

# METHOD

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## “CLASSICIST CULTURE”: THE UTILITY AND LIMITS OF AN IDEAL- TYPE<sup>1</sup>

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“CLASSICIST CULTURE” is an ideal-type Lonergan formulated retrospectively, based on his experience of pre-Vatican II Catholic culture, which for centuries had largely been in a siege mentality against the assault of “modern culture” (where at the turn of the twentieth century the arch heresy became “modernism”). Immediately we may wonder at its utility for philosophical analysis, since the retrospective formulation was made almost forty years ago and subsequently Catholic culture has fragmented into various streams, including large currents of a “scattered left” caught up with now this modern innovation and now this post-modern innovation. And all along, this “classicist culture” seemed a relic of an earlier age. What value does the examination of “classicist culture” have for us today?

First, we must consider that “classicist culture” is an ideal-type, which offers not an exhaustive description of reality but a set of intelligible relations that sheds light on a discernible pattern. It is an historical construct specifically in the field of intellectual history, a field that grasps major trends of thought and identifies the basic assumptions – ultimately philosophical – that define intellectual horizons. The work of intellectual history allows us

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1 This was first presented as a paper at the West Coast Methods Institute and Fallon Memorial Lonergan Symposium at Loyola Marymount University, April 3, 2008. It also incorporates some material from Thomas J. McPartland, “Meaning, Mystery, and the History of Consciousness,” in *Lonergan Workshop 7*, ed. Fred Lawrence (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 203-367, which is substantially the same as chapter. 4 in Thomas J. McPartland, *Lonergan and historiography: The Epistemological and Speculative Philosophies of History* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, forthcoming).

to reflect on history with critical tools so that we can examine the trends and assumptions in light of the dialectic of progress and decline. We can, then, develop "positions" consonant with cognitive, moral, and spiritual authenticity and reverse "counter positions" at odds with cognitive, moral, and spiritual authenticity. This, of course, is a reflection of our historicity, a notion at variance with "classicist culture." But "classicist culture" is a trend in intellectual history that is also part of the history of consciousness, with its themes of differentiations of consciousness and attendant radical horizon shifts. The ideal-type of "classicist culture" must be seen as a component of the ideal-type of the Age of Theory in the history of consciousness. We may live in a world after the Age of Theory (namely, the Age of Interiority), but since we are dealing precisely with ideal-types, we need to understand the achievement and limits of the Age of Theory and the role of "classicist culture" so that we do not underestimate the recurrent appeal of "classicist culture" in some form. And to appreciate the problems of the present age we need to consider that the history of consciousness deals with differentiations of consciousness that pose the historical challenge of integration. If "classicist culture" is inadequate to the task of integration, we need to know what is to be integrated and how "classicist culture" is fundamentally inadequate.

Let us consider, first, the relation of the ideal types of the "age of theory" and "classicist culture," second, the utility of the ideal-types, and, third, the problem of differentiation and integration.

### 1. THE AGE OF THEORY AND CLASSICIST CULTURE

The Age of Theory achieved a revolutionary new understanding of basic horizon. The discovery of the human mind as a noetic and spiritual center, particularly in ancient Hellas, implied human responsibility for the creation and maintenance of civilization; the differentiation of both theoretical and

religious consciousness stressed individual responsibility and, within that context, emphasized a new, positive ideal of freedom.<sup>2</sup>

A number of factors, however, blunted the edge of a theoretical control of meaning so as to obscure the understanding of basic horizon and preclude satisfactory awareness of human historicity. In the first place, according to Lonergan, the humanist tradition of Isocrates, repelled by the technical achievements of philosophy, stepped in and obliterated the difference between the world of common sense and the world of theory. This strand of humanism, spreading from Greece to Rome and from antiquity to the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance, marveled at the fact of language and traced all aspects of culture to man's power of speech and persuasion. Being educated linguistically and becoming human it considered as interchangeable.<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, thinkers in the Age of Theory, who labored under a Greek conception of the physical universe that either attributed mind to the cosmos as a whole or at least held the beings of the celestial realm to be more intelligent than humans, tended, conversely, to ascribe to human history the qualities of a natural process.<sup>4</sup> A distinction between nature and history was not sufficiently articulated. The philosophy of history in antiquity failed to appreciate adequately the radically temporal dimension of human existence, while medieval theologies of history tended to regard Providence too much as a kind of natural force.

Thirdly - a point Lonergan stresses forcefully - the very advance of theoretical understanding also bred an excessive fascination with concepts, with logic, with the necessary, the immutable, the certain, with the end

2 Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrell (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), 226. Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, trans. Gilbert Highet (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943), 2.357, argues that Plato created the early European idea of the free human personality. The *Orestes Trilogy* of Aeschylus perhaps represented a new awareness of the human personality in terms of both intellectual and psychological development. On the psychological level, Orestes attained a differentiation of his own ego against the forces that would prevent his individuation. Erich Neumann, *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 1.186-89.

3 Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Collection*. Vol. 4 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. F. E. Crowe. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 260; Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 97.

4 Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 5th ed., *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 129.

products of thought. Overlooked were the dynamism of the mind, the subjectivity and the historicity of human knowing, and, indeed, the subjectivity and the historicity of human living.

Lonergan, for example, perceives two sides of Aristotle in tension with each other. On the one hand, there was his focus on insights as the ground of concepts.<sup>5</sup> This tied in with his empiricism in ethics, which concentrated on the ethical reality of good men, who, guided by the virtue of prudence, navigate the chartless sea of contingency. On the other hand, he treated psychology in a metaphysical framework and formulated a scientific ideal, propounded chiefly in the *Posterior Analytics*, which was modeled after geometry.<sup>6</sup> Aristotle conceived of the sciences "as prolongations of philosophy and as further determinations of the basic concepts philosophy provides."<sup>7</sup> The upshot of this method was the failure to distinguish sharply between biology and psychology, and a consequent neglect of the properly historical realm.<sup>8</sup>

Aristotle's scientific ideal discovered its true paradigm in Greek geometry: it seeks true, certain knowledge of causal necessity.<sup>9</sup> It demands not only conclusions that follow necessarily from premises but also premises that are necessary truths (1974b: 201).<sup>10</sup> It is opposed to the contingent, the merely factual, the existential. It sets up a split world. For genuine science (*episteme*) understands the necessary, the ultimate, the changeless. Mere opinion (*doxa*) must grapple with the ever elusive, the contingent, the fluctuating, the variable (1967a: 260; *Posterior Analytics* 88b30ff; *Nicomachean Ethics* 1140a24ff.).<sup>11</sup> His object of theoretical contemplation, "an eternal heaven ... and eternal cyclical recurrence," does not square with the

5 Lonergan's whole project in *Insight*, of course, takes off from Aristotle's passage on insight in *De Anima*, 3.7 (I, title page). For a forceful analysis of the role of wonderment in Aristotle's logic, see Patrick H. Byrne, *Analysis and Science in Aristotle* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).

6 Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, vol. 2 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), pp. 5-6, 27; *Insight*, 406-407; *Collection*, 259-260; *Method*, pp. 95-96, 279-280, 310-311; *Second Collection*, 72-73, 139-140, 201, 235-236.

7 *Method*, 95; Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1048a25ff.

8 *Verbum*, 3-4.

9 *Collection*, 259; *Second Collection*, 139-140; Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 71b10-12, 71b25, 72a37ff.

10 *Second Collection*, 201.

11 *Collection*, 260; Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 88b30ff.; *Nicomachean Ethics* 1140a24ff.

modern scientific worldview of emergent probability.<sup>12</sup> The Aristotelian corpus, then, does not provide "either guidance for historical research or an understanding of the historicity of human reality."<sup>13</sup>

In Aquinas's massive synthesis of Aristotelian thought into the context of Christian theology, Aquinas himself, Lonergan maintains, was as little influenced by the ideal of necessity as was Aristotle in the totality of his worldview: "his familiarity with the whole of Aristotle protected him from any illusions that might be generated by the *Posterior Analytics*."<sup>14</sup> Accordingly, Aquinas's "commentaries, *quaestiones disputatae*, *summae*, fall under the description of research followed by a search for understanding."<sup>15</sup> But in the wake of the ensuing acrimonious and dogmatic Augustinian-Aristotelian controversy Duns Scotus and William of Ockham devoted almost exclusive attention to Aristotle's logical works, thus taking the *Posterior Analytics* at face value.<sup>16</sup> To be sure, the clarity and rigor of logical demonstration, although it conveyed little understanding, held great advantages in debate.<sup>17</sup> In time the vocabulary of Scotus dominated all schools of Scholasticism, including that of Thomism.<sup>18</sup> The net result was the burst of skepticism and the philosophical decadence of late Scholasticism in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>19</sup>

A fourth factor limiting the effectiveness of the Age of Theory in executing a critique of meaning, and one which reinforced its anti-historical immobilism, was the nature of post-theoretical, or post-systematic culture, the culture of what Lonergan names the "classicist mentality." While the differentiated consciousness of the great philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, enriched a later philosophical humanism, this humanism lost "the cutting edge of genuine theory."<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the educated classes accepted the critique

12 *Insight*, 129-30.

13 *Method*, 280.

14 Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophy of God and Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973), p. 30; *Verbum*; Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

15 *Method*, p. 280.

16 *Method*, p. 280, 297; *Philosophy of God*, p. 30.

17 *Philosophy of God*, p. 31.

18 *Ibid.*

19 *Method*, pp. 280, 311.

20 *Method*, p. 275. As in the Hellenistic period so in the Renaissance a skeptical humanism, reacting against the dogmatism of the philosophical schools, tended toward cultural precedence over a more philosophical humanism.

by philosophy of earlier common sense, literature, and religions; they had among their sources of education the works of authentic philosophers; and they might on occasion employ this or that technical term or logical technique. Still, their predominant mode of thought was that of common sense and undifferentiated consciousness. The insights of philosophers became encased in dogmas in the process of *la haute vulgarization*.<sup>21</sup> Voegelin speaks of them as "cultural hieroglyphics" (a reference to Cicero).<sup>22</sup>

Philosophical humanism became intertwined with the humanism of Isocrates and the ideal of *philanthropia*, the respect and devotion to "man as man," particularly as suffering man, to generate the "classicist mentality."<sup>23</sup> Classicist culture, according to Lonergan, "stemmed out of Greek *paideia* and Roman doctrine *studium atque humanitatis*, out of the exuberance of the Renaissance and its pruning in the Counter-Reformation schools of the Jesuits."<sup>24</sup> In practice, classicism, by its transformation of philosophical insights into dogmas, accepted the Aristotelian ideal of necessity and geometrical certitude. It interpreted culture in a normative sense and considered itself to be the culture, which, if rejected, made one into a barbarian.<sup>25</sup> It fell into an anti-historical immobilism, believing that it could encapsulate culture in the universal, the normative, the ideal, and the immutable.<sup>26</sup> It spoke in terms of "models to be imitated or ideal characters to be emulated, of eternal verities and universally valid laws."<sup>27</sup> It regarded classicist philosophy as the one perennial philosophy, classicist art as the set of immortal classics, and classicist laws and structures as the deposit of the wisdom and prudence of mankind.<sup>28</sup> So was created a somewhat arbitrary, if refined, standardization of human nature.<sup>29</sup>

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21 *Method*, pp. 98, 276-77, 304; Dennis D. Klein, "Dimensions of Culture in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Boston College, 1975), pp. 411-12.

22 Eric Voegelin, *History of Political Ideas*, vol. 1, *Hellenism, Rome, and Early Christianity*, ed. Athanasios Mouklakis, vol. 19 of *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1997).

23 *Philanthropia* "was an ideal that inspired education and fostered the gracious urbanity, the ease and affability, the charm and taste exhibited in Menander's comedies and their Latin counterparts in Plautus and Terence" (*Method*, 97-98).

24 *Second Collection*, 101, 182.

25 *Second Collection*, 101, 182; *Method*, xi.

26 *Second Collection*, 112.

27 *Ibid*, 101.

28 *Ibid*, 182.

29 *Collection*, 262.

The stupendous achievement of the Age of Theory, the differentiation of the mind, was marred by classicist culture. This, we can judge, was the inherent weakness of the Age of Theory, that classicist culture concentrated on, glorified, the end-products of conscious operations: concepts, moral laws, models of behavior. The Age of Theory, we can say, could not adequately integrate theory (or vulgarized theory) and common sense: it could tie together neither concept and image nor logic and the spontaneous, affective, and unconscious sides of human living. Classicist culture transmitted technical statements, protected good manners, and supported good morals in much the same way as the modern superstructure communicates to the infrastructure through "simile and metaphor, image and narrative, catchphrase and slogan."<sup>30</sup> Do we not see here the source that only aggravated the perennial conflict between the cultural infrastructure and the cultural superstructure, with the incomprehension of the average person in the face of higher culture now heightened by the narrowness, the rigidity, and the repressive nature of the latter?<sup>31</sup> Perhaps it is this very inflexibility that has contributed so mightily to the saga of continuing cultural strife Friedrich Heer has perceived in Western intellectual history:

There has always been a struggle between "above" and "below" in Europe's inner history. The "upper" culture of Christianity, educated humanism and rationalism has struggled against a "lower" culture of the masses. This cultural "underground" included both the deeper levels of the individual personality and the customs, manners and faith of the people.<sup>32</sup>

Erich Neumann has spoken of the psychological damage done to the average person who could not live up to the standardized models and

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<sup>30</sup> *Second Collection*, 112, 182.

<sup>31</sup> *Method*, 272. The distinction should be made between those people who operate solely within the cultural infrastructure, that is, those with completely undifferentiated consciousness, and those people who operate within *both* the cultural superstructure and the cultural infrastructure (no one operates entirely within the superstructure). Hence there is an antagonism between those with undifferentiated consciousness and those with differentiated consciousness, and for those with differentiated consciousness there is a tension between their rationality and their psychic vitality. To be sure, the degree of differentiated consciousness—the number of patterns of experience differentiated—will vary from person to person and from historical age to historical age.

<sup>32</sup> Friedrich Heer, *The Intellectual History of Europe*, trans. Jonathan Steinberg (New York: World Publishing Co., 1953), xi. Lonergan's analysis of scotosis (treated in *Insight*, p. 215) would seem to be applicable here.

ideals and concepts of classicist culture.<sup>33</sup> We may conclude that in the past two centuries the West has witnessed, in the victory of the neo-gnostic ideologies and revolutionary movements over traditional higher culture and the Old Regime, the rising up, in diabolical form, of a repressed dimension of human existence, a dimension that could not be properly integrated into the cultural horizon of the Age of Theory. Clearly, then, classicist culture" is not up to the task of integration—a theme to which we must return.

## 2. UTILITY AND LIMITS OF THE AGE OF THEORY AND CLASSICAL CULTURE AS IDEAL TYPES

But Lonergan's ideal-type of the Age of Theory is, to be sure, an ideal-type, and, by definition, it is not an exact description of historical reality but only an approximation through the model of an intelligible pattern. The fundamental issue is always its utility. We can, in fact, mount arguments pro and con about the utility of the ideal-type of the Age of Theory.

There is no doubt, on the one hand, either that around 500 BC what Lonergan calls a cultural superstructure was born, or that Socrates sought universal definitions, or that Greek thinkers began systematic investigation of topics. This ideal-type is not impugned by the fact that the carriers of differentiated consciousness were an elite or that it reached its most concentrated form in Hellas and the Western tradition and not elsewhere in the globe. The breakthrough of a creative minority or of advanced communities has often delineated time periods, as we see, for example, in the cases of the Enlightenment, the Romantic Era, the Agricultural Age, or the Iron Age. We must note that in the Age of Theory there seems to be a quaternary pattern, which is repeated twice. A creative surge is followed by stale dogmatism, and the dogmatism then evokes a skeptical reaction that, outside of more radical philosophical spokesmen, engenders a humanistic

33 Eric Neumann, *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic*, trans. Eugene Rolfe (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1969). It is interesting to examine how numerous have been the segments of the lower middle class and lower class, particularly unemployed artisans, marginal workers, and landless peasants, as potentially revolutionary classes in European history going back to the Middle Ages. See Norman Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millennium*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970). These have been groups (except for the peasants) neither sufficiently withdrawn from classicist culture (as the peasants often were) to avoid repression nor sufficiently integrated to be restrained by classicist conventions. Perhaps revolutionary movements since the Middle Ages can be viewed in one sense as representations of the "unconscious" of the cultural superstructure.

tradition devoid of a solid philosophical orientation. And so the insights of Plato and Aristotle were watered down by the Academy and the Peripatetics. The Platonic and Aristotelian schools and the Hellenistic philosophies of conduct increasingly avoided genuinely systematic and open discussions of basic philosophical issues. One response to this dogmatic atmosphere was skepticism, and the sting of skepticism only enhanced the appeal of rhetoric, which looked askance at theory. The school of Isocrates won out over the school of Plato in the battle of these two forms of humanism that, according to Werner Jaeger, ran "like a leitmotiv throughout the history of ancient civilization."<sup>34</sup> Lonergan considers the theology of the early church and of the Patres as an educated kind of common sense, often employing theoretical terms only in a metaphorical sense. In Lonergan's judgment, even the brilliance of Augustine was expressed primarily in a common-sense mode.<sup>35</sup> It was the Scholastic movement that reintroduced an authentic theoretical impulse. But the acrimonious debates among medieval Schoolmen, starting in the generation after Aquinas, ushered in a new era of dogmatism only to invite another wave of skepticism in the nominalist movement. And in the early modern period a classicist culture with its rigid standards and humanistic canons of literature attempted to salvage a frozen residue of the creativity of earlier periods. We can conclude that the ideal-type of the Age of Theory does not lose its efficacy because of these - perhaps inevitable - fluctuations.

On the other hand, we must ask whether prior to the modern period the differentiation of theoretical culture was the sole development worthy of note in the history of consciousness. Had not human self-interpretation reached a major watershed, a decisive transformation, with the spiritual differentiation of the higher religions? And to what degree was the turn to interiority present in the Age of Theory? The Socratic enterprise certainly included decidedly religious and existential overtones. Lonergan himself admits that Plato's dialogues were "suggestive of the subject."<sup>36</sup> Indeed has any reflective technique ever surpassed the dramatic artistry of the Platonic dialogues in objectifying cognition precisely as process and highlighting the

34 Jaeger, *Paideia*, 3.46.

35 *Verbum*, 6-9; *Method*, 261, 177-78; *Second Collection*, 22-23, 212, 245-59; Bernard Lonergan, *The Way to Nicaea: The Dialectical Development of Trinitarian Theology*, trans. Conn O'Donovan (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976)

36 *Verbum*, 4.

guiding role of existential consciousness? This would seem to be a supreme example of what Kierkegaard called "indirect communication," that mode of expression most appropriate to explicate existential subjectivity.<sup>37</sup> Are not the Platonic dialogues, along with Kierkegaard's pseudonymous works, the equivalent, on the existential level, of Lonergan's cognitional exercises in *Insight*? If Kierkegaard's pseudonymous works belong to the Age of Interiority, as Lonergan intimates, then do not the Platonic dialogues belong there as well? Lonergan views Augustine's exploration of human interiority as a brilliant and penetrating common-sense precursor to the Age of Interiority.<sup>38</sup> Aristotle and Aquinas, he remarks, "used introspection and did it brilliantly."<sup>39</sup> Still, Lonergan contends that *none* of these towering figures objectified cognitional process as structure or transposed introspection into a reflectively elaborated technique.<sup>40</sup> Would this judgment also obtain with respect to Chinese philosophy and Indian philosophy? While Eastern thought did not attain the same measure of theoretical differentiation, as did Greek philosophy in the West, it did focus on dimensions of subjectivity in its mysticism, its psychology, and its ethics. Missing, however, from traditional Eastern thought was the context of critical philosophy, empirical science, and a notion of historicity.

The foregoing considerations lead us to ponder to what extent the Age of Theory and the Age of Interiority are integral parts of one great movement of differentiation. The time-span of two thousand years between the Greek Enlightenment and the modern Enlightenment may seem forbidding. But from the perspective of a history of consciousness it is a relatively brief episode in the drama of history. Indeed we could look at the past ten thousand years as one major trend: the Agricultural Revolution and the Urban Revolution, separated from each other by about five thousand years, established the technological *a priori* for the cultural superstructure; the destruction of Bronze Age civilizations about 1200 BC, with the attendant "times of troubles," challenged, for some, the validity of the myth that tied order in human society to cosmic-divine order, thereby provoking an intellectual crisis to which the Greek *theoroi* responded; the

37 Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, trans. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), 68, 74, 246-247, 319-321.

38 *Way to Nicaea; Method*, 277-78, 307-08; *Second Collection*, 22-23, 212, 245-59.

39 *Verbum*, 5-6.

40 *Ibid.*

Greek achievement ran through the pre-Socratic discovery of the mind, to the cultural crisis of the Greek Enlightenment during the age of the Sophists, and to the Socratic, Platonic, and Aristotelian climax with its somewhat ambiguous concern for theory and interiority; the theoretical life then underwent the fluctuations alluded to above until the Scientific Revolution and the modern Enlightenment brought it to the threshold of the unambiguous discovery of the subject. This scenario does not necessarily assault the utility of Lonergan's ideal-types, but it does warn us not to apply Lonergan's constructs dogmatically. They are heuristic tools, devices to foster continuous inquiry into the complicated fabric of historical life. And their utility, in part, is gauged by how well they permit us to pinpoint more accurately the most significant exceptions, departures, and disparities.

### 3. DIFFERENTIATION AND INTEGRATION AS AN ISSUE IN THE HISTORY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

But we need to introduce more thematically the historical issue of differentiation and integration.

The great accomplishment in the Age of Theory was the differentiation ("discovery") of the mind and the differentiation of transcendence. With this accomplishment came a profound transformation in culture perspective. We may take as our starting point Voegelin's eloquent description of the worldview of a culture, including that of the early high civilizations, whose predominant mode of expression of meaning was mythic. There was a sense of a "community of being," where all the partners—the divine, nature, society, and humans were participants in the same substance of order along a continuum, with intricate patterns of interpenetration. Indeed all the partners were part of the cosmos. There was an integrating principle, reflective of this sense of oneness - the principle of lastingness. So human beings needed to be integrated in the more lasting order of human society to live meaningful lives; human society needed to be integrated into the more enduring order of nature through the mediation of a shaman or king; and nature was, in fact, integrated into the order of the divine. The "discovery of the mind" in the Age of Theory meant that the human mind, having attained a reflexive self-identification and confidence, would investigate the essential properties of the partners in the community of being. The

possibility loomed of an eclipse of reality, a denial of the very existence, or at least, integrity of one of more of the partners (as, for example, in the naturalistic reductionism of some Sophists, or an extreme view of *maya*). A new set of relations emerged among the partners in the community of being: the mediator between order in human society and the larger order of nature and the divine was the representative human, either the philosopher or the spiritual person. To generalize, the integrating principle in the West was the mind. The mind was not a mirror of nature, but nature was a mirror of mind. Mind was the key to the dynamics of human nature. The well-ordered mind was the source of order in human society. God was pure mind. Nature was an intelligible, pre-established static hierarchy within which human nature flourished in its proper place within the hierarchy of human society. This worldview, of course, underwent numerous variations and criticisms amid the larger trends of creativity, dogmatism, skepticism, and cultural retrenchment adumbrated above.

We must focus on the situation in the Late Middle Ages in the West, for at that time there was a decided disintegration of the worldview. If we accept the penetrating analysis of Louis Dupré, as early as the fourteenth century we witness the beginnings of modernity. The medieval synthesis was dissolving, and neither the self-assertion of modernity, argued by Hans Blumberg, nor the second wave of modernity (the Enlightenment), nor the post-modern era has fundamentally changed the intellectual situation. According to Dupré, "Modernity is an event that has transformed the relation between the cosmos, its transcendent source, and its human interpreter. To explain this as an outcome of historical precedents is to ignore its most significant quality — namely, its success in rendering all rival views of the real obsolete."<sup>41</sup> In fact, what has taken place is a complicated process of decline and progress. The situation is irreversible in the sense that to reverse the decline is not to restore the prior intellectual situation because this would be to ignore the progress (which would be a form of decline). To be sure, it is quite correct to see the decline as beginning in the Late Medieval period with the nominalist critique of conceptualism (participating in what we have called the dialectic of dogmatism and skepticism). The hierarchical cosmos became an autonomous network of relations created by the arbitrary fiat of a

41 Louis Dupré, *Passage to Modernity: An Essay in the Hermeneutics of Nature and Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 249; see Hans Blumberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1983).

voluntarist deity separate from the world, and human beings began to take on the trappings of the voluntarist deity. The world was no longer a mirror of mind but the product of – perhaps blind – will. The deity was the distant voluntarist creator, or the removed Deist creator, or simply the hypothesis to be discarded. This epistemological confusion only continued with a repetition of the dialectic of dogmatism and skepticism in the antagonism of rationalism and empiricism, their canceling out in the Kantian critique and its retreat from metaphysics, the post-Kantian dialectic of positivism and romanticism as the dominant theme of nineteenth and twentieth century intellectual history, leading to the inexorable exhaustion of post-modernism with its denial of the self, an objective world, and perhaps transcendence. Even at the beginning of the twentieth century, the climate of opinion was such, as Voegelin recounts, that a Wilhelm Dilthey, a man of philosophical bent, “refrained for a decade from publishing because he deemed the effort useless.”<sup>42</sup> And to this decline in the cultural superstructure Voegelin would add the decline in the cultural infrastructure of symbol and sentiment with the neo-gnostic construction of modernity as the self-salvation of humanity. Lonergan would offer his more restrained recounting of the “longer cycle” of decline.<sup>43</sup>

Still, decline has been mated to progress. For along with the disintegration have come new differentiations of consciousness. Modern science has isolated the causes it investigates and developed an heuristic procedure to carry on those investigations. This specialization of intelligence has been complemented by the development of the hermeneutical and historical sciences in the past two centuries. The differentiations of consciousness associated with the Scientific Revolution and the “historical revolution” have led to the differentiation of nature from history. As the key to the Age Theory, we might argue, was the “discovery of the mind,” so the key to its emerging successor, the Age of Interiority, is the “discovery of the self” (or subject).<sup>44</sup> The Age of Interiority, of course, is itself an ideal-type. If the contemporary situation is the product of decline and progress, then the fractures of modernity have been intensified by the new differentiations

42 Eric Voegelin, *Published Essays 1966-1985*, ed. Ellis Sandoz, *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 12 (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990), 57.

43 *Insight*, 251-253.

44 Hegel distinguished substance and subject; Kierkegaard, I would argue, actually discovered the self.

of consciousness. At the same time, the earlier "discovery of the mind" has not disappeared and the problems and excesses and temptations of the Age of Theory have not disappeared, including the appeal of the "classicist culture."

Let us, by way of conclusion, expand on these comments.

We cannot return to an earlier view of nature as a static hierarchy permeated by mind nor to the modern romanticist intuition of the vitality of nature, which protests too much against the truncated rationalism of the modern idea of nature, thereby accepting its ground rules of what reason is. Unfortunately the autonomy of differentiated scientific inquiry has been purchased with the coin of faulty epistemological assumptions. The confrontation theory of truth was the framework for formulating the notion of nature as consonant with the heuristics of scientific method. Nature thus became a machine to be dominated by world alien human observers (Descartes), or a machine that could crush the independence of human objects (scientific materialism), or a merely phenomenal reality that could preserve human autonomy (Kant). To be sure, Leibniz sought to reintroduce teleology in natural process and a kind of historicity, taken up later by Whitehead, but his project was thwarted by his conceptualist metaphysics—decisively criticized by Kant for issuing mere analytic a priori judgments. More astute was Schelling's attempt at a philosophy of identity that could overcome the confrontation theory of truth that had reigned since the Late Middle Ages. While his attempt floundered in his absolute idealism, his theory of natural process (his *Potenzlehre*) offered promise of an approach to nature that could do justice to modern scientific discovery and, at the same time be structurally and dynamically integrated with human development and divine presence.<sup>45</sup> Indeed his *Potenzlehre* bore a family resemblance to Bergson's theory of creative evolution, both of which attributed "finality" to nature in a fashion not altogether different from that of Lonergan. A contemporary effort to reintegrate nature, human being, and divinity, while respecting the differentiated field, cannot do so without resolute commitment to objectivity and a renewed focus on epistemology. Most varieties of existential phenomenology and Post Modern thought have failed to do this. Needless to say, classicist culture has nothing to offer here but utter obscurantism. We need to create, in Lonergan's words,

45 See Jerry Day, *Voegelin, Schelling, and the Philosophy of Historical Existence* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 203).

"a pure line of progress" retrospectively, separating modern insights from faulty epistemological assumptions and reconstructing the epistemological framework.

The modern discovery of the self has been accompanied by numerous versions of an "ersatz self," catalogued in abundant historical detail by Charles Taylor.<sup>46</sup> It is instructive to note that there is a current version of the "self" dominant in Western popular culture and in political discourse. The self, so conceived, is the self-creation of a voluntaristic agent, and the very activity of self-creation, or self-making, is its own end, for the process bestows meaning on human existence.<sup>47</sup> This goes beyond even the earlier romantic journey of finding one's unique, true self. The self is not found — but must be created. And this self-creation is the goal to which all culture and politics must be subordinate. In the modern secular utopia the purpose of the polity is to ensure the conditions of self-creation. By definition, minority life styles are to be protected; by definition, the majority culture is tyrannical. All issues from the most complex constitutional disputes to concerns over the status of marriage must be analyzed solely from the perspective of this view of the self. Such is the dominant temperament and sentiment of the times. There is a clear and present danger lurking here. For, the immanentization of a liberal Christian moralism notwithstanding (which confers a kind of dignity on the project), the status of this self is not altogether different from that of Plato's "democratic soul" in the *Republic*, and the "logic" of the situation heads toward a devolution of selfhood into the "tyrannical self," as the contemporary drug and techno culture would intimate. This view of the self, in fact, is a product of a crude voluntaristic subjective idealism. It is a massive counterposition, which must be exposed and rejected without compromise, for its smothering intensity prohibits rational debate. The classicist mentality may be nurtured in this soil as a reaction, but it is not equal to the task of critique, and indeed it would simply be co-opted as just another viewpoint created as a project of self-making! By contrast, sufficient reflection on the normative process of cognitive, moral, and spiritual self-transcendence would establish the validity of a basic

46 Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of The Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989).

47 See Emil Fackenheim, "Metaphysics and Historicity," in *The God Within: Kant, Schelling, and Historicity*, ed. John Burbidge (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), chap. 8.

horizon beyond solipsism and narcissism and enter the world of authentic selfhood – and indeed the universe of being.

Also prevalent in popular culture today is neo-atheism, a movement nourished by positivism and certain post-modern efforts. To be sure, the movement is singularly lacking in originality; it regurgitates stock arguments from Victorian anthropology, Feuerbach's projection theory (rooted in naïve realism!), Marx's one paragraph critique of religion, Freud's own version of projection theory, based on his so-called "reality principle," and, in general, simplistic materialist and reductionist philosophies, culminating in claims of neuroscience; while it dogmatically denies the validity of philosophy in the age of science. But its massive impact cannot be reversed by thinkers – including many contemporary theologians – who contain religious discourse within language games, or subtexts, or opinions. God is absent from modern culture. Philosophical discourse – and arguments – about God are not arcane if they are purged of antiquated science and conceptualist metaphysics, that is, if they are completely divorced from classicist culture. In our post metaphysical age, metaphysics still matters! It must, of course, be a metaphysics at home with a universe of emergent probability and the discovery of the self.

In summation, classicist culture is the result of certain tendencies within the Age of Theory. But as long as the dynamics of basic horizon are overlooked and a premium is placed on the products of thinking, as long as the defects of materialism, reductionism, relativism, nihilism, hedonism, and atheism are apparent, and as long as philosophical skepticism is rampant, then classicist culture will have a perennial appeal. We do not live in a positivist universe where the putative third stage of history has supplanted the earlier stages. The Age of Interiority has not superseded the Age of Theory any more than the Age of Theory has superseded the Age of Myth. The discovery of the self has not abrogated the discovery of the mind any more than the discovery of the mind has abrogated the efficacy of myth as a representation of mystery. What is an imperative in the Age of Interiority is the integration of selfhood, objectivity, and myth. And classicist culture cannot even adequately conceive of this enterprise, let alone execute it.

## FROM BIAS TO METHOD: PEIRCE AND LONERGAN ON COMMON SENSE AND ITS LIMITATIONS

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"But the difficulty is to determine what really is and what is not the authoritative decision of common sense and what is merely *obiter dictum*. In short, there is no escape from the need of critical examination of "first principles."  
Charles S. Peirce, 1905

"To err is human, and common sense is very human."  
Bernard Lonergan, 1957

**D**ESPITE EMERGING FROM different countries, times and cultures, the striking parallels between the thought of the American philosopher and logician Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914) and the Canadian philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984) certainly give one pause. Of many points of possible comparison, one of the most striking that they share in common is the need for the emergence of scientific and even transcendental method from the patterns of common sense thinking. 'Common sense' does not refer to the *sensus communis* of scholastic psychology but rather to the beliefs and operations in ordinary patterns of practical action, or to the pre-philosophical or pre-scientific mode of cognition. For Peirce, this blend of philosophical commitment and common sense led to his declaration of "Critical Common-sensism" as a philosophical nomenclature issuing from Kant's Critical Philosophy and the old Scotch Common Sense Philosophy. For Lonergan, these views coalesced into his self-described "Critical Realism". This paper will show, despite differences on points and emphasis, the commonality of the philosophical perspective Peirce and Lonergan shared. If it is true that Lonergan was unfamiliar

with Peirce prior to the publication of *Insight* in 1957,<sup>1</sup> then the correlation between the two thinkers stands as a possible confirmation of their shared view. In this paper I propose to explore the relations between theoretical understanding and the common sense mode of inquiry first in Lonergan and then Peirce. Following this I will show how each view is complementary to the other and how each offers us some grounds to continue to identify, evaluate and free ourselves from the intrusive bias endemic to the common sense point of view.

#### BIAS AND OVERCOMING: LONERGAN

Lonergan's view of bias emerges most clearly in chapters six and seven of *Insight* in which he lays out the various patterns of experience: the biological, aesthetic, intellectual and the dramatic patterns in both a biographical and a social context. Briefly, Lonergan defines bias as "a block or distortion of intellectual development."<sup>2</sup> Lonergan develops a view of the growth and development of intelligence in ordinary and practical affairs as the human being successfully, and sometimes unsuccessfully, navigates the world of material conditions, economic relations, political structures, and most importantly the variety of roles we play in the drama of our personal, familial, and cultural lives. The imperative to intelligent behavior is ever present and guides practical intelligence from the development of primitive tools and weaponry to the modern bureaucratic state. For all this, common sense can order activity to efficient and workable solutions.

The problems arise because in the dramatic pattern of experience the individual operates out of the tension between the two connected but often opposed principles of (a) the pressing need for images by brain processes<sup>3</sup> and (b) the largely unconscious exercise of self-censorship. Socially, this is a product of the tension within a community between practical common

1 Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, (1957), vol. 3 of *The Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*. Edited by F.E. Crowe and R.M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

2 Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition [1973]. Reprinted (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 231.

3 Lonergan terms these "neural demand functions" and his characterization is more nuanced than the crude and more ordinary expression given above. The context of the discussion is the cognitional relation between images and insights. He notes that "[i]nverse to the control of the psychic over the neural are the demands of neural patterns and processes for psychic representation and conscious integration." *Insight*, 213.

sense and human intersubjectivity.

Specifically, the problem that arises is the appearance in common sense of various forms of bias. Lonergan singles out four, and the three that interest us most here are 1) the individual bias of egoism, 2) a group bias that sets one group against others, and 3) a general bias that sets common sense against the rise and importance of the theoretical, specifically against philosophy and science.

Lonergan's analysis of individual egoism is instructive for us because it lays bare the structure of limited practical intelligence: the egoist uses intelligence extensively to exploit the social, political and cultural world but refuses to answer the question of what justifies the different treatment afforded the exploiter and the exploited. What makes the exploiter so special? In order to be a successful egoist one must either a) not ask this question and thus censor its emergence into consciousness, b) subvert the question when it does emerge into one which necessarily characterizes everyone else as inferior and undeserving, or c) simply not answer the question at all and dumbly continue one's ways. Thus Lonergan calls egoism "an incomplete development of intelligence"<sup>4</sup> since one never successfully faces the principle that we are essentially equal in important respects, and equals ought to be treated equally.<sup>5</sup> Since intelligence spontaneously treats similars similarly, egoism is a sin against intelligence. The egoist, on pain of inconsistency, must then somehow pervert the natural development of intelligence to persist in such behaviors. This is usually accomplished by refusing to ask or somehow blocking the very question from arising. The longer we persist the better we have denied the natural social impulse of intelligence.<sup>6</sup>

4 Lonergan, *Insight*, 245.

5 See *Insight*, 244-247. However, Lonergan has stressed as an essential element in scientific and all intellectual activity that "similars are similarly understood", p. 61. Thus, it is already a principle of intelligence that equals are equally treated even in a non-moral context and thus the egoist is forced on pain of inconsistency to give up the principle or apply it to both moral and non-moral contexts.

6 Here we may anticipate a correlation with Peirce's view on the social implications of logic. Lonergan notes that "one has to give further questions a chance to arise" by which he means "that something equivalent is to be sought by intellectual alertness, by taking one's time, by talking things out, by putting viewpoints to the test of action." *Insight*, 310. This requirement to "talk things out" is part of what later in *Insight* Lonergan terms the *remote* criterion of truth, while the *proximate* criterion of truth is simply reflective grasp of the virtually unconditioned. This talking things out in terms of the remote criterion is social in nature and with large enough groups over long enough periods of time can lead

Bias as egoism reveals the important structure of the denial of the development of intelligence, the refusal to ask the pertinent questions that might force a negative view of oneself to arise.<sup>7</sup> However, the two further forms, group bias and general bias, render us even more impotent and more reluctant to dredge up unpleasant truths into conscious awareness. In group bias, common sense finds itself *supported by* the social principle. As Lonergan says,

Were all the responses made by pure intelligences, continuous progress might be inevitable. In fact, the responses are made by intelligences that are coupled with the ethos and interests of groups, and while intelligence heads for change, group spontaneity does not regard all changes in the same cold light of the general good of society. Just as the individual egoist puts further questions up to a point, but desists before reaching conclusions incompatible with his egoism, so also the group is prone to have a blind spot for the insights that reveal its well-being to be excessive or its usefulness at an end.

Thus group bias leads to a bias in the generative principle of a developing social order.<sup>8</sup>

Because the bias is part and parcel of "the generative principle of a developing social order" any particular individual within that social order is simply enculturated into the biases of the existing state of common sense. Claims of such bias have been laid against the vested interests - both industrial and governmental - that debunk global warming as "junk science" or the ravings of extremists in the environmental movement.<sup>9</sup>

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to a "virtual elimination of individual and group bias, and the absence of any ground for suspecting general bias" *Insight*, p. 574. This converges well with Peirce's notion that the community of inquiry is required for the adequate clarification of particular judgments. See *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, 8 Volumes (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1934-58); 5.407; 5.311; as with Lonergan, Peirce at 2.654 connects this with the doctrine of chances and probability which lays down the normative requirement that "He who would not sacrifice his own soul to save the whole world, is, it seems to me, illogical in all his inferences, collectively. Logic is rooted in the social principle."

7 In part this is because the subject may well refuse to submit to the discipline of conversion. For if genuineness calls forth a conversion, a commitment to development "[t]hough it fears the cold plunge into becoming other than one is, . . . , it does not try to rationalize" *Insight*, 502. On the other hand, a lack of genuineness rejects the conversion for the agent is cowed by that cold plunge into otherness and will, more often than we would wish, rationalize that choice.

8 Lonergan, *Insight*, 248-249.

9 Among other sources, see Chris Mooney, *The Republican War on Science* (New York:

Lonergan extends this analysis to include within the domain of common sense an inherent and general bias against theoretical investigation itself, against knowledge for its own sake, against any long term investigation that shows no immediate benefit or short term payoff. The use of intelligence in common sense arises prior to theorizing in abstract terms about results which may be available only in a remote future. Anyone who has introduced undergraduates to the discipline of philosophy should be familiar enough with general bias in the common question "What will I ever need this for?" Yet for all that, the student may well be as clever and intelligent as anyone else, the teacher included. The problem is that the bias prejudices the student against asking and exploring the natural questions that arise from our ordinary experience of the world. As Lonergan notes,

Indeed, the supreme canon of common sense is the restriction of further questions to the realm of the concrete and particular, the immediate and practical. To advance in common sense is to restrain the omnivorous drive of inquiring intelligence and to brush aside as irrelevant, if not silly, any question whose answer would not make an immediately palpable difference.<sup>10</sup>

Since common sense remains an incomplete development with unasked questions, Lonergan claims that it is regularly opposed to theory. Yet, this is precisely its failure: common sense cannot attain a solution for its own bias. The necessity of theory simultaneously is a plea for intellectual liberty, the precondition for progress. The closing down of liberty in inquiry is a refusal to ask or answer pertinent questions. This closing down of inquiry will inevitably result in self-justifying rationalizations, and "[h]uman activity settles down to a decadent routine, and initiative becomes the privilege of violence."<sup>11</sup> Violence, or rule by force, is a direct result of the failure to establish a binding rational solution capable of asking and answering all questions.<sup>12</sup>

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Basic Books, 2005).

10 Lonergan, *Insight*, 202.

11 Lonergan, *Insight*, 8.

12 In practice, however, it may not be so easy to discriminate which side more explicitly precludes reason and which precludes bias (if either do). A regime may well claim that the opposition, the rebels say, are pervaded by bias and therefore it is their failure to accept the rational solution which triggers violence as a necessary means to maintain order. I am certainly not trying to justify government violence, but I point this out to indicate that a "second order" commitment to the regulative function of theoretical openness does not itself determine which "first order" group or position instantiates that openness.

Finally, on Lonergan's account, bias is progressively overcome by the increasing authenticity of the subject. These are not two different processes, but rather the progressive overcoming of bias in intelligent and reasonable behavior just means the subject's increasing authenticity. But this is no small thing. The subject's authenticity is a progressive realization of her own cognitive powers, a realization of the failures to operate in such an intelligent manner, and the overcoming of those failures. The realization and overcoming of those failures is not normally a linear process but rather one which also requires intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. In conversion one does not simply recognize patterns but makes a commitment to reorient oneself to truth, goodness, or the divine. Conversion thus requires a self-transcendence, a commitment to and becoming other than what one is now. This self-transcendence is embedded in the process of development, regulated by the great law of genuineness. We unconsciously resist the transformation we consciously intend. Becoming aware of this tension between conscious and unconscious intentions is to subject oneself to the law of genuineness: "[t]hough it fears the cold plunge into becoming other than one is, it does not dodge the issue, nor pretend bravery, nor act out of bravado. [...] It grows weary with the perpetual renewal of further questions to be faced, it longs for rest, it falters, it fails, but it knows its weakness and its failures, and it does not try to rationalize them."<sup>13</sup> Self-deception is the great enemy. Freedom from bias is attainable because of self-transcendence, but especially so by deflecting self-deception in self-appropriation: what James Marsh calls "the pearl of great price."<sup>14</sup>

#### BIAS AND OVERCOMING: PEIRCE

In 1877-78 Peirce wrote a series of articles, including "The Fixation of Belief,"<sup>15</sup> in which he attempted to ground a secure method for fixing belief. The phrase "fixation of belief" refers to the various manners – what

13 Lonergan, *Insight*, 502.

14 James L. Marsh, "Self-Appropriation: Lonergan's Pearl of Great Price" in *In Deference to the Other: Lonergan and Contemporary Continental Thought*, edited by J. Kanaris and M. Doorley (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004), 53-63.

15 "The Fixation of Belief" was the first of six papers published in *Popular Science Monthly* as part of the series "Illustrations of the Logic of Science". They were not written primarily for philosophers but rather for the generally educated and scientifically interested person.

Peirce calls “guiding principles” – by which people come to accept ideas that then settle into habitual mental actions. While Peirce was concerned to find a reliable method for fixing beliefs, he also noted that reasoning did not appear to be a common method for fixing belief in many of the people he regularly met. This concern is expressed obliquely and comically in the first line of the essay: “Few persons care to study logic, because everybody conceives himself to be proficient enough in the art of reasoning already. But I observe that this satisfaction is limited to one’s own ratiocination, and does not extend to that of other men.”<sup>16</sup> Peirce is highlighting the maybe commonplace point that whatever each of us does believe, we believe to be true. So the problem is not myself and my own reasoning, since all my beliefs are true, but rather those who disagree with me – *they* surely need some tutoring in critical thought.

Curiously, Peirce begins his examination of methods for fixing belief with a controversial parameter. Since belief is an easy, calm and satisfied state, it is the goal of inquiry. Since doubt is an uneasy, dissatisfied state, it is the condition we seek to free ourselves from. The mental journey from doubt to belief is inquiry. Peirce then boldly states:

Hence, the sole object of inquiry is the settlement of opinion. We may fancy that this is not enough for us, and that we seek not merely an opinion, but a true opinion. But put this fancy to the test, and it proves groundless; for as soon as a firm belief is reached we are entirely satisfied, whether the belief be false or true. [. . .] The most that can be maintained is that we seek for a belief that we think to be true. But we think each one of our beliefs to be true, and, indeed, it is mere tautology to say so.<sup>17</sup>

From this angle, Peirce then proceeds to examine the various methods for belief fixation with the sole criterion being whether the method in fact would remove doubt and settle opinion. This is an important, though not ultimately happy, proviso.

Another point to consider about Peirce on common sense is that belief can be held as a “primitive” as opposed to an acquired belief. Peirce adopted a critical variant of the Scotch common sense philosophy in which one maintains, so to speak, a fairly fixed list of invariant beliefs.<sup>18</sup> For Peirce

16 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.358.

17 Peirce, *Collected Papers* 5.358.

18 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.509.

these were often limited to the basic or primitive actions of our animal nature. These beliefs were more instinctual than not, for instance the taboo on incest.<sup>19</sup> They are not critical in any way, since we do not come to accept them but rather discover that we have always believed in them, at least as long as we can remember.<sup>20</sup> Peirce was always open to the instinctual nature of belief, and later connected Galileo's *il lume naturale* to cognitive instinct. However, to have a cognitive instinct is one thing, to justify the belief may be another. How we regularly fix our beliefs is normally a matter of neither cognitive instinct nor primitive inheritance.

There are four methods of belief fixation examined by Peirce: tenacity, authority, the *a priori* method, and science. The methods proceed in dialectical progression. The method of *tenacity* is simply to believe whatever it is that we want to believe, ignore any evidence to the contrary, and be done with the whole deal straight away. This rather appealing method has some great advantages: primarily it relieves us of the irritation of doubt and provides a calm state from which we can act unhesitatingly. Yet the method appears flawed in that "[t]he social impulse is against it. The man who adopts it will find that other men think differently from him, and it will be apt to occur to him in some saner moment that their opinions are quite as good as his own, and this will shake his confidence in his belief."<sup>21</sup> The problem here is not that the method fails to guarantee truth but rather that it fails to keep the belief fixed, i.e., it fails to successfully eliminate doubt.

The key to tenacity's immediate failure is its individualism. Because your belief 'that X' is simply one within a plurality of different beliefs, X, Y, Z, doubt creeps back into consciousness. The most obvious solution to the problem then is to eliminate the diversity of opinion through the second method: that of *authority*. Instead of by the will of the individual we fix belief by the will of an institution capable not only of inculcating beliefs in

19 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 1.661. The passage is worth quoting: "true conservatism, I say, means not trusting to reasonings about questions of vital importance but rather to hereditary instincts and traditional sentiments. Place before the conservative arguments to which he can find no adequate reply and which go, let us say, to demonstrate that wisdom and virtue call upon him to offer to marry his own sister, and though he be unable to answer the arguments, he will not act upon their conclusion, because he believes that tradition and the feelings that tradition and custom have developed in him are safer guides than his own feeble ratiocination" [1898]. In 1908, Peirce offers a variant of this as the ground for belief in God. See *Collected Papers*, 6.452-485.

20 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.523.

21 Peirce, *Collected Papers* 5.378.

the community but also of eliminating contrary opinions. Such a method, practiced on subjects since their earliest memories would be far more effective than the method of tenacity. Since doubt arises from a plurality of opinion, the elimination of plurality thus eliminates doubt. Peirce, raised in a Unitarian household, illustrates this with a fairly direct reference to the Catholic Church in the middle ages. Political examples from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries may occur to us today more readily. Three problems appear: first, it seems that no matter how controlling a community becomes it simply cannot regulate opinion on every matter, and this will allow people to think for themselves, thus opening up sources of potential criticism; second, no matter how savvy a community becomes it is too difficult to really prevent all outside opinion from entering, and this will result in precisely the same situation as the method of tenacity when believers realize that their views are simply one among many; third, the community will have to resort to violence in order to enforce its opinions, and this will have a negative effect on the validity of authority for many people. This breakdown exhibits the fundamental problem with the first two methods: they attempt to fix belief based on the will. The corrective, then, is to base belief fixation on rational principles. When a criticism of authority arises, the question becomes "Is it more reasonable than the dictate of the authority?" Whether the authority is more reasonable or not is beside the point – the key criterion has shifted from the will of the authority to the reason justifying the will of the authority.

Peirce calls the third method of belief fixation "the *a priori* method," and "[t]he most perfect example of it is to be found in the history of metaphysical philosophy."<sup>22</sup> Peirce labels it *a priori* because he seems to think that, in general, philosophical systems have not been erected utilizing "observed facts" but rather have operated out of principles which appear "agreeable to reason."<sup>23</sup> Peirce cites several examples, including Plato's belief that the celestial spheres would have the same proportional distance as the lengths of strings that produce harmonious chords. As a more advanced or universal axiom he takes the common belief in the principle that "man acts only selfishly" and only does what he finds most pleasing.

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22 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.382

23 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.382. Lonergan frequently expressed opposition to such an intuitive acceptance of first principles. In his frequent criticism of Scotus, Lonergan reduces the Scotistic intuition to another variety of knowing as "taking a look." See, for instance, *Insight*, 396.

Such a doctrine, Peirce notes, "rests on no fact in the world, but it has had a wide acceptance as being the only reasonable theory."<sup>24</sup> The problem is that the method leaves too much room for the variable inputs of taste and thus to the accidental and peculiar characters of individuals and cultures, such that a bias creeps in simply from, say, being from the upper class in the American Gilded Age.<sup>25</sup> Further, since philosophical systems are many how do I decide on one in particular? Why, for instance, is theism preferable to atheism when both sides appear to present sophisticated and systematic explanations for these positions? Peirce's concern is that the belief will be fixed by a decision involving *aesthetic* factors: if reason cannot clearly and evidently determine the issue, then my decision to be a theist is grounded in at least some significant aspect in the sense that it *appeals* more than the alternative.<sup>26</sup> But appealingness is a much more person-relative criterion. When we recognize the person-relative aspect of our decision for one belief among a plurality of beliefs we begin to doubt its veracity. This goes for individual beliefs as well as for systems of beliefs.<sup>27</sup> So despite our transition from fixing our beliefs based on the will to fixing our beliefs based on reason and providing a rational account and defense, we are back

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24 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.382.

25 This is the obvious, though frequently unstated, target for Peirce. He frequently enough refers to egoism as a pronounced feature of 19<sup>th</sup> Century culture. For instance early in the Fixation essay, *Collected Papers* 5.377, he targets free-trade advocates who counsel him not to consider, nor even read about, any protectionist doctrines. This was cited as an example of the method of tenacity. Peirce is reacting precisely against a form of bias in the self-serving Social Darwinism of the Gilded Age.

26 To give equal time to atheists, Thomas Nagel reflects that "I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope that I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that." *The Last Word* (New York: Oxford, 1997) p. 130. And later he notes that "the feeling that I have called fear of religion may extend far beyond the existence of a personal god, to include any cosmic order of which mind is an irreducible and nonaccidental part. I suspect that there is a deep-seated aversion in the modern "disenchanted" Weltanschauung to any ultimate principles that are not dead – that is, devoid of any reference to the possibility of life or consciousness" p. 133. Nagel is not justifying his unbelief by this fear. However, this is precisely the manner of justifying intellectually undecidable "genuine options" pursued by the arch-pragmatist and friend of Peirce, William James. See, for instance, "The Will to Believe" [1896] *The Works of William James – The Will to Believe*, ed. Frederick Burkhardt (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 13-33.

27 For the *locus classicus* of this and some of its problems see W.V.O. Quine "Two Dogmas of Experience" *From a Logical Point of View* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), 20-46.

to the same problem we encountered with the method of tenacity: we have just one among a plurality of beliefs.

Peirce infers that the solution to this problem is the *method of science*. But the particular feature of it that he highlights here is that "it is necessary that our beliefs may be caused by nothing human, but by some external permanency – by something upon which our thinking has no effect. [...] yet the method must be such that the ultimate conclusion of every man shall be the same, or would be the same if inquiry were sufficiently persisted in."<sup>28</sup> This method, therefore, remedies the weaknesses of all the prior ones. It is rational, like the a priori method, but does not depend on individuality in any crucial way. In "How to Make Our Ideas Clear"<sup>29</sup> Peirce defines truth and reality as follows: "[t]he opinion which is fated to be agreed to by all who investigate is what we mean by the truth, and the object represented in this opinion is the real. [...] reality is independent, not necessarily of thought in general, but only of what you or I or any finite number of men may think about it."<sup>30</sup> So the method that works in belief fixation is one which is rational but also communal, and the community of inquiry necessary for such a method to achieve truth cannot be circumscribed nor identified with any particular set of inquirers nor limited to the past or present line of inquirers.

Now a curious problem arises for Peirce given that he has (1) set as a parameter that the sole object of inquiry is the settlement of opinion, i.e., the establishment of a belief and the cessation of doubt; and (2) that the sole reliable method of inquiry is one that gives a final opinion only after the community of inquiry has adequately answered all relevant questions. The problem for Peirce's characterization of the matter is that in the here and now of belief fixation the method of science gives us only provisional answers and thus does not eliminate doubt in any substantial manner. In fact, the method of science appears singularly incapable of dispelling lower level doubt since empirical hypotheses remain fundamentally open to future revision by the ongoing community of inquiry. What the community requires are members who settle for provisionally justified beliefs and leave to the indefinite future a belief fixed with greater certainty.

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<sup>28</sup> Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.384.

<sup>29</sup> "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" was the second of the six articles of "Illustrations of the Logic of Science" in *Popular Science Monthly*.

<sup>30</sup> Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.407-08.

The dialectical progression of belief fixation offered by Peirce intended to bring the lay reader from the will of the individual to the will of the community, then to the reason of the individual, and finally to the reason of the community. The lacuna in Peirce's account was that the surest method to fix belief gives the lay reader no refuge from the doubt he promised to eliminate for her. The gap in Peirce's account is his uncharacteristic psychologism.<sup>31</sup> By beginning in the natural desire to rid oneself of doubt he glossed over the failure to remedy that demand by the scientific pursuit of truth. What fills the gap in Peirce's account is explicit in Lonergan's account: the need for an intellectual conversion. What Peirce requires of his readers is to forgo the initial goal of inquiry, the simple settlement of belief and the attendant relief from doubt, for a transcendental goal of inquiry – the inference to the best explanation as a means to attaining the truth in the long run.

The required conversion is suggested by Peirce, but he lacks the language to make it explicit and thus to clarify what precisely is to be accomplished by the reader. The suggestion is given by the bride metaphor at the end of the fixation article. There, Peirce notes that a choice of method is not just one intellectual choice among others but "one of the ruling decisions of his life, to which once made he is bound to adhere" and which "should be loved and revered as his bride, whom he has chosen from all the world."<sup>32</sup> The language is redolent of commitment to the scientific method as a necessary condition for the attainment of truth in all but the simplest problems which vex us; it shows a conversion, a turning away from personal satisfaction in any form and a turning toward truth.<sup>33</sup> Using Lonergan's later language, it is a vertical, rather than simply horizontal, exercise of freedom, since Peirce is advocating a selection of an entirely new horizon; the new method is an orientation to truth and a fundamental openness to reality.<sup>34</sup> By 1893 Peirce

31 By 'psychologism' I mean a view that our inferences are justified because people compulsively draw such inferences. This makes logic rest on psychological facts. Peirce was opposed to this thesis and identified it with the "German School" of logicians (e.g., Schroder, Sigwart, Wundt, Husserl). Rather Peirce sided with the "English school" (e.g., Boole, De Morgan, Venn, ). See, *inter alia*, the *Collected Papers*, 3.432.

32 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.387.

33 "Individual action is a means and not our end. Individual pleasure is not our end; we are all putting our shoulders to the wheel for an end that none of us can catch more than a glimpse at – that which the generations are working out." *Collected Papers*, 5.402, n. 2.

34 Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 40, 237-38.

had formulated the "method" of science such that it was itself a product of scientific investigation. This is because the scientific method could not be identified with any specific formulation, for it was itself a development of science and is not even now some kind of finished formula. Thus Peirce notes:

that which constitutes science, then, is not so much correct conclusions, as it is correct method. But the method of science is itself a scientific result. It did not spring out of the brain of a beginner: it was a historic attainment and a scientific achievement. So that not even this method ought to be regarded as essential to the beginnings of science. That which is essential, however, is the scientific spirit, which is determined not to rest satisfied with existing opinions, but to press on to the real truth of nature. To science enthroned in this sense, among any people, science in every other sense is heir apparent.<sup>35</sup>

The passage deftly handles the problem of the origin of science as a fundamental desire, quite clearly a desire to know the "real truth of nature."

By 1899 Peirce had formulated this desire as the first rule of reason:

Upon this first, and in one sense sole, rule of reason, that in order to learn you must desire to learn, and in so desiring not be satisfied with what you already incline to think, there follows one corollary which itself deserves to be inscribed on every wall of the city of philosophy: Do not block the way of inquiry.<sup>36</sup>

This locates the source of development in the [or as] the origin of reason itself and for Peirce is strongly linked to the natural affiliation of the mind with the order of nature.<sup>37</sup> In terms of the problem of bias, however, it was

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<sup>35</sup> Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 6.428.

<sup>36</sup> Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 1.135.

<sup>37</sup> This is a recurring point in Peirce's works. For instance "It appears to me that the clearest statement we can make of the logical situation – the freest from all questionable admixture – is to say that man has a certain Insight, not strong enough to be oftener right than wrong, but strong enough not to be overwhelmingly more often wrong than right, into the Thirdnesses, the general elements, of Nature. An Insight, I call it, because it is to be referred to the same general class of operations to which Perceptive Judgments belong. This Faculty is at the same time of the general nature of Instinct, resembling the instincts of the animals in its so far surpassing the general powers of our reason and for its directing us as if we were in possession of facts that are entirely beyond the reach of our senses. It resembles instinct too in its small liability to error; for though it goes wrong oftener than right, yet the relative frequency with which it is right is on the whole the most wonderful thing in our constitution" *Collected Papers*, 5.173 [1903].

impossible to sort out beliefs in any critical manner so long as inquiry was tied to satisfactions other than that of pure truth seeking. The inherent limitation of common sense is that, whether ordered to action or to the cessation of doubt or to an instrumental solution to a technical problem, common sense fails to free itself of bias in the long run, because it is not grounded in the transcendental goal of discovering the truth that is independent of what you or I or any finite number of individuals may think about it. Thus it is more likely, indeed it is expected, that common sense will throw up blocks to inquiry and thus prevent the free flow of questions and self-criticism necessary.

#### FROM SCIENCE TO SOCIETY

But it is one thing to sift through biases that pervade common sense against the backdrop of explanatory science, it is another to enter the murkier ground of history and politics and sort out bias without the aid of an impersonal science as backdrop. Lonergan calls this "scholarship."<sup>38</sup> How do we secure our inquiry into truth and value without bias when we do not have recourse to the explanatory schema of science? The elimination of bias is much easier to discuss when the knowledge we seek is impersonal or, as Peirce and Lonergan both note, depersonalized in that it is "determined by nothing human,"<sup>39</sup> according to Peirce, or utilizes symbolic languages to emancipate explanation from any particular, hence more descriptive, point of view, according to Lonergan.<sup>40</sup>

Lonergan's solution is given in very general terms. He distinguishes between the remote and proximate goals of the scholar. The scholar may be "devoted to social and cultural goals,"<sup>41</sup> but only as remote goals. Within the functional specialty, he or she is concerned with the proximate goal which is simply the matter at hand, the proper interpretation of the available data. Since the necessary detachment from bias cannot be achieved in the objectified manner of the sciences "the only positive control is to have another historian go over the same evidence. Just how one conceives the

38 Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 233.

39 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.384.

40 For instance Lonergan's consideration of the apt symbolism of mathematics that leads to invariance of explanation. See *Insight*, 43.

41 Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 230.

achievement of such detachment depends on one's theory of knowledge and morals. Our formula is a continuous and ever more exacting application of the transcendental precepts. Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible."<sup>42</sup> These are all true, but somewhat vague. Both economic and education theorists dispute not only particulars, but goals of policies, practices and theories. They can develop into distinct schools whose funding sources are not generally equal. They can also develop with a mixture of competing motives which could cover greed with a patina of social good.

One prominent feature shared by Peirce and Lonergan is that they both set all our intellectual inquiries within the context of a theology of love. Both locate the origin of intellectual inquiry in a primordial desire which expresses itself in practical reasoning and common sense. This activity of reasoning is insufficient, for bias and blockage are natural and perennial foibles. Out of this predicament emerges the objectivity of scientific procedure, of disinterested theory untied from sensible description. But, other than the transcendental precepts, what hope may we have that our intellectual activities and our deliberative actions would progressively approximate the truth and the human good *within* our descriptive world? For both Peirce and Lonergan these activities are nestled within the basic relations intended by a loving God.

Peirce, in his attempt to counteract what he called the gospel of greed in the American Gilded Age, proposed a moral sentimentalism to check our growing indifference to the pain and suffering caused by a political economy geared to the advancement of the powerful.<sup>43</sup> If the Gospel of Greed advocated that "progress takes place by virtue of every individual's striving for himself with all his might and trampling his neighbor under foot whenever he gets a chance" so the contrary position is the gospel of Christ "that progress comes from every individual merging his individuality in sympathy with his neighbor."<sup>44</sup> But why bother losing benefits through sympathy with others? Why bother caring about progress so conceived? Obviously this orientation makes sense within a cosmology in which agapastic love perfuses and drives the direction of nature. Evolutionary philosophy for Peirce is simply a reading of nature on its way to God,

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42 Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 231.

43 This doctrine is explicitly laid out in "Evolutionary Love" published in *The Monist* in 1893; *Collected Papers*, 6.287-317.

44 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 6.294.

whose love projects novel creations into a free and independent life while drawing them ever more into a harmony of increasing diversity.<sup>45</sup> It is a wildly theocentric reading of evolution, yet it does help to explain how our moral and transcendental intending is more than mere Darwinian survival traits. This is elaborated in three points by James Marsh. First, religious conversion transforms the basis of my entire life: intellectual, moral and religious. Second, religious conversion orients one towards the community and away from the rugged individualisms that have permeated the American ethos from Peirce's era to our own. Third, "since the love of God is fruitful, it overflows into love of all those that God loves or might love," including a preferential option for the side of the poor rather than the side of the rich.<sup>46</sup> This exactly echoes Peirce's exhortation against Gilded Age Social Darwinism and economics both in its methodological inadequacies as well as in its moral and religious repugnancies. Peirce's position is well expressed in Marsh's conclusion that "Capitalism is institutionalized group bias reinforcing and legitimizing the general, empiricist bias and thus blocks the unfolding of the desire to know. Capitalism is an institutionalized refusal of insight."<sup>47</sup>

In general, what follows is a viable and I think necessary answer: that the only manner to effectively eliminate bias is through agapastic love, aimed at freedom and harmony. I suggest that this can be *explanatory* if and only if our inquiry and experience are grounded in a theology of love. Such would make a metaphysics of value in terms of the lovability of what is, grounded in the primary lover and lovable which is the divine reality.<sup>48</sup> This is the horizon within which dialogue leads to the elimination of bias through compassionate understanding. Within this context all things echo the love of God. On the other hand, if most people live exclusively in the world of common sense, if their beliefs are fixed by tenacity or authority, then the bias which may deeply affect them may not as easily be overcome even in their committed religious or moral lives. Religious

45 Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 6.288.

46 James L. Marsh, "Praxis and Ultimate Reality: Intellectual, Moral, and Religious Conversion as Radical Political Conversion" *Ultimate Reality and Meaning*, Vol 13, no. 3, September 1990, 235-236.

47 Marsh, "Praxis and Ultimate Reality," 229.

48 For a working out of a classification that makes much more sense of this than I have, see Michael Vertin, "Lonergan's Metaphysics of Value and Love: Some Proposed Clarifications and Implications" *Lonergan Workshop*, Vol. 13, 1997, 189-219.

and moral conversion affects the whole life of the scholar as well as the ordinary person. It provides the over-arching context in discerning not only which conclusions are to be reached, but the character and quality of one's approach to the matter, the parties involved, and one's own value in that context. In religious conversion, love precedes knowledge and effects a new organization of one's life.<sup>49</sup> The opposite is the approach or organization motivated by fear, or indifferent opposition – even if we have experienced some level of conversion, over against a more unadulterated susceptibility to advertising, to commercialism's impact on our sense of life as the continuous but eventually joyless pursuit of private pleasure.

#### COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SOLUTION

The first and most important distinction commonly made by Peirce and Lonergan is that between theory and practice. The separation of theory from practice is about the most practical move the species has ever made. The political, economic, or anti-intellectual pressure to collapse theory into some form of immediate practical activity, to co-opt science into technology, scholarship into ideology, will remain a constant threat to philosophy and the theoretical sciences. The second point follows immediately. What theory has to offer is that it grounds its precepts in transcendental goals. Those goals may be always anticipated, and we may always only approach the theoretical limit, but they are still given in the structure of heuristic metaphysics or the anticipated opinion of the community of inquiry. For all that, they are as real as any others and exert an effective force on thought. So for these reasons, any form of instrumentalism will fail as too susceptible to bias and will remain a counterposition. This shared view explicates the role of philosophy itself as a science which articulates and abrogates bias through the explicit language of authenticity and conversion.

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49 Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 122.



## SOME TERMINOLOGICAL RESERVATIONS: 'POSITION', 'CONVERSION', 'PERSON'

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I HAVE SOME reservations about Lonergan's theology, which I think are largely, and I hope entirely, terminological rather than substantial in nature. I would like in what follows to take issue with his talk of 'positions' (as opposed to 'counter-positions'), with his use of the term 'conversion' in his later writings, particularly *Method in Theology*; and with what he has to say about a 'person' in his Christology.

I begin with comparatively trivial example. I myself find it convenient to use the term 'position' (as opposed to 'counter-position') in a more normal sense than Lonergan's, in a way that is neutral rather than commendatory; as one might say, 'It was Professor Blenkinsop's position that human beings were just complicated machines', or 'It was T. A. Coward's position that Iceland and Greenland Falcons were geographical races of the same species', without committing oneself to agreement or disagreement with the savant in question. On the other hand, I should say that the point Lonergan is making by this distinction is one of the most brilliant and fruitful in his whole philosophy. A 'position' in his sense, of course, is a judgment which is compatible with its being attentively, intelligently, and reasonably asserted; whereas a 'counter-position' is not so compatible. Thus what was apparently B. F. Skinner's opinion, that whatever anyone says, thinks or does is entirely due to a history of positive reinforcement of innate biological predispositions, is a counter-position; since it is incompatible with anyone, including Skinner himself, asserting it because it is attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible of them to do. So the contradictory of this opinion (I had almost said 'position', which shows you the point I am driving at) is a 'position' in Lonergan's sense. So I propose we use the

term 'L-position' for the term of art in Lonergan's philosophy; 'counter-position', which has no common non-technical use, may be retained as it is.

We now come to the term 'conversion', which I fear will be a harder nut to crack. In the life of the religious believer, there comes a time of conversion; when God substitutes a heart of flesh for one's heart of stone, as Ezekiel puts it; when 'operative grace' becomes 'cooperative grace', in the more technical terms of Augustine and Aquinas; when the divine action *on* her becomes also divine action *in* and *through* her in her free virtuous action. It is important to note immediately that this applies to the good unbeliever as well as to the believer; though the unbeliever naturally does not acknowledge such operation of God on and in herself. In this the unbeliever, given that the relevant beliefs of the believer are true, is like someone with no scientific education who falls into a pond; though she does not acknowledge the fact, she has fallen into a sample of H<sub>2</sub>O.

Suppose that it became important, for some reason, that the person to whom such an accident happened should come to know that it was indeed a sample of H<sub>2</sub>O which she had tumbled into. You would not immediately and tactlessly impose on the conversation a way of speaking which had previously been alien to her. You might, instead, invite her to watch the famous school experiment supposed to show that water indeed is composed of hydrogen and oxygen; where an electrical current is passed through water, and bubbles appear at the terminals, while the level of the water slowly goes down. When the two sets of bubbles are collected, and one is ignited, there is a little explosion, and moisture is left in the containing vessel; this is diagnostic for hydrogen. When a smoldering taper is introduced into the other, it springs into flame; which is indicative of oxygen. If she gets the point of the experiment, she will come to see that water is not an element, chemically unanalysable into constituent parts, as she may previously have assumed; but a compound. She is then likely to accept the new way of talking.

Now, to talk of 'conversion' in the way Lonergan does, it seems to me, is to assume that theism or Christianity is true, and should thus not be done when theism or Christianity is in question. In conversation with unbelievers, some other way of speaking, which does not make the assumption that any form of religious belief is true, or for that matter that it is false, should be

adopted. All that I want to say about 'conversion' in Lonergan's sense is related to this point.

What comes first in what Lonergan calls 'conversion', ecumenically described, is (i) (a) basic good will, and (b) basic intellectual openness and honesty; one might, without giving anyone any offense, label these respectively moral and intellectual authenticity. Next comes (ii), a fairly determined effort to follow up these principles, (a) and (b), in one's daily living. The following stage is (iii) reflection on the general nature of intellectual and moral authenticity, as one has been, at least intermittently, exercising them, and on their general implication for knowledge (epistemology) and what is to be known (metaphysics). There ensues (iv) realization of the plausibility of theism, and its ultimate intellectual inescapability, and (v) acceptance of the appropriateness to the human condition, and the truth, of the Christian revelation. In that curious book, *Looking at Lonergan's Method*<sup>1</sup>, one contributor complains of that method that it seems to put everyone in the right; another that its demands are so stringent that even theological giants like Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann are treated as not having 'arrived', since they lack 'intellectual conversion'.<sup>2</sup> One may, of course, immediately throw up one's hands at such a flagrant example of inconsistency, and conclude that neither Lonergan nor his method is to be taken seriously.

An answer to the apparent contradiction, however, is not far to seek, which makes Lonergan look less of a fool. What he calls 'intellectual conversion' seems to be a matter of going through stages (i)b, (ii)b, and (iii) to (v), as shown in detail in *Insight*. Barth and Bultmann, as classical Protestants,<sup>3</sup> believe that there is no way to argue that Christianity is true, by rational processes available in principle both to believer and unbeliever;

1 Edited by P. Corcoran (Dublin, Talbot Press, 1975). The irony implicit in the title might have been still closer to the surface, perhaps, if it had been *Taking a Look at Lonergan's Method*.

2 Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd 1972), 318. Corcoran, *Looking*, 72.

3 Representatives of classical Protestantism are Martin Luther in the sixteenth and Karl Barth in the twentieth century. For these, fallen human reason is unable to find sound arguments for the existence of God or for the truth of something like the Christian revelation. They are to be contrasted with Liberal Protestants, of whom a paradigm case is Adolf von Harnack, author of *What is Christianity?*, a book which appeared at the very beginning of the twentieth century. Liberal Protestants believe in God and try to follow Christ, but sit loose to traditional doctrinal formulae, as they believe that these obscure Christianity's moral essence.

as Barth famously put it, belief cannot argue with unbelief, only preach to it. They think, in other words, that there is no way through from stage (iii) to stage (iv) or (v); hence Barth's notorious hostility to 'natural theology.' Atheists, in contrast, would concede that there is a way through, but insist that it issues in the contradictories of (iv) and (v) - that there is no God, and that Christianity is consequently false.

Now I should say that Lonergan's terminology, referring to an 'intellectual conversion' which Barth and Bultmann, in common with all classical Protestants, lack, is unfortunate, and unnecessarily off-putting to such people, who are often very clever as well as morally sincere. What is true is that Barth and Bultmann would both deny that methods of reason, acceptable to believer and unbeliever alike, could establish that there probably or certainly was a God, or that such a God was likely to make a special revelation of the divine nature and intentions toward humankind, or that we have rational means, which we can in principle articulate, of identifying this.<sup>4</sup> As to the claim that Lonergan awards prizes to all and sundry, everyone is to be *invited* to the arena of dispute which Lonergan calls 'dialectic'. But it is one thing to be thus invited, another to accept the invitation, another still to emerge unscathed from the ensuing mental fight.

According to Lonergan, religious conversion sublates moral, which in turn sublates intellectual conversion; that is to say, the former in each case confirms and strengthens the latter, and puts it on a new basis.<sup>5</sup> As a matter of fact, however, as Lonergan sees it, they generally occur in the reverse order in a single individual; religious conversion comes first, and tends to promote moral, which at last may lead to intellectual conversion. Religious conversion is a matter of coming to be grasped by otherworldly love. This leads to moral conversion, where we replace mere pursuit of satisfactions with that of values as well; and perhaps ultimately to intellectual conversion, where we break with the error that knowing is analogous to taking a look, determine that it is a matter of experience, understanding and judgment,

4 Barth, especially in the earlier volumes of the *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clarke, 1936-1964), attacks all such reasoning as 'natural theology'. At one point he defines 'natural theology' as 'knowledge of God apart from the grace of God.' This seems to me very mischievous. That such knowledge is supposed to be derived from first principles, does not imply that it is supposed to be apart from the grace of God.

5 B. J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1972), 241-3.

and resolutely follow through the consequences of that account. *Insight* moves in the opposite direction, anatomizing and justifying intellectual conversion, and showing how, when thoroughly followed through, it must lead to moral and at last to religious conversion.

My difficulty is this. My acquaintance consists very largely of people of intelligence and good will who do not believe in the existence of God or the divinity of Christ, and would vehemently deny that they are religiously converted. Their intellectual integrity and moral probity are sometimes such as to put those of many Christians and Catholics to shame (cf. Romans 2: 24). Many of those, on the other hand, who are 'religiously converted' in the standard sense, seem to use this as an excuse (perhaps especially if they are Catholics) to reduce morality to obedience to authority, and to abjure intellectual autonomy to a very considerable extent. If Lonergan were right in his account, you would expect Catholics and other Christians to be among the more intellectually and morally awake of the world's inhabitants, whereas they seem quite often to be among those most soundly asleep; and Catholics appeared, at least before the Second Vatican Council, to have considerable *prima facie* justification for doing so. As Lonergan quipped, the laity were supposed in effect to be not so much the crew, as the cargo, of the ship which was the Church.

I suggest the term 'basic authenticity' as meaning a state of mind and heart which is characterized by fundamental goodwill, and willingness to listen to others, attend to evidence, and follow what seem to be good arguments. According to the theist, this is certainly a matter of God replacing the heart of stone with a heart of flesh, and of beginning to cooperate with God whereas one had formerly been merely operated upon by God. I think indeed it is right to say that, as Lonergan himself admits, some unbelievers have such a passionate devotion to truth and goodness as such, that one can say that they are in love with God without knowing it. (I like to compare the situation of the heroine of Jane Austen's *Emma*, of whom one can surely say that she is in love with Mr. Knightley throughout the novel, but only comes to know it just before the end. One might perhaps cite Matthew 25: 37-40 to the same effect.) Quite often such basic conversion occurs simultaneously with a religious conversion in the ordinary sense. But quite often too it may actually coexist with a repudiation of religion, especially when the religion concerned is such as to suppress and stifle intellectual and moral autonomy.

I think the term 'moral authenticity' can properly be used where Lonergan speaks of 'moral conversion', since nearly everyone seems to agree, *exercite* (implicitly in practice) if not *signate* (explicitly and in theory), that to change one's aims from the mere immediate satisfaction of desires to more long-term and other-directed ends is a good thing. Where Lonergan has 'intellectual conversion', I think "'intellectual authenticity'", with emphasis on the quotation marks, is a possible way to go. Without the quotations, the phrase may sound like a surreptitious way of commending Lonergan's philosophical principles without actually arguing for them; the quotations are a sign that the case does have to be argued, and cannot be taken for granted.

The justification of referring to what Lonergan calls 'religious conversion' as religious conversion is, I think, that basic lovingness, when all goes well from a religious, Christian or Catholic point of view, should normally issue in what would ordinarily be called 'religious conversion' when the person concerned has not previously had a positive religious affiliation. When she has, this will be deepened and rendered more intense and authentic. But, commonly, and perhaps especially commonly in our own time, all does *not* go what would appear to be 'well' from a religious, Christian, or Catholic viewpoint. The terminology which is used in ecumenical discussion has to be acceptable to people of really good will, and not without intelligence or culture, who conclude, often with regret, that they cannot believe in God or in Christ.

Lonergan's terminology not only *can* lead to misunderstanding and confusion, but demonstrably *has* done so. Wolfhart Pannenberg thought that Lonergan's requirement of 'religious conversion' as necessary for theologians implied that one had to be Catholic to contribute anything of significance to Catholic theology. It is clear that this was a mistake; but it found some excuse in Lonergan's terminology. And I would vouch that, when I discussed the matter with him, Pannenberg was open to conviction, and had no ideological axe to grind. (He said he might well agree with Lonergan, if his views were really as I had presented them.)

In in-house talk among Catholics, to talk in terms of religious, moral and intellectual conversion is perhaps appropriate. But it is not if the full range of Lonergan's potential contribution to interdenominational and interreligious thought, and to dialogue between the religious and the non-

religious or anti-religious of good will, is to be properly appreciated. For the purposes of fully ecumenical discussion at least, it is undesirable to appear to build religious belief, or theistic belief, or Christian or Catholic belief, into the very terminology one uses. It is like saying 'rationalism' when you mean 'materialism'; two ways of thinking which many, including myself (and of course Lonergan), would say were not only not identical, but not even compatible in the last analysis.

This is one of the several reasons why I wish there were a society of atheistic Lonerganians, who swore by the 'transcendental precepts' and the first eighteen chapters of *Insight*, but thought the last two a mistake. (Not that I personally have any doubt that Lonergan's argument for the existence of God in chapter XIX of *Insight* is sound; but this is not immediately to the point.) I would like to reserve the term 'religious conversion' for what it usually means, the actual embracing of a religious faith for the first time, or beginning to take seriously religious beliefs which one had before maintained rather unthinkingly or automatically and without active commitment. I want instead, where Lonergan talks of 'religious conversion', to talk about 'autonomy with respect to religion', which would be a matter of serious open-mindedness whether or not one actually believed a set of religious doctrines.

'Moral conversion' is the least problematic, terminologically speaking, of Lonergan's three types of conversion; as everyone effectively agrees, whether it is consistent with their ethical theories or not, that it is a good thing to shift one's goals from mere satisfactions to values. I don't think this is compatible with emotivism or prescriptivism; but I don't want to spend much time on that. I want to divide what Lonergan calls 'intellectual' and 'religious conversion' each into constituent parts, and to affix what I would regard as ecumenically appropriate labels on them. (i) 'Basic authenticity' has two components, a fundamental good will, and a fundamental intellectual openness (ii) the latter may be applied not only to matters of common sense and science, but to philosophical and metaphysical questions and issues (iii) Among these is the question whether God exists, whether the soul is immortal, or at least capable of surviving bodily death, and whether there is reasonable ground for accepting the teaching of any religious document or body. (iv) A thorough philosophical examination will result in the answer 'yes' to each of these four questions. Nothing is commoner among

intellectuals in our own time than denial of (iv); and assertion that the thoroughgoing exercise of rationality will tend to establish that God does not exist, that consciousness ceases with the death of the body and is never re-established, and that all claims that God has made a special revelation of the divine self, and of the divine intentions for and requirements of human beings, are false. It will not do to exclude from the outset such a view; one has to refute it by argument. (Atheistic rationalists deny this in one way, Classical Protestants in another; and it does not do to exclude *a limine* any discussion with such people by the very terminology one uses. Lonergan is not a Barthian.)

I believe that what Lonergan has to say about 'Person' in Christology is excellent systematics but poor communications. Not only uninstructed laypeople, but one Anglican theologian who specialized in patristics, inferred from what the Councils said that our Lord Jesus Christ is not a human person, and properly reacted with shock and disbelief.<sup>6</sup> (I admit Anglicans, as opposed to Catholic and Reformed Christians, are not apt to be good systematic theologians, but excel rather at the first three functional specialties, from which they try to move straight to the last.) One can answer succinctly, I think, that our Lord *is* a human person in one sense, that signified by ordinary linguistic usage, but doesn't *have* a human person in another, more technical, sense. To clarify the issue I will distinguish between 'person a', person in the modern sense, and 'person b', person in the sense at issue in the relevant councils of the Church. (The former is more relevant to 'communications', the eighth functional specialty; the latter to 'systematics', the seventh.)

Next I shall proceed to set out, more or less baldly, a number of theses:

(1) Not only is it perfectly orthodox to assert, but it is heretical to deny, that Our Lord is a human person a. (That is to say, he is and has everything that it takes to make him an individual human being; he has an 'individual human nature', as the ancient writers would put it.)

(2) Our Lord, though at once human and divine, both *is* one person a and *has* one person b --- from which it follows that, when the historical Jesus was conceived, a new person (a or b) was not created. (Being a divine person, a and b, he *became* a human person a, without *taking on* a human

6 Anthony Hanson was responsible, among other things, for authorship of that fine book, *The Wrath of the Lamb*.

person b, but merely a human *nature*. As I have said elsewhere, if I undergo the training, acquire the skills, am awarded the diploma, and take on the habits and dispositions, which together constitute me as a baker, I do not assume or take on a baker, but rather bakerhood.

(3) The divine identity (person b) of Jesus, as eternal Son of the eternal Father, does not prevent him from taking a human *nature* --- i.e., a bunch of characteristics which constitute an individual as a human person.

(4) To maintain that the eternal Son took on a human person (a or b), rather than an individual human nature which constituted him as a human person (a), is to imply that he has two persons, which is Nestorianism.

(5) Clever people sometimes deny that Nestorius was a Nestorian. I prescind from the question of whether he was or not. But his inability to say, in response to the challenge of Cyril of Alexandria, that Mary is the Mother of God, does commit him, when logically followed through, to Nestorianism.

If Mary is mother of Jesus, and Jesus is (in spite of what Arius said) really and truly God (or consubstantial with the Father, which is to say the same thing in technical language), then Mary is Mother of God. That she is his mother with respect to his human nature, but not with respect to his divine nature --- to say she was his mother with respect to his divine nature would be nonsense ---, does not affect the issue.

(6) Cyril of Alexandria's point is just that the babe born in the manger, later to be the man put to death on the cross, was *one and the same as* the eternal Son (Word) of God. (In other words, it is one individual, not merely two intimately associated with one another, who has the divine properties of eternity and creatorhood on the one hand, and the less or more dignified human properties of being born in a manger at a certain place and time, and being tortured to death not far away some thirty-three years later, on the other. As to the difference between A being intimately associated with B on the one hand, and A being one and the same as, or identical with, B, on the other --- it is by no means the same thing to claim that the blonde in the bikini is intimately associated with the favorite child of the chief of police, as to claim that they are one and the same.

(7) That Cyril may have been rather a nasty chap<sup>7</sup> is, perhaps

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7 If he was not personally involved in the scandalous business of the lynching of Hypatia by the Christian mob, he did nothing to prevent it; and at the Council of Ephesus, he was threatening to break the thumbs of those who disagreed with him. After his death,

unfortunately, not incompatible with his being a great theologian who had insight into the very essence of the Christian faith. As Christina Rossetti wrote: 'Enough for him whom cherubim/Worship night and day/ A breast full of milk/ And a manger full of hay'. In the words of another carol, 'Lo! Within a manger lies/ He who built the starry skies'.

I remain astounded by Lonergan's genius, both philosophical and theological, and find it no small matter to disagree with him, even on issues which are merely terminological. But I have given my reasons for doing so, for what they are worth.

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Theodoret, as climax to a paean of loathing, said that he feared Cyril would soon be back, since hell would not be able to put up with him.

## WHOLES AND HIERARCHIES

*David Oyler*

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IN A WHOLE that is not fully systematic, everything is not related to everything else, but everything is related to something that is related to something else, so that all the parts do not need to be interrelated. This permits an aggregate of elements and occurrences that in turn constitutes the potency of the whole to perform in relation to itself and to the other and to develop. Remotely it makes evolution possible. In such a whole it is possible to have structure and systematic processes without the whole being fully systematic. This permits organisms to live in situations which are not fully systematic. It also provides evolutionary gradients towards greater complexity, greater variability and greater flexibility.

This type of whole is not a system nor is it a set of fixed processes. Neither is it a structure where changes in one area necessarily have implications that radiate throughout the whole, though this can occur. This is because not all parts of the whole need to be engaged at any one time for it to function. Understanding such a whole takes us beyond determinism, systems theory and structuralism. Our contention is that organisms are such wholes. Organisms need to be understood holistically, as spontaneously integrating their parts in their behavior or performance, but these integrations are transient and not necessarily related to one another systematically. Neither are parts necessarily related to particular processes. Hierarchy theory, a variant of systems theory, with its notion of levels of organization can introduce unwarranted difficulties into understanding organisms. After providing an overview of the non-systematic whole, we will see how Lonergan's understanding of things and conjugates can be understood in a way that avoids these pitfalls. Though he evokes an understanding of hierarchical structure in his notions of conjugates organizing conjugates

and of higher systems and integrations, understanding the part-whole relationship as an inadequate distinction avoids ontological difficulties immanent in reductionism and in understanding causation as below upward and above downward.<sup>1</sup> There are key points in his thinking where the notion of emergent probability applied to developing organisms and developing intelligence and knowing requires an understanding of the whole as not fully systematic, though it is not explicitly acknowledged.<sup>2</sup> His terminology remains that of systems theory, though the situations discussed are neither systematic nor fully integrated.

With more complex organisms mutually self-mediating systems have evolved to support more flexible and complex behavior.

The respiratory system supplies fresh oxygen not merely to the lungs, but to the whole body. The digestive system supplies nutrition not merely to the digestive tract but to the whole body. The nervous system supplies control not merely to the nervous system but to the

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1 We will focus on the former. "Upward causation" is understood via a theory of emergence. The issues arise if one imagines separate levels and then tries to combine them. In emergence there is the prior situation and the emergent situation. The prior situation has the conditions for emergence. The post situation includes the existence of the emergent. Emergence is the coming to be of the emergent. The emergent is a more complex organization of elements in the prior situation. As such it is self-organizing and is one of the causes of emergence, the other being the prior conditions. In emergence there is a coming to be of an organizer/organized where each is inadequately distinct from the other. There are three types of downward causation. The first occurs where organized processes create elements which later become organized in other processes. These processes can be more or less complex than the originating process. The second is the general relation of organizer/organized. The third is when a process ends, but some of its components continue to function. They become transformed and then change their role to some extent the next time the process occurs. Formation of memories after an experience where these memories inform the next experience of a similar type is an example. The intent of this discussion is to eliminate the need for the metaphor of levels by transforming these notions of upward and downward causation into explanatory terms compatible with science. This would seem to be compatible with a mature metaphysics which does not rely on images and is fully explanatory.

2 The first is in his discussion of development in *Insight* (p. 490) where the manifold is an operator. The second is after the quote below from "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer" where he acknowledges that other things are going on besides mutual self-mediation including the creation of currently non-systematized elements that will be integrated in future developments. He notes that "...there are anticipatory developments that have no great utility at any particular given stage but are extremely useful later on....In other words, there is something more to the organism than mutual mediation." (p. 167) The third is the reference at the end of this paper where there is a clear conflict in the use of the notion of integration and the notion of manifold to describe the same thing. The resolution is to consider the 'integration' as a state that is more or less integrated, like a state of affairs or a situation. Applied to consciousness we can understand it as an operational situation.

whole body. And the muscles supply locomotion not merely to the muscles but to the whole body. The result is something that has fresh oxygen and is nourished, is under control and is moving, because you have a number of immediate centers ....and the centers make the whole, giving the whole all the properties of each of the centers of immediacy.<sup>3</sup>

The notion of mutual self-mediation is holistic. Since the systems yield different states at different times in different situations they are understood statistically as well as in terms of their core sets of possible interrelations.

Loneragan distinguishes primary and secondary determinations. Loosely put, primary determinations are basic relationships. Secondary determinations regard the way the relationships occur. The concrete occurrences have variations for which the primary relationships as abstract do not account. So we can have a scientific model of how satellites orbit a body in space which provides the primary relationships, but the actual orbits of distinct bodies vary from the model.<sup>4</sup> These variances provide the secondary relationships. There is no model which accounts systematically for the variances. The existence of the satellites and the events of their orbits are understood statistically.

If we consider an organism the situation is more complex. With mutually self-mediating systems not only do we have the case of the secondary determinations of the systems, but we need to address the interrelationships of the systems to one another. The divergence of the systems from the systematic can yield various states within a range that constitutes species specific behavior. So we can have flexible sets of schemes of recurrence that define the behavioral range of ducks and coyotes, for example.

In the higher organisms' behavior cycles, not only do we have the different motivational cycles such as those associated with mating, eating and play, but we have the diurnal cycles of sleeping and waking. Within

3 Bernard Lonergan, "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer" in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, Vol. 6, eds. R. Croken, F. E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 165.

4 A model is a set of terms and relations that can be applied to explain the concrete and particular or numerous. What is explained is particular (though it may be a particular group). Models can be understood analogically when they are transposed from one area of inquiry to another, for example Piaget's use of the mathematical notion of groups. Other types of models can have imaginative components - i.e. a model of a building and these may have heuristic value. However, our focus is explanatory models.

sleep we have other cycles such as deep sleep and REM sleep which are not fully understood. As persons we typically assume that our freedom is the primary operator in determining what we do, at least in the immediate situation. However, if we acknowledge that we perform within a context, the context can be invoked either via our free operations or other sources. (The person may think that the context is set by the "objective situation," but we are assuming a fully intellectually converted "universal" viewpoint as the context for our discussion). The other sources can be either conscious or non-conscious.

If we consider the fight or flight response, the source is conscious. There is a perceived threat. All major systems are transformed via a stereotypical response which enables both fight or flight. Which is invoked depends on the animal's decision. The fact that either is possible, points to the openness of the organism's state and indicates that self actualization, this time through decision, is what completes the process. This is a basic tenet of Kurt Goldstein's holism. The organism is structured for self actualization. It spontaneously organizes itself as a whole engaged in performances that constitute what it is. Polanyi terms these comprehensive acts. For Lonergan these would include the conjugate forms of behavior that distinguish one species from another.

In the fight or flight situation, both the key operator of performance and the operator that invokes the context for performance are conscious. This is not always the case. For example, events in the immune system can influence mood via peptides which are utilized throughout the body. Their somatic release can activate neural activity via the pituitary pathway which bypasses the blood-brain barrier so that emotions can have visceral as well as neural origins. So when we are ill or injured our mood may become depressed and we become more inactive.

Falling asleep is another type of case, for here our fundamental state changes from full consciousness to the states of the sleep cycle. One theory of sleep is that it permits "restorative" functions to occur by permitting neural networks to process independently of the wider context and correlative integrations required for conscious performance. The organism is still a whole, but not fully integrated as it proceeds through the different cyclic stages of sleep. The operations that lead to us falling asleep and waking up are not conscious. The fact that consciousness does not initiate itself leads

to the understanding that consciousness per se is not free,; rather, freedom is conscious.

In mammals, what we have are non-systematic wholes where at one time one mode of behavior is predominant and at another time another mode, and they do not need to be interrelated other than that they are activities of the same thing. Likewise, there can be different types of states while awake where self-actualization is possible and while asleep where it is not. In these cases different systems become dominant to set the context for performance or non-performance.

In this holistic view the major systems are complementary with sometimes one taking more of a leading role and sometimes another. For example, though the neural system provides a different means of integration of operations than biochemically based systems, it utilizes the biochemical for neural transmission and can itself be subject to biochemical regulation that influences the organism's behavior. In short, there are complex interactions across the mutually self-mediating systems that are literally parts of the comprehensive processes or sets of conjugates that constitute behavior.

The notion of "part" in the distinction of wholes and parts is suggestive, for a part, as a part of a process, is functional. It does something, and the something that it does can be distinct from the nature of the part itself. If we turn to understanding parts, we can see that there can be an independence of function from how it is realized. The same thing can be done in different ways. Likewise, the same thing or part can be used in different ways. The first is expressed in the system notion of equifinality and the latter in the notion of equipotentiality. Thus, it is possible that both grey parrots and chimpanzees have insights, yet they are not animals of the same class. Thus, we have a convergence of a type of form from divergent sources. This is an instance of equifinality. On the other hand, nails, like atoms or neurons, can be used within a variety of structures. This is an illustration of equipotentiality. The potential for manifolds to be organized into different organizations yielding different kinds of things rests on equipotentiality. We see equipotentiality within the organism in the variety of coordinated actions of populations on other populations that yield disparate behaviors.

In his notion of the thing and in his metaphysics, Lonergan lays out a view of the organism that incorporates aspects of hierarchy theory.

In a hierarchical organization lower levels of organization are

themselves organized into higher levels where the higher levels, as organizations of the lower, are more complex. A common example is, letters are organized into words, words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, and so on. With science we have physical entities or organizations found in chemicals, biochemicals providing an organization of chemical entities which can themselves be organized within cells. Cells are organized by organs, organs by the body, and so on.

What relations obtain among the levels? This is where the key philosophical discussion and difference occur. If the higher organizes the lower, then the relation is of organizer to organized. Higher level principles of organization are postulated which can cause changes on lower levels of organization. We can conceive of "above downward" causality for example. Conversely there is "below upwards" causality. There are at least three instances. The first is the most straightforward where the higher organization is what it is because of the parts that make it up. The higher can be explained reductively in terms of the lower. Levels of computer languages in their instantiation in a machine can be understood this way. (Use of computer languages cannot be. But that is a more complex discussion for another day.) Higher level languages organize lower level commands in general tasks which can be fully articulated in both languages. It is just that the lower language is more cumbersome. Likewise, the notion of theoretic reduction trades on the same relationships. It is granted that chemistry and biology are necessary today to understand organisms, but that is only because physics is underdeveloped. Once physics is mature, it will be able to explain everything. This type of reductionism is materialistic.

The model of levels of organization is also used as a context for the mind-body, matter-spirit, and brain-consciousness discussions. Is the mind the brain? The answer is "No" if they are different levels of organization and the mind is a higher level. The mind may not be distinct from the brain but it is something more. The answer is "Yes" if they are not different levels. Identity theory, interactionism, psycho-physical parallelism and other mind-brain theories all can be cast in terms of hierarchy theory.

The discussion of levels can be ontological. If levels of organization exist, they are ontological in the sense that at some point we get to the ultimate levels of organization in terms of which everything else is organized. We find a parallel structure in the order of knowledge, where Lonergan, perhaps,

has the best formulation. If we understand physics, the things understood by physics alone are a coincidental manifold to chemistry. As such they provide a potency for organizations that cannot be explained by physics alone. This possibility is recurrent as one moves from chemistry to biology to psychology to ethnology and to the human sciences.

For Lonergan this pattern is not recurrent within things, since a thing is a unity-identity-whole where all aspects of the thing pertain to the thing. Thus, there cannot be things within things which means that things are not organizations of other things. One cannot, then, explain an animal in terms of physics alone because an animal is not a thing specific to physics. It is not an atom or an electron. On the other hand, there are sciences such as biophysics which understand the animal in terms of the physics of an animal. This is a complementary, partial understanding of the animal which fills out the anticipated full explanation that would draw on multiple sciences.

Lonergan does approach a hierarchical understanding of levels when understanding the conjugate forms of an organism. Higher conjugates can be integrations of lower conjugates since the lower conjugates, as coincidental, leave open the possibility of being organized in ways that do not transform them, but that actualize their possibilities of being related to other conjugates.<sup>5</sup>

In general, conjugates of conjugates are in the relation of organization to organized. Further, conjugate acts are temporal wholes where there is a unity of process over time. The process has parts. The parts and the whole are a single organization.<sup>6</sup> Though they can be distinguished, that distinction

5 If we consider the ontology of organisms in terms of parts and wholes the relation of the sciences to one another becomes just another instance of parts being open to organization. It is analogous to the ontology of the organism, but not the same. The ontology of the organism evolved. It did not evolve from "below upwards", but holistically via "internal" evolutionary differentiation. Evolution occurred within wholes, as does development, though they differ in other respects of course. The ontology of organisms then, becomes one of the types of parts that evolved and survived and their manner of organization. With major moves, such as the evolution of the neuron and the associated emergence of consciousness, new potencies arose. The shift from expression to sign with the concomitant biological and psychological changes is another instance. The ontology of parts makes bioengineering easier to assimilate. An ontology based on a "natural hierarchy" would require a full theory of artifacts and then an interrelation of that with the basic scientific principles immanent in the organism.

6 This single organization is extremely complex. The introduction of hierarchy theory is one means of handling the complexity by distinguishing levels. While there can be organizations of organizations ... of organizations, concretely there is only one organization

is inadequate. When considered in isolation, one can err and consider the part as fully distinct from the whole, which is what the reductionist does, at least tacitly. On the other hand, if we consider how the lower conjugates survive or endure, they either survive as part of a process or as sometimes independent of any process so they can be organized into a process. If they survive as part of a process, then there is not a higher and lower level of organization but simply an organization of parts where the parts are inadequately distinct from the organization. Notionally we can distinguish them, but concretely they are a whole. If they exist for a time independently of any process then we have an instance of the non-systematic nature of the whole where there is potency for further integration.

The discussion of higher and lower is carried over to higher and lower systems, specifically the organic, the neural, the psychic and the conscious. The key here is to acknowledge that these exhibit mutual self-mediation insofar as processes are distinct and are inadequately distinct insofar as there are organizations of organizations. Failure to do so results in issues in the relation of mind and body which can never be resolved if mind and body are considered adequately distinct. Likewise, the reductionist can never reassemble the organism from its disaggregated parts without implicitly reintroducing the organization he or she denies. So the content as seen integrates wavelengths of light, neural transmitters, neural dynamics and consciousness at a minimum. An understanding of all the types of systematic processes is required to understand it.

Also, consciousness, though the highest of these integrations, is not always the highest operative integration. We noted that different systems play different roles at different times where, as in sleep, the organic and the neural may take precedence over consciousness. However, if one considers the comprehensive acts and performances of an organism, it is the higher integration that comprises the conjugate forms that differentiate species from one another.

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with the sub-organizations inadequately distinguished. Imagination is not up to the task and we must resort to concepts and virtual images. The notion of nested contexts is one helpful notion as is the symbolization of a mathematical equation with expressions within expressions. But in a complex neurodynamic process these would be inadequate given the reciprocal relations and transformations occurring across neuronal groups. The bottom line is that nothing suffices except the understanding itself. However, in most cases it has not been achieved and we are left hanging – or we fill it in with a metaphor or something else that is simpler which is where we make our mistake.

Our contention is that the organism is a non-systematic whole, not a hierarchical system. There are multiple systematic integrations within the whole. While these may be understood in terms of organic, psychic and conscious functioning, these are inadequately distinct and are not fully systematic. In the lower organisms, including the less complex mammals, we find fairly regular motivational cycles and behaviors that actualize them. The non-systematic in these cases approaches the minimal flexibility immanent in the secondary determinations of primary relations where the primary relations are understood as comprising a fairly invariant development and fairly stable developmental stages and life cycles. In humans, though, we find a major flexibility immanent in the fact that different systems may not themselves be fully related systematically. We find this type of flexibility in Lonergan's notion of the aggregate as operator in development, and most poignantly in his view of man as "...the being in whom the highest level of integration is, not a static system, nor some dynamic system, but a variable manifold of dynamic systems."<sup>7</sup> In this instance, "integration" seems more like a state with situational aspects where the systematic is found in the different parts of the manifold and the non-systematic in their coincidence. If so, we find human consciousness as a non-systematic whole open to further integrations that enable each of us to be a species unto ourselves.

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7 Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, Vol. 3, eds. F. E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 532.



## SELF-APPROPRIATING THE INNER PARTS<sup>1</sup>

Philip McShane  
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"One of the temptations of having a mind is to try using it alone to solve the mystery of its own nature. Philosophers have attempted this since time immemorial.... At the 'brain of the matter' is the most complicated arrangement in the known universe. To understand it will take us from philosophy to embryology, in a curious but necessary leap."<sup>2</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

TO SOME READERS a definite question may already be raised by that quotation: in what way is a venture into neuro-anatomy etc part of self-appropriation? It certainly is a long way from, say, the elementary pointers of chapter 9 of *Insight*. Yes, it seems a legitimate project when put in the conclusion of chapter 15: it gives a lift to the heuristics of botany, zoology, psychology. But it does not seem to be an essential of self-appropriation, nor of the standard type of self-appropriation that we have become accustomed to in the tradition associated with Lonergan. This, I suspect, is a view that in fact would be shared by almost all of my readers. I think myself that it is a limited and limiting view. Let me see if I can turn your thinking towards a larger view.

Now I cannot help adding a second, primary turn, to your thinking

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1 I note that the title is abbreviated from that of its projected location in an emergent work, a series of 41 essays, *Field Nocturnes*, that are to be a 300-page commentary on the single paragraph of *Insight* 464[489] which starts "Study of the organism begins....". The work will be available on the usual website: [www.philipmcshane.ca](http://www.philipmcshane.ca). This little essay stands on its own as making some elementary points regarding the future reading of *Insight*. The essay's title in the series is "Field Nocturnes 12: Self-Appropriating the Inner Parts", recalling the second sentence of the paragraph to which I referred, "a first step is a descriptive differentiation of different parts and, since, most of the parts are inside...."

2 Gerald M. Edelman, *Air, Brilliant Fire. On the Matter of the Mind* (Basic Books, Harper and Row, 1992), 31. See, however, the comment below, at note 18.

about this matter. But I shall not do so immediately, apart from mentioning it. It is the larger turn that is the collaborative functional recycling process. Then the "let me see if I can" would be shifted uncomfortably but efficiently into the operations of the second half of page 250 of *Method in Theology*. Let us leave it at that until section 2: let us at most think of ourselves as doing an impoverished version of the exercise of dialectic that aims at helping us along in a relatively commonsense fashion. We have a shot at that in the following first section. In section 2, as I say, we come back to the larger turn. In section 3 we venture further in fantasy. The Epilogue locates the compact presentation in the fuller project.

### 1. SELF- APPROPRIATING MY BRAIN

Perhaps we might start by going back to that first page of chapter 1 of *Insight*, to Archimedes in the bath. We are being introduced in an elementary fashion to the mind-leap of Archimedes, but notice now that we are also introduced to his leap of enthusiasm and to his leap out of the bath. Furthermore, we are being introduced thus to ourselves: is not that the whole point, pointing, of the book? But that whole pointing is not obvious, and is not immediate. Lonergan is caught in a problem that was to repeat itself in his old age, when he began working towards a primer in economics.<sup>3</sup> So, the larger invitation is present right from that first page, but a first reading is possible where, at best, the self is read only in the context of a culture of self-description. One adds to that descriptive perspective something like an initial meaning for a scientific pursuit.<sup>4</sup> I do not wish to enlarge here on the danger of that initial meaning. For people unfamiliar with scientific thinking, the initial meaning can too easily be locked into a *haute vulgarisation*, even into patterns of "pseudo-metaphysics myth-making."<sup>5</sup> The larger enterprise lurking in the book has, in that shrunken context, to be somehow tamed, so that, for instance, the bridge<sup>6</sup> of chapter 5, and the build up to it, is replaced by a

3 I consider this problem in the second chapter of the third part of Pierrot Lambert and Philip McShane, *Bernard Lonergan: His Life and Leading Ideas*, a work that is to appear in English and French in 2010.

4 See *Insight*, 544[567] at note 5. I note that throughout I thus give references to both editions of *Insight*.

5 *Insight*, 505[528]. On *Haute Vulgarization* see Lonergan, *Complete Works*, vol. 2, 121, 155.

6 The notions of space and time "form a natural bridge over which we may advance from our examination of science to an examination of common sense" (first paragraph of

by-pass such that one manages not be discomforted by the final sentence of chapter 7: "May we note, before concluding that, while common sense relates things to us, our account of common sense relates it to its neural basis and relates aggregates and successions of instances of common sense to one another". But the larger challenge bubbles out explicitly, perhaps a surprise to many readers, at the beginning of the section on genetic method in chapter 15 of the book, and it becomes brutally explicit in the section of chapter 16 entitled "The Unity of a Concrete Being". It is worth quoting here Lonergan's two explicit pointings:

[1] "To reveal the heuristic significance of the notion of development, and to prepare our statement of the integral heuristic structure that we have named metaphysics, attention must now be directed to genetic method."<sup>7</sup>

[2] "So it comes about that the extroverted subject visualizing extensions and experiencing duration gives place to the subject oriented to the objective of the unrestricted desire to know and affirming beings differentiated by certain conjugate potencies, forms, and acts grounding certain laws and frequencies."<sup>8</sup>

The fifty odd pages between these two explicit pointers sketch a climb foreign both to present science and to present philosophy. What might I say here, briefly, of their significance, that might be of effective use to readers? The key is in the word *effective* and in helping towards grasping, in popular doctrinal terms, its long-term methodological meaning. The difficulty, obviously, is that the serious doctrinal grip comes only through the mediation of such enterprises as I mention in note 1, a note indeed that must, then, be supplemented by the tasks lurking in notes 31, 32, and 34 below.

The problem and the long climb are expressed compactly in a meaning for *Standard Model* that is part of the title *Lonergan's Standard Model of Effective Global Inquiry*.<sup>9</sup> What do I mean by *Standard Model*? It is a common name for

*Insight*, chapter 5). Without that sophistication, backed by the aggreformic infolding that is the main topic of the previous chapters, one is liable to be the victim of "the viewpoint of sensitive extroversion" (*Insight* 513[537]) the operative "terms of space and time are mere intrusions of the imagination" (*Insight* 379[404]). See further, note 17 below.

<sup>7</sup> *Insight*, 458[484].

<sup>8</sup> *Insight* 517[534]. I regularly speak of the movement here, the complex existential explanatory conversion, as the "*come-about*".

<sup>9</sup> The book (2007) is available on the usual website. I would note here that, while the *Standard Model* of the next century is identified there with a sublation of the foundational perspective expressed in *Method in Theology*, and mention is made of its eschatological

the present orthodox perspective in physics.<sup>10</sup>

The standard model is operative as a powerful explanatory perspective throughout present physics, and here it is useful to attend to that zone of physics that is to be analogous to functional research: normal research as it is carried out in those cyclotronic centres of massive experimental competence. The processes of that research make clear that the experimental competence is controlled both in its techniques and in its findings by theoretic competence in the standard model. Otherwise a researcher is not in the ball-park of detecting anomalies, signs of future shifts of theory or of neglected possibilities in present theory.<sup>11</sup>

So, the present essay might be considered as compact descriptive research pointing to anomalous neglect of elements in the standard-model component of *Insight*.<sup>12</sup> It points to functionally distinct tasks for many selves component, I am only slowly coming to grips with the centrality to the operative model of an eschatological heuristic such as is intimated in notes 31 and 32 below. A fuller view of the cycling standard model's content of UV + GS (a universal viewpoint and a genetic systematics) is available on the website in *Prehumous 11* "Fostering Functional Specialization".

10 There are other reachings at present that are not within the genetic heuristic of that model. My opinion of them coincides with that given in the following quotation: "The next step in creating a more unified theory of the basic interactions will probably be much more difficult. All the major theoretical developments of the last twenty years, such as grand unification, supergravity, and supersymmetry string theory, are almost completely separate from experience. There is great danger that theoreticians may get lost in pure speculations." (L.O'Reaferthaigh and N.Straumann, "Group Theory: Origins and Modern Development", *Reviews of Modern Physics*, 72(2000), 15.

11 An illustration from theology would be more in tune with the present audience than one from physics. So, for example, a competence in Lonergan's life-long searchings regarding the exigence that is the natural desire for God is key to noticing his identification, in thesis 12 of 1964 version of *The Incarnate Word*, of the "ineffable" nature of the natural desire. The noticing is a function of functional research. How is the anomalous shift to be lifted towards street-value? The noticing leads to efforts of interpreters, and so on round the cycle of global collaboration.

The illustration is apt in the present essay, in that what is noticed here is an inner part of the brain dynamic that needs to be considered aggreformically in the full perspective of finitude's "dynamic joy and zeal" (*Insight* 700[722]).

12 I would note that my pointing here meshes with the work on neuroscience of three other searchers, William Mathews and David Oyler and William Zanardi. In different ways they envisage the zone as requiring long-term commitments of interpreters, historians, etc. They have delivered papers on the topic at recent Lonergan Conferences in Los Angeles and Boston. They carry forward, implicitly, the need of a subulating implementation of the powerful but neglected hermeneutics expressed by Lonergan in chapter 17 of *Insight*, but that is a topic for another day. I think too of the interest in what I might call chemodynamics expressed by people with apparently diverse interests: Patrick Byrne's focus on the chemical dynamics of ethics; Paul St.Amour's cosmological investigations. No doubt there are others, from whom I would like to hear.

during the next millenia, but it also points to each present self meeting the issue discerningly, in the context of talent, time, strategic job-holding. An increasing number of selves need to face the effort "to prepare our statement of the integral heuristic structure that we have named metaphysics."<sup>13</sup> For some, that statement may be simply the expression of a hope, a change of ethos, a shadow of later standard-model communications.

The ethos, a pick-up of the mood of the searching Lonergan of 1953, is very important. It is a matter of an aesthetic apprehension of missed opportunities. "Man is nature's priest, and nature is God's silent communing with man,"<sup>14</sup> and talk of brains and techniques such as MRI and PET open doors to a fresh empiricism of our inner cosmic loneliness. "The aesthetic apprehension of the group's origin and story become operative whenever the group debates, judges, evaluates, decides or acts - and especially in a crisis."<sup>15</sup> And we have here a crisis.<sup>16</sup> Any self can begin to be a point of discontinuity with present philosophic culture. An accumulation of such points can ground the shift from a Poisson distribution of rare occurrences to the emergence of Bell-curve success.

We turn to that issue of statistics in the next section, but perhaps I should conclude here on a practical note. The new "turn to the subject" is by no means an easy matter. It gradually brings forth, with new refinements, the problems of objectivity associated with "out-there" and "in-here", with imaging and "bodies."<sup>17</sup> In first efforts, those problems will not be evident: it will be a matter of facing the challenge of the invitation "Study of the organism begins" by using standard texts on neuroanatomy. Such texts

13 *Insight*, 458[484].

14 Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, University of Toronto Press, 1993, 225.

15 *Ibid.*, 230.

16 I enlarge on the crisis, especially regarding aggregism and objectivity in psychology, in the series *Field Nocturnes*. But two questions of immediate interest to Lonergan students would be: where does the drive towards self's-brain-appropriation described here leave [1] phenomenology and [2] the debates about feelings within Lonergan studies?

17 To the obvious contexts of *Insight* I would add the context of Thomas' peculiar start to his considerations God in the First Part of *Summa Theologica* (Q.3, a.1): "Is God a Body?". Add the Trinitarian context of processional unity from *Contra Gentiles* 4: 11. Both these contexts are central to the pointers of section 3 below, especially notes 31 and 32. There is not only the very human problem of the illusion of size as of consequence, but also the disorientation of a positive view of energy as against Lonergan's view of energy - micro and galactic - as dispersiveness needing sequences of formal infoldings. But one must hold also to the cosmic dynamic zeal at the heart of energy: see the concluding line of *Insight* 700[722].

are generally not helpful in their entrapment in reductionist tendencies, information theory jargon, anti-genetic stances. The text I use in the series of essays mentioned is among such flawed texts: there does not exist the equivalent of Lonergan's recommended Lindsay and Margenau.<sup>18</sup> It is the task of a later culture to bring forth such texts in botany and psychology, spanning later school grades and post-graduate directives.

## 2. SELVES APPROPRIATING A STANDARD MODEL

The challenge expressed compactly in this section can be located neatly by recalling paragraph of *Insight* that speaks of a particular probability-discontinuity. "Now a sum of a set of proper fractions,  $p, q, r, \dots$  is always greater than the product of the same fractions. But probability is a proper fraction. It follows that, when the prior conditions for the functioning of a scheme of recurrence are satisfied, then the probability of the combination of events, constitutive of the scheme, leaps from a product of fractions to a sum of fractions."<sup>19</sup>

I do not wish here to get into explanatory details about this. Rather, I wish for a little imaginative leaping. There is, in *Insight*, the problem of implementation and of cosmopolis: a solitary builds his foundational ark: sharing the ark as the waters of decline continue to rise, that is a matter of multiplying very tiny fractions. "The concrete intelligibility of Space and Time grounds the possibility of those simultaneous multiplicities named

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18 *Foundations of Physics*, with many paperback editions, still stands as a remarkable work, not easily replaced. I usually recommend supplementing it with the more recent Ian D. Lawrie, *A Grand Tour of Theoretical Physics* (Institute of Physics Publishing, Bristol and Philadelphia, paperback, 1998). Neither of these are light or popular reading, of which there is a present surge in the area. The same surge, with a lag, is occurring in the neurosciences. The works of Gerald Edelman, such as the one cited at note 2, fall into that category. The task here requires that one venture into the serious scientific effort, however bad its heuristic and its expression is. The beginners' book I use - *Neuroscience. Exploring the Brain*, M.F.Bear, B.W.Connors, M.A.Paradiso (Lipincott, Williams and Wilkins, 2001) - is by no means a Lindsay and Margenau, but it is a convenient start. The reach must be to be luminously at home in one's own amygdala and mid-brain, one's ATP and cytogates. Part of that at-homeness is to be luminous about one's limited explanation at lower levels of science: how competent is one on the dynamics of protein-folding involved in the cilia-movements of one's hearing? There is a profound problem here of aggreformism and a mythic thinking that would allow description at a higher level - especially if it is aesthetically enriched - to bluff forward as explanatory. So, there can be something like enthusiastic talk of sonata form but no serious grip on the concrete dynamics of any sonata.

19 *Insight*, 121[144].

situations."<sup>20</sup> So, the solitary Lonergan gets to display models of his ark in a continuum of Roman situations and a scattering of other space-time venues. He was not happy at that period about either the reach or the effectiveness of his model, and the ferment of his discontent towards a sublating model is a well-known story. The sublating model was eventually conceived as a recurrence-scheme yielding "cumulative and progressive results".<sup>21</sup>

But what of the satisfying conditions? The sublating model, in its global operation, seems a utopia. "Is my proposal utopian? It asks merely for creativity, for an interdisciplinary theory that at first will be denounced as absurd, then will be admitted to be true but obvious and insignificant, and perhaps finally be regarded as so important that its adversaries will claim that they themselves discovered it."<sup>22</sup> Such a sequence of receptions will, I surmise, be an actuality of this century. The model is fosterfather Lonergan's self-appropriated brain's child, but the reality is to be mothered by history.<sup>23</sup> The satisfying conditions are emergent in the present muddles and confusions of every contemporary zone of global investigation and care. But they look to a complex multi-faceted paradigm shift, especially as they bubble in the volcanic mess of present political economics. It would seem that the fractional probabilities are larger in such harmless zones as musicology and literary studies, or in a popular zone like green-party or feminist-ecological movements.<sup>24</sup>

Still, the followers of Lonergan have an edge in the aggregate of unconnected fractional probabilities: an initial meaning of the eventual global achievement sits there, awaiting the effective attention of his

20 *Insight*, 172[195].

21 *Method in Theology*, 4.

22 B.Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," *A Third Collection*, edited by F.E.Crowe (Paulist Press, New York, 1985), 108. The article is also in Lonergan, *Macroeconomic Dynamics: An Essay in Circulation Analysis*, edited by F.G.Lawrence, P.H.Byrne and C.C. Hefling, Jr.(University of Toronto Press, 1999), 106.

23 I have treated this topic in chapter one of *Method in Theology: Revisions and Implementations*, 2006, available on the usual website.

24 Arne Noess, Founder of a fundamental ecological movement and of the journal *The Ecologist*, makes the point in "Deep Ecology and Ultimate Premises", *The Ecologist*, 18, 1988, 131. On musicology, see chapter 2 of my *The Shaping of the Foundations* (University of Press of America), 1974. On literary studies see chapter 5 of *Lonergan's Challenge to the University and the Economy* (University Press of America, 1979). Both these books are available on the usual website. On functional specialization in law, see chapter 8 of Bruce Anderson, *Discovery in Legal Decision-Making* (Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht,1996). On feminist movements see Alessandra Gillis Drage, *Thinking Woman* (Axial Publishing, 2006), chapters 11 and 12.

disciples. "It asks merely for creativity", but that creativity is a massive struggle of fantasy. What if *Method in Theology* was and is a poor shot at an initial meaning of something that is to blossom, in a hundred years or so, into a global omnidisciplinary collaboration whose elders' talk would break into the polite cover-ups and spins of world-bodies like the UN, the World Bank? "Doctrines that are embarrassing will not be mentioned in polite company," but a foundational global elderhood of transdisciplinary women and men would lift green and Gaia movements into a Bell-curve statistics of pressure on world business, world hunger, world inequalities. There is a beckoning here that is 13.7 billion years old, a call of will that is 7 million years old, lifted recently<sup>25</sup> to an incarnational pre-cosmopolis that shifts massively the statistics of willing so that "good will wills the order of the universe, and so it wills with that orders dynamic joy and zeal."<sup>26</sup>

### 3. REACHING FOR THE SEEDS OF THE ESCHATON

"In that beckoning we discern not only the ground of our hope but also the cosmic dimension in the new creation of all things in Christ Jesus our Lord."<sup>27</sup> But before going on to muse over discerning the ground of our hope in the self-appropriation of brain, let me pull in a milder reaching from another context. So I quote from a reaching presented at an Australian Lonergan Conference in 2007:

"By a new global culture I mean a culture that is established in the scientific mode invented by Lonergan in his creative leap of February

25 A full heuristic perspective helps. The past stretches back 13.7 billion years. Estimates of the sun's story allow for at least another 2 or 3 billion years of present human conditions, not taking into account travels beyond the solar system with concomitant adaptations. The emergence of the human predates the Incarnation merely by a few million years.

26 *Insight*, 700[720].

27 B. Lonergan, "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections", *A Third Collection*, 94.

I am reaching in this short section for compact suggestiveness. Eschatology has been a focus of my attention for at least twenty years. I resonate with Rahner's last public address - I think in February 1984 - when he lamented the absence of a serious contemporary eschatology. But there is too much to suggest here. Think, for instance, of a brain-including reading of *mind* in those two key invitations to cherish and make our own the mind of Jesus (1 Cor 2: 16; Phil 1: 5). Think of the inclusion of brain in the eschatological reach for a Big concentrated Clasp (see notes 31 and 32): "the universe can bring forth its own unity in the concentrated form of a single intelligent view" (*Insight*, 520[544]), an eternally brain-viewing Community, mysteriously incomplete and genetic.

1965, when he conceived of a functional collaboration in the global search for progress. In Christian terms one might see him as bracketing Paul's hymn to charity of *First Corinthians*, chapter 13, with a sublation of the two bracketing chapters, 12 and 14, with a refinement of interpretation, a maturing of thinking: "All do not interpret, do they?" (12: 30); "in your thinking be mature" (14: 20). But to that light-weight reading of a parallel in scripture there is to be added the deeper perspective of the effective unity of the mission of Jesus as it seeds the efficient unity of a human science. "It is quite legitimate to seek in the efficient cause of the science, that is, in the scientist, the reason why a science forms a unified whole."<sup>28</sup> And that efficiency places the global solution to Plato's ancient problem of the control of urban meaning in Lonergan's final identification of the human component of Cosmopolis.<sup>29</sup> Functional collaboration is to replace eventually the long muddled haphazard effort of thinking effectively forward in history."<sup>30</sup>

That reaching for a strange recontextualization of Paul's hymn to charity, is a contextualization in a new global culture that would gladden Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's heart: "Lord Jesus Christ, you truly contain within your gentleness, within your humanity, all the unyielding immensity and grandeur of the world. And it is because of this, it is because there exists in you this ineffable synthesis of what our human thought and experience would never have dared to join together in order to adore them - element and totality, the one and the many, mind and matter, the infinite and the person; it is because of the indefinable contours which this complexity gives to your appearance and to your activity, that my heart, enarmoured of cosmic reality, gives itself passionately to you."<sup>31</sup>

28 B. Lonergan, *Topics in Education* (University of Toronto Press, 1993), 160.

29 In the second half of *Joistings* 22 I discuss the manner in which the characteristics of Cosmopolis are realized in the strategy of functional specialization.

30 The conference was organized by Professor Neil Ormerod and he is in process of publishing the papers. For the present, the paper quoted, "Insight Within a New Global Culture", is available on the usual website, [www.philipmcshane.ca](http://www.philipmcshane.ca), Field Nocturnes Cantower 50.

31 Quoted in Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Writings Selected with an Introduction*, Ursula King (Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, 1999), 53. The quotation is from *Writings in Time of War* (Harper and Row, New York, 1968, 69). The mood and struggle of Chardin provides an existential and prayerfilled context for the challenge left abruptly here in my final paragraph of this section. How are we to replace the muddled struggles of, say, Thomas and Chardin? There is the Big Bang. How are we to slowly come to envisage, not a Big Crunch, but a Big Clasp, in which "element and totality, the one and the many, mind and matter" neurolink with the Big Brain of the Incarnate Word in a brain-shared mesh of billions of humans, trees in an eternal nerve-forest, individually circumincessionally (see Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, University of Toronto Press, 2007, 509-513) named

But the reach I speak of is the slow luminous climb through the third stage of meaning, mediated by functional cyclings of global collaboration, that would mustard-seed the distant utopia of finitude's eschatological meshing into *Theoria* in a long series of leaps from initial meanings of Old or New Testaments. That series would slowly lift the self-meaning of Chardin's enarmoured heart or the heart of *Roman's* 5: 5 into the world invisible of the "come-about." The "come-about" is to an ever-incomplete aspiring of the foundational elders reaching in prayer for an imaging of "their destiny."<sup>32</sup>

The reach I speak of is for a new eschatology so desperately needed in these coming millennia. But it must begin with the foundational self-appropriation of our brains. And, providentially, the pressures towards such a foundational effort, the conditions for the recurrence-schemes it involves, are present in crises of neurodynamics, genetics, psychology, linguistics, that are erupting in the simmering volcano of contemporary technologies.

#### 4.EPILOGUE

It seems to me important to make, at this stage, the compact statement of the article.<sup>33</sup> *Insight* emerged in a solitude reaching way beyond the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and its success depended, paradoxically, on recurrence-schemes of which its author had no notion at the time. As we flounder into a new millennium of terror and hunger, the conditions are being grimly fulfilled

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and cherished? "I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it" (*Revelations*, 2:17). We can only begin, in our time, by cherishing the genetic neurodynamics of the naming of water that Annie Sullivan made possible for Helen Keller.

32 *Method in Theology*, 292. As the previous note indicates, the imaging is to be a slow climb through the analogies of nature. We are here up against issues of fantasy and of the humble struggle for explanatory invisibility. It brings to mind Lonergan efforts at these in another context, reaching for the "difference between high civilization and primitive gardening. But we are not there yet. And for society to progress towards that or any other goal, it must fulfil one condition. It cannot be a titanothore, a beast with a three-ton body and a ten-ounce brain" (*For A New Political Economy*, 20). So, for example, we have left the voicings of the primitive garden to mesh brains cellophonically in a global village: might this give pointers towards a Big Clasp?

33 A simple analogy helps here in sensing the need for a fuller standard model. It is of enormous help to have a heuristic grip on the nature of the adult animal when studying the processes towards that adulthood. So, some heuristic grip on the brain-seeded Eschaton gives a key lift to what I call the Standard Model. An initial context for the reaching is Charles Hefling Jr.'s essay on chapter 20 of *Insight in Lonergan's Hermeneutics. Its Development and Application*, edited by Sean E. McEvenue and Ben F.Meyer (The Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C.), 1989.

for a fresh global effort at implementing his later fantasy of differentiated collaboration. "The most difficult of enterprises will have to be undertaken under the most adverse circumstances."<sup>34</sup> The adverse circumstances include, within Lonergan studies, developed habits of contented old-style descriptive and comparative searchings of the surface self. Within the global struggle they include the evident yet sadly dodged fact of a global village that includes the needs of the brains and bellies of Arabs, Orientals, and Africans, as well as the appetites of North Americans and Europeans, of the white folk of New Zealand and Australia.

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34 *Insight*, 233[258]. A final footnote seems an inappropriate place to open up massively the topic of our present interest. Still, it is appropriate to note that the topic of the spiritual, in its mesh with energy, is a topic of *Insight* 16.4.3, on "The Unity of Man", outside the 50 pages that I mentioned at the beginning. It is a topic needing all the clarity attainable by a community regionalized in history by the "come-about" of the previous section. (The problem of this functional regionalization emerges, but implicitly, in the final chapter of *Topics in Education*). It is to give a fresh and subtle other sense to the claim that "in another sense it is quite difficult to be at home in transcendental method" (*Method in Theology*, 14). And what is it for the human group to reach home in the ultimate Ascension? We have to lift Thomas cramped and non-genetic puzzling (see his searchings about the separated soul and the Ascension of Jesus), within the layered and time-tight cosmology of his time, into a dynamic view of the separated soul and the energy-redemptive lift-off we are to share with Jesus, onwards everlastingly into the Big HUG: Home Unrepeatedly in God.



## DIFFERENTIATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS

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### I

FOR PEOPLE OF all times and places, authentic human living requires persistent fidelity to the normative human desire to understand what the cosmos is and what we ourselves are. Every major conceptual leap in the understanding of reality has made such fidelity more of a challenge. In our particular cultural situation, such understanding is dauntingly difficult, due in part to human consciousness having, in the course of history, differentiated the cosmos into what Lonergan calls a number of distinct "realms of meaning." So in our time, rising to the challenge of authenticity unsettlingly but inevitably involves making some sense of these diversified "realms of meaning" that have come into view through what both Lonergan and Eric Voegelin call differentiating consciousness. Such a "making sense" would consist of a twofold process that involves differentiation and integration. *Differentiation* would entail apprehending the basic characteristics, and accepting the validity, of distinct realms of meaning. *Integration* would entail understanding to some degree how these realms and their distinct modes of apprehension, insights, and languages are related to each other, while working toward the absorption of this understanding into one's effective interpretations of self and reality. That this process must be accompanied by various discontents is perhaps obvious.

Let me begin a consideration of the challenge of differentiation, and its discontents, by recalling two passages in Lonergan's works.

First, there is his approving reference to Ernst Cassirer's statement that, in the context of a phenomenology of culture, a human being is more adequately defined as an *animal symbolicum* than as a "rational animal."<sup>1</sup>

1 B. Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, vol. 10 of *The Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, revising and augmenting the unpublished

Lonergan's approval reflects his view that, for humans, reality is *mediated by meanings* that are articulated by language symbols, and further that these symbols are of various distinct types, reflecting various types of meaning. The language-symbols of commonsense meaning are different from the language-symbols of scientific theory, and both are different from the language-symbols of mystical religiosity.<sup>2</sup>

With the multiple languages of different realms of meaning certainly in mind, Lonergan states dramatically that Cassirer's definition of the human as *animal symbolicum* "in fact poses the challenge of our age." He proceeds to express this challenge in the form of two questions: "Are we to seek an *integration* of the human good on the level of historical consciousness, with the acknowledgement of man's responsibility for the human situation? If so, how are we to go about it?"<sup>3</sup> The first question is both rhetorical and hortatory. The answer is, yes: we *are* to seek an integration of the human good on the level of historical consciousness, with an acknowledgement of our responsibility for the human situation. The answer to the second question—how are we to go about it?—is that we must do this in part by striving for authenticity through achieving, to some degree, an intellectually, imaginatively, and existentially differentiated and subsequently integrated apprehension of the various realms of meaning that have become differentiated in the course of history.

This leads us to the second passage of Lonergan's I want to consider. It is part of his account of the various realms of meaning in Chapter 11 of text prepared by James Quinn and John Quinn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), Chap. 3: "The Human Good as Object: Differentials and Integration," 78.

2 From another angle, and involving a more technical definition of the term *symbol*, Lonergan's approval of Cassirer's definition might reflect his view that it is more through the efficacy of emotionally evocative, many-meaning *symbols* as employed in everyday discourse, art, and religious expression—and not primarily through the more or less univocal *concepts* of science and philosophical analysis—that we make sense of existence, both in the context of everyday living and in our relation to the ever-mysterious divine ambience within which we exist: "With symbolic meaning we reach a fundamental point of importance in many ways. The symbolic is an objectifying, revealing, communicating consciousness . . . [and the symbol is concerned] not with univocity but with multiple meanings. . . . [T]he fundamental fact [is] that it is on the artistic, symbolic level that we live. . . . Scientific words simply have meaning; they have no resonance. . . . [But everyday] words have not only their proper meanings, but also a resonance in our consciousness. They have a retinue of associations, and the associations may be visual, vocal, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, affective or evocative of attitudes, tendencies, and evaluations. This resonance of words pertains to the very genesis, structure, and molding of our consciousness through childhood and the whole process of our education." Lonergan, *Topics*, Chap. 10: "Art," 219-221, 229.

3 "The Human Good as Object," 78 (emphasis added).

*Method in Theology* (on "Foundations"), which builds upon his introductory explanation of realms of meaning in Chapter 3 (on "Meaning"). In the later chapter, Lonergan again distinguishes and defines what he calls the four "basic realms of meaning": the realm of *common sense*, the realm of *theory*, the realm of *interiority*, and the realm of *transcendence*. But here he adds and describes two other realms of meaning, the realm of *scholarship* and the realm of *art*, explaining that "[a]ny realm becomes differentiated from the others when it develops its own language, its own distinct mode of apprehension, and its own cultural, social, or professional group speaking in that fashion and apprehending in that manner."<sup>4</sup> Lonergan's introducing of these two additional realms of meaning is not a marginal issue; nothing in *Method in Theology* is marginal. And his consequent discussion of the thirty-one possible varieties of undifferentiated, partially differentiated, and fully differentiated consciousness—assuming six significantly distinct realms of meaning—implies that, to be *fully* at home in the contemporary world, we must have at least some apprehension of, and at least some intellectual and imaginative facility within, all six of these realms of meaning.

I want to explore this implication, first by considering briefly the nature of each realm of meaning, and then by trying to reach a few conclusions about what striving for authenticity entails for those of us living in educated comfort in the twenty-first century West. difference.

## II

It makes sense to start with the realm of meaning that Lonergan calls "common sense," since many people never differentiate their conscious living beyond the commonsense realm of meaning, whose symbolic tool of communication may be called "ordinary language." A few quotations from Lonergan on common sense will help us to be brief later on. He writes:

The realm of common sense is the realm of persons and things in their relations to us. It is the visible universe peopled by relatives, friends, acquaintances, fellow citizens, and the rest of humanity... [T]he specific object of the intellectual habit of common sense is that on all ordinary occasions an individual is able to grasp just how to behave, just what to say, what to do, how to do it... [The habit of common sense arises

4 Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 272.

through a] spontaneous process of teaching and learning that constantly goes forward in the individuals of a group. One notices, admires, tries to imitate, fails perhaps, watches or listens again, tries again and again till practice makes perfect. The result is an accumulation of insights that enable one both to deal successfully with recurrent situations and, as well, to notice what is novel in a new situation and to proceed tentatively with that... [This] accumulation of insights with regard to concrete behavior is the fundamental and common development of human intelligence... People understand; but don't bother asking them why — things are so, they know, and that is all there is to it. This is the normal development of human intelligence.<sup>5</sup>

Now, about people who live solely, or undifferentiatedly, in the realm of common sense, Lonergan makes this important point: "In their endless varieties common sense and ordinary language are not unaware of the realms of religion, art, theory, scholarship, interiority. But their *apprehension of these realms is rudimentary and their expression vague*."<sup>6</sup> Apprehension is rudimentary, because meaning in the other realms is not grasped in terms of their own proper insights but remains both obscure and filtered through commonsense images and insights; and expression is vague, because commonsense language can only mimic, without critical control of meaning, the specialized language deriving from specialized insights within the various realms. But to move from a commonsense awareness and understanding of these other realms to a differentiated grasp of each in its unsettling distinctness, its peculiar language, and its unique mode of apprehension, is, Lonergan is at pains to explain, both difficult and at times existentially disturbing. Let us look briefly at each of these differentiations — and in doing so indicate why each differentiation, however partially achieved, might cause some existential turbulence.

Historically, discovery and elaborated differentiation of the theoretical, or scientific, realm of meaning has occurred, and continues to occur, because of the presence in consciousness of what Lonergan calls a "systematic exigence." This exigence is a built-in demand of human inquiry to understand what is *invariable* about things, to understand things not in terms of how they present themselves to us, but in terms of what they are in themselves,

5 *Ibid.*, 81, 303; Lonergan, "The Human Good as Object," 71.

6 Lonergan, *Method*, 273 (emphasis added).

in terms of their *intrinsic* properties. Scientific or theoretical understanding offers *systematic explanations* of objects in terms of "the relations constituted by their uniform interactions with one another," explanations that move beyond the imagination-based perspective of commonsense descriptions. To explain things in terms of intrinsic properties and uniform interactions requires insights different from those of common sense, insights that open up a new, abstract conceptual field that constitutes a distinct realm of meaning. Anyone who has studied one of the natural sciences appreciates the difficulty involved in moving out of the commonsense realm and into the explanatory domain in the pursuit of systematic knowledge of objects or processes, and of the necessity of learning a special technical language corresponding to the intelligibilities of explanatory science. Such study attends to the same world of objects, the same finite universe, as does common sense, but it approaches it from a quite different standpoint, and discloses meanings belonging to a distinct realm of understanding. "Mass, temperature, the electromagnetic field," Lonergan writes, "are not objects in the world of common sense." Their meanings *pertain* to the objects of everyday experience, but, as technical terms, their meanings can only be grasped through comprehending their functions with related terms in often highly abstruse systems of theoretical explanation.<sup>7</sup>

So, Lonergan writes, there are "a realm of common sense and a realm of theory. We use different languages to speak of them." And it is "only by knowledge making its bloody entrance that one can move out of the realm of ordinary languages into the realm of theory and the totally different scientific apprehension of reality."<sup>8</sup> Now, one needn't become an accomplished scientist or theoretician to grasp the nature of this differentiation and to some degree inhabit it, but one must understand enough about theory to appropriate at least the elementary distinctions involved between the two realms. And for the person who *does* successfully distinguish and relate the two realms of common sense and theory — who recognizes and can move with some facility between their distinct but equally valid truths, languages, and modes of apprehension — life in the contemporary world makes much more sense than it does to the person for whom the realm of scientific theory is only a vague cultural field of insights opaquely glimpsed — usually with

7 *Ibid.*, 81-82, 258.

8 *Ibid.*, 83, 85.

some resentment—through the filters of commonsense description and ordinary language.

Now let us consider what Lonergan has to say about coming to understand, and operating successfully to some degree in, the “realm of scholarship.”

“The scholarly differentiation of consciousness,” he writes, is that of the linguist, the man of letters, the exegete, the historian. It combines the brand of common sense of its own time and place with a commonsense style of understanding that grasps the meanings and intentions in the words and deeds that proceeded from the common sense of another people, another place, or another time. Because scholarship operates in the commonsense style of developing intelligence, it is not trying to reach the universal principles and laws that are the goal of the natural sciences and the generalizing human sciences. Its aim is simply to understand the meaning intended in particular statements and the intentions embodied in particular deeds. Accordingly, the scholarly and the theoretical differentiations are quite distinct.<sup>9</sup>

To employ the language of Hans-Georg Gadamer, the scholarly differentiation entails coming to understand things to some degree from within the distinct horizon of a person of a culture, time, or place quite different from one’s own. In practice it means to understand that such a person’s guiding questions, her presuppositions about world and self and society and the divine, and her commonsense understanding of innumerable particulars, are in fact different in some important ways from *our* questions, *our* presuppositions, and *our* commonsense understandings—and then to take the time and make the efforts necessary to familiarize oneself with the horizon under investigation. Still using Gadamer’s language, the successful outcome of scholarly endeavor is a never-complete, but still real and illuminating, “fusion of horizons” between the scholar and the author of the work encountered. It is a successful dialogue between two commonsense horizons of developed intelligence.<sup>10</sup>

This account makes quite clear that the scholarly differentiation requires

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 274.

<sup>10</sup> See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (second, revised edition), trans. revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Continuum Publishing Co., 1993), 302-307.

the development of a *historicized* consciousness—and by this I mean two distinct traits. First, a historicized consciousness recognizes the genuine *otherness* manifested in the multifarious commonsense horizons of people of other cultures, times, and places. Second, historicized consciousness recognizes that our own culture has come to be what it is only through a long process of development out of prior related cultural horizons different in various ways from our own, and that one cannot understand well what is happening and going forward in our own culture without understanding its genesis in, and development out of, prior horizons.

Let me take a moment to expand on this point. Some decades ago, a book was published that won the Pulitzer Prize for non-fiction and became something of a modern classic: Richard Hofstadter's *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*.<sup>11</sup> Now, as rampant as anti-intellectualism is in American culture, which Hofstadter makes clear, it pales in comparison, I would say, with what I will call *anti-historicalism*. There is widespread resistance among the so-called educated classes, not to mention their counterparts, to the recognition that *knowledge of history matters*—that present-day culture cannot be deeply understood and critically assessed without significant understanding of the horizons of the cultures founding and preceding it; that without such historical understanding *personal* self-understanding must remain more or less shallow; and that absent some serious historical understanding, one is shrugging off a key element in taking responsibility for one's part in the human constitution of human history. *Anti-historicalism* is an attitude that presumes that the historical present and the immediate future can be adequately understood, and that one can be historically responsible, without some serious study of the past as an interconnected process of development and precedent. Not only is this an appallingly prevalent attitude within American culture at all levels, it also seems, in my experience with friends, students, and of course colleagues, typically to be as impervious to amelioration or reversal as a drunkard on the edge of slipping into a coma is to impassioned exhortations to change his ways. And as a force in society, anti-historicalism has somewhat sordid consequences: it tends to produce Nietzsche's infamous "last man," who lives for comfort; avoids seriousness and struggle; assumes that human development has reached its

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11 Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963).

apogee in him; and avoids thought about historical responsibility.<sup>12</sup>

To bring this to bear once again on our topic: anti-historicalism not only precludes the *scholarly* differentiation of consciousness; typically it also prevents common sense from recognizing the importance, for contemporary self-appropriation, of understanding the *theoretical* differentiation of consciousness. Anti-historicalism is thus, I would argue, the greatest impediment in our time to striving for and achieving personal authenticity through the differentiation and subsequent integration of various realms of meaning.

Now, about differentiation in the realm of art, Lonergan writes this: "Artistically differentiated consciousness is a specialist in the realm of beauty. It promptly recognizes and fully responds to beautiful objects. Its higher attainment is creating; it invents commanding forms; works out their implications; conceives and produces their embodiment."<sup>13</sup> Within this brief description, I would like to emphasize the phrase "*promptly recognizes and fully responds to beautiful objects.*" Notice the lack of an historical qualifying clause; the description implicitly embraces an appreciation of artworks created right up through the present day, in all artistic media. Now, the *prompt recognition* and *full response* to beautiful objects is difficult enough for people who encounter only the sculpture, painting, architecture, music, poetry and other forms of literature produced in mainstream Western culture from classical times through the end of the nineteenth century. The degree of differentiated artistic appreciation required to respond to artistic forms up to the beginning of the twentieth century already necessitates a profound "education of the sensibilities," as it used to be called. But how much more difficult is the emergence and cultivation of such differentiated appreciation with respect to more recent art! An artistically differentiated consciousness adequate to, and at home in, contemporary culture would have to be able to *promptly recognize* and *fully respond* to beauty, for example, in the best of cubist, abstract, minimalist, pop, and conceptualist painting and sculpture, not to mention film art, video art, mixed-media creations, and installation art; in the music of Alban Berg, John Coltrane, Alfred Schnittke,

12 On Nietzsche's notions of the *overman* and the *last man*, see Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*; First Part; "Zarathustra's Prologue," sections 3-5, in Walter Kaufmann, ed. and trans., *The Portable Nietzsche* (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), 124-31.

13 Lonergan, *Method*, 273.

and Arvo Pärt; in Mark Morris's choreography; and in the writings of Eliot, Joyce, Pound, Proust, Kafka, Beckett, Hermann Broch, David Jones, and W. G. Sebald, just to name a few names.

Now, one of the peculiarities of twentieth-century Western art is that, partly due to the nineteenth-century revolution in historical consciousness and the way its intensification has informed artistic creation, it is impossible to appreciate the best of what has been accomplished in this last century without some understanding of the history of Western art and literature from classical times up through and including the breakthroughs of the post-impressionists and abstractionists in painting and sculpture, and of modernists in literature and the other arts. Without that understanding, deep aesthetic responsiveness goes no farther than approximately the developmental stage represented by Gauguin or Chagall or O'Keeffe in painting; Mahler or Stravinsky in music; Virginia Woolf or her equivalents in the novel; Chekhov in structure and experimentation in drama; Yeats, William Carlos Williams, Sylvia Plath and their equivalents in poetry. As with the scholarly differentiation of consciousness, what is again needed, for *artistically* differentiated consciousness to operate with vitality and insight in our time, so that the artistic realm in its fullness can be adequately understood in its relation to the other realms of meaning and integrated into one's understanding of self and reality, is openness to, and effort applied toward, the study and understanding of historical development.

Moving on: the realm of interiority, as the word implies, is the realm of human consciousness itself. It is the realm of meaning, in Lonergan's words, that concerns "one's subjectivity, one's operations [of conscious intentionality], their structure, their norms, their potentialities. . .". The discovery and exploration of interiority has a long history: in the West, one could say it begins forcefully with Plato's analyses of the operations and potentialities of the human psyche, and carries on through all the investigations of the "interior" soul, subject, or self from the classic Greek and Hellenistic psychologies through medieval, early modern, Kantian, German Idealist, existentialist, phenomenological, hermeneutic, and postmodern sub-differentiations and expansions—not forgetting the contribution of depth psychologists and developmental psychologists—and reaching a special kind of sophistication, many here would argue, in Lonergan's full-blown explanatory cognitional analysis.

What is the urge or drive that has led humans to examine subjectivity itself, and eventually to clearly differentiate it as a realm of meaning? Lonergan has named it the "critical exigence" inherent in consciousness, which compels human inquiry, once it has differentiated the realms of common sense and theory—as also of art and scholarship—to ask: what is the common denominator in commonsense knowing, theoretical knowing, and artistic knowing? What am I doing when I am knowing in any of these realms? Why is that really and truly *knowing*? Thus one is led into the investigation of one's own consciousness; into epistemology; into an understanding of one's conscious operations and of the dynamic relations that link these operations to each other.<sup>14</sup>

To *personally* engage in the differentiation of this realm of meaning requires, of course, that one move beyond the popular image of the mind as a sort of inscrutable "black box" into which flow sensory and linguistic input and out of which flow feelings, ideas, speech, and behavior. It means recognizing that one can engage in consistent and coherent investigation into the invisible operations of one's own mind. But to take up this engagement successfully is difficult; it is easy to be misled by simplistic or materialistic psychologies, by distorted epistemologies, and by wish-mongering about the mind's powers. As Lonergan writes, it "is only through the long and confused twilight of philosophic initiation that one can find one's way into interiority and achieve through self-appropriation a basis, a foundation, that is distinct from common sense and theory[,]...that accounts for them both [and for all other types of knowing in the various realms]." <sup>15</sup> Can one achieve a *satisfactory* level of personal authenticity in our time without appropriating the structure of one's interiority in as sophisticated a form as, say, its presentation in Lonergan's philosophy? Of course. But one cannot do so without letting the critical exigence in one's consciousness have a respectable range of exercise: without reaching, in whatever imaginative and conceptual manner, at least that level of self-understanding on the basis of which one recognizes that commonsense, theoretical, scholarly, and artistic knowing—and even religious knowing, which I have left for last—are all valid in their distinctness; that at the core of the self is an unrestricted desire to know; that the proper criterion for affirming that something *is*,

14 *Ibid.*, 83, 305.

15 *Ibid.*, 85.

is not its physical observability or quantifiability, but rather the intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation of some data, whether material or not; and that descriptive images of the self derived from commonsense experiences invariably misrepresent and oversimplify the realm of interiority. Once this degree of recognition is achieved, a foundation for an integrated grasp of self and world has been laid.

But such an integration will be radically incomplete without effective differentiation of the last of the basic realms of meaning identified by Lonergan: the realm of transcendence. Now, to say that in our contemporary situation this is a tricky area for the attainment of adequate cultural and personal integration is an understatement. But it must be emphasized that this realm cannot be ignored by a person if she is to have, in our day, at least the virtue of *striving* for authenticity. For there exists in human consciousness, Lonergan states, a "transcendent exigence." And what exactly is this? He explains:

There is to human inquiry an *unrestricted* demand for intelligibility. There is to human judgment a demand for the *unconditioned*. There is to human deliberation a criterion that criticizes *every finite good*. So it is...that man can reach basic fulfillment, peace, joy, only by moving beyond the realms of common sense, theory, [interiority, scholarship, and art], and into the realm in which God is known and loved.<sup>16</sup>

Well, we want to address the chances for *anyone's* attainment of a modicum of authenticity in the present-day world—so let's translate, for ecumenical purposes, the symbol "God" into the more general: "ultimately unknowable and abyssal divine mystery of transcendence." That clarifies the issue, I hope.

The contemporary problem of differentiating the realm of transcendence adequately, and then integrating it successfully into one's understanding of self and reality, lies in the innumerable problems and confusions that have streamed, historically, from the original experiences that shattered the felt and imagined unity of the divinely-saturated cosmos into the two imaginal and conceptual realms of "immanent world" and "transcendent divinity." Simply put, once the realm of transcendence—in India, in China, in Israel, in Greece—was clearly and explicitly differentiated from the world intrinsically conditioned by space and time, it became a mysterious

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16 *Ibid.*, 83-84 (emphasis added).

"non-thing," a distressingly recondite realm of divine reality that cannot be observed or even directly known, but only approached through the inwardness of concentrated meditative seeking, or unconstrained longing and loving, that ends in the discovery of a divine "Beyond." As Voegelin remarks: transcendence isn't just lying around for people to stumble upon. One finds it only through the passionate questioning, hoping, and loving that leads one to finally accept that, in the words of Simone Weil, "*all the goods of this world, past, present, and future, real or imaginary, are finite and limited and radically incapable of satisfying the desire that perpetually burns within us for an infinite and perfect good.*"<sup>17</sup> And when one grasps that this infinite and perfect good—which *must* exist if our inquiring, our hoping, and our loving are themselves *ultimately* to have meaning—can be like nothing in and of the spatiotemporal universe, then one is prepared to affirm a realm of transcendent meaning that is the recondite but real ground of our conscious being, and the proper if profoundly unknowable object of our deepest yearning. But then: one is a mystic.

I am not using the word "mystic" here casually, and in fact am following Lonergan in his recognition of two appropriate applications of the term. Because of the historical process that has steadily, and with ever more clarity, differentiated the realm of transcendence into an abyssal divine mystery, it is *only* through an inward discovery and affirmation of a mystery beyond all reality proportionate to finite human knowing that one can, in a manner adequate to our stage of cultural development, understand and integrate this elemental dimension of meaning into one's apprehension of reality as a whole. Lonergan states clearly: "Religiously differentiated consciousness is...*reached* by the mystic." He further explains that, regarding mystic insight and orientation, "there are two quite different modes of apprehension, of being related, of consciously existing, namely, the commonsense mode operating in the world mediated by meaning, and the mystical mode withdrawing from the world mediated by meaning into a silent and all-absorbing surrender in response to God's gift of his love."<sup>18</sup> The first mystical mode of apprehension mentioned by Lonergan is that which belongs to what might be called the everyday mystic, whose sensibilities

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17 Quoted in Stephen Mitchell, ed., *The Enlightened Mind: An Anthology of Sacred Prose* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991), 204 (emphasis added).

18 Lonergan, *Method*, 273 (emphasis added).

are represented by the insistence of the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins that "There lives the dearest freshness deep down things," a "dearest freshness" that, as he understands it, radiates steadily from a transcendent source of absolute goodness, absolute truth, and absolute love.<sup>19</sup> The second type of mystic is represented by those much rarer mystics whose contemplative nature, spiritual drive, and stamina lead them to concentrate feelingly and repeatedly on the radical otherness, the utter apartness-from-all-finite-being, of the divine mystery—on the realm of transcendence specifically as, in the words of Pseudo-Dionysius (5<sup>th</sup> c.), "Mind beyond mind, word beyond speech...gathered up [by] no intuition," "the Superunknowable," at "a total remove from every condition, movement, life, imagination, conjecture, name, discourse, thought, conception, being, rest, dwelling, unity, limit, infinity, [and] the totality of existence"—and that yet is "the cause of everything..."<sup>20</sup> But whether as this type or that, a mystic one must be, in order to responsibly differentiate the realm of transcendence in our time, since the only alternatives are (1) to misinterpret that realm through uncritical reliance on the rudimentary apprehensions and ordinary language of common sense in a way that reifies religious symbols, from which flow the deforming forces of religious literalism and fundamentalism; or 2) to deny the realm of transcendence in favor of materialist or immanentist conceptions of the whole of reality, or (3) to ignore the *transcendence* of divine transcendence through one or another vague pantheism, blurred neo-paganism, or superstitious occultism.

### III

So how, in the end, might we describe our extraordinary fellow-contemporary both striving for personal integrity and *achieving* it, to some significant degree, through the fivefold differentiation and subsequent integration of the six realms of meaning identified by Loneragan? She will be a science-and-theory-informed, scholarship-practicing, aesthetically

19 Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Selected Poetry*, ed. Catherine Phillips (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Oxford World Classics edition, 1998), 114. Hopkins almost certainly would not have wished to claim for himself the title of "mystic." But he fits the description of the "first" type of mystic described by Loneragan in the above passage.

20 Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names*, in *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, "The Classics of Western Spirituality" series, 1987), 50, 53, 54.

sophisticated-and-up-to-date, cognitively self-appropriated, ecumenically sensitive mystic. Needless to say, this is an ideal. But here I would say that a more elementary challenge to well-off Western citizens than somewhat approximating this ideal of contemporary conscious existence, is recognizing and accepting it *as* the proper ideal of existential integrity. Now, given that the dynamic core of consciousness is our unrestricted desire to know and love, and that the unfolding of knowledge into culturally differentiated realms of meaning might seem to be precisely what that desire would naturally seek to grow into, one might ask what it is that tends to hold people back from even allowing an *awareness* of this potential for proper development to be admitted into consciousness. To conclude my talk I will suggest three reasons for this.

First, there is the inertial drag of reliance on practical common sense as providing a quite satisfactory, quite successful solution to the concrete problems of everyday living. One of the characteristics of common sense, as Lonergan often mentions, is its presumption of omnicompetence for understanding all that needs to be understood. The person of undifferentiated common sense often thinks that science and theory would be perfectly intelligible if people using the specialized languages of science and theory would just put what they have to say in the ordinary language of common sense and then speak more clearly and slowly. Of such people, Lonergan writes, with a hint of sarcasm, "If you go by more than common sense, people say you are becoming *technical*." But even when the complex technicality, and the strangeness of the insights and languages of science and theory, are admitted as valid, he notes, the person of undifferentiated common sense typically "entertains no aspirations about reaching abstract and universal laws"; he leaves that to the "experts" of science and theory, since successful living and agreeable income and status are attainable in society without any study of science or theory whatsoever. Scholarship, for its part, is disdained both because "common sense is unequal to the task of thinking on the level of history" and because it is "easily led to rationalize its limitations by engendering a conviction that [such] forms of human knowledge are useless or doubtfully valid." This last point, again, holds even more true for the knowledge to be gained through differentiating an artistic consciousness up to the level of our times. Further, and perhaps needless to say, common sense "brushes aside the aim of philosophy" and

the systematic analysis of the structure of consciousness itself, for all the often-heard reasons — it's hopelessly abstruse and irrelevant to daily living; it can't be proven; all you will end up with is another viewpoint among many, to which your commitment could only result from an arbitrary choice based on personal temperament or a devious will-to-power, etc., etc.<sup>21</sup> And finally, the person of undifferentiated common sense will *accept or reject* religion in terms of linguistically commonsensical, ahistorical, non-theoretical, anti-scholarly, non-cognitionally-self-appropriated, unmeditative and unmystical, essentially reactive imaginative and intellectual apprehensions, usually formed around age fourteen and remaining unchanged thereafter.

But there is another aspect to the remarkable inertia of undifferentiated common sense besides its complacent satisfaction with itself as a successful solution to the problems of everyday living. It is the fact that, as Lonergan writes, each differentiation "will involve some remodelling of one's previous commonsense views on matters in which common sense is not competent."<sup>22</sup> That remodelling of one's views is frequently uncomfortable, and often painful. Further, as each successive differentiation of consciousness occurs, it "takes over a realm of the universe and spontaneously *requires of previous attainments a readjustment of their previous practice*, which hitherto somehow or other had tried to make do in that realm."<sup>23</sup> Summarily what this means is that, with *each* differentiation, one must become, in some sense, a different person — that is, one must accept a somewhat, and perhaps startling and disturbing, new understanding of who and what oneself is, what one's culture is, what reality as a whole is, and what personal authenticity might more completely entail.

To put it in slightly other terms, each differentiation involves a significant broadening of one's *horizon* of feeling, imagination, and understanding; and with each broadening, as Lonergan puts it, a person "has to reorganize his living as well as the concepts that he uses . . . . Otherwise he is not keeping pace with the broadening of the horizon." Indeed, with each major broadening, the subject "has to have new principles to guide his thinking, judging, evaluating, new principles guiding everything that concerns him."

21 Lonergan, "The Human Good as Object," 71; 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), 251, 253, 443.

22 Lonergan, *Method*, 273.

23 *Ibid.*, 275 (emphasis added).

So to change one's horizon through the differentiation of a new realm of meaning requires some real changing of one's "successful integration of the problem of conscious living." And—with this we reach perhaps the most crucial point—"any change in that successful synthesis of human living gives rise to anxiety. Anxiety is the anchor that keeps you where you are, the conservative principle."<sup>24</sup> Avoidance of anxiety; resentment at the idea one isn't already as wonderful and radiant with integrity as one could be; and satisfaction with one's so-far attained solution to the concrete problems of conscious living in contemporary culture: this is the great triad of forces that keep undifferentiated commonsense consciousness from developing.

A second factor that keeps people from growth through any or all of the five differentiations of consciousness we've been discussing is intimately related to the preceding points. To engage in a repeated broadening and at times radical transforming of one's horizon, with accompanying reinterpretations of self, society, culture, and reality, there is required a certain humility, indeed a repeated humility. And humility is not much appreciated in our culture. More than that: each such transformation means inevitably facing the teasing, and the variously expressed disapproval (usually through some type of passive aggression), from some of one's friends, colleagues, and maybe family members; perhaps even suffering their scorn in some cases. As Nietzsche wisely remarked: "When we have to change an opinion about anyone, we charge heavily to his account the inconvenience he thereby causes us."<sup>25</sup>

A third and last factor of resistance is one I've already mentioned, but I'd like to drive the point home with a sledgehammer. Every one of the differentiations of consciousness demands some form of openness to history, to interest in and learning from past historical developments—and our culture is blighted by the anti-historicalism mentioned earlier. We've heard Lonergan state that in consciousness, the unfolding of the unrestricted desire to know and love is moved forward by a "systematic exigence," a "critical exigence," and a "transcendent exigence." I would

24 Bernard Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic: The Boston College Lectures on Mathematical Logic and Existentialism*, vol. 18 of *The Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Philip J. McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 281, 288.

25 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books Edition, 1966), "Part Four: Epigrams and Interludes," No. 125 (p. 87); but I have substituted for Kaufmann's translation that of Helen Zimmern, which is in the public domain.

like to suggest that there is also in human consciousness what I will call an "historical exigence." This term doesn't appear in Lonergan's work as far as I know. But it refers, I think, to a real element in the dynamism of the desire to know as it has unfolded through time. And—to borrow an image from Plato's *Laws*—to respond to it, today, as to the very gentle pull of a golden cord, as against the powerful yankings of the hard, iron cords of the anti-historicalist smugness that saturates our culture in these waning years of American Empire, would be to overcome a principal impediment to striving for greater personal integrity in our current situation.<sup>26</sup> To hearken closely, today, to the historical exigence in contemporary consciousness would illuminate certain key truths: (1) that the differentiations of realms of meaning identified by Lonergan have occurred; (2) that the only viable path, now, to living in a truly *integrated cosmos* lies in learning what these realms are, and learning to move within and between with them with some facility; and (3) that to do this is central to striving for greater personal authenticity in our time.

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26 Plato, *Laws*, 644d-645b. On the myth of God as the player of the human "puppet" moved by the pulls of various cords, see Eric Voegelin, *Order and History, Volume III: Plato and Aristotle*, vol. 16 of *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, ed. Dante Germino (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 285-288.

