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## LONERGAN, HEIDEGGER, AND THE BEING OF QUESTION

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IN A HIGHLY LAUDATORY review of Emerich Coreth's *Metaphysik*, Bernard Lonergan paraphrased Coreth's view on the ontological status of questioning: "... questioning not only is about being but is itself being, being in its *Gelichtetheit* [luminosity], being in its openness to being. . . ." <sup>1</sup> These words, though presenting only a gloss, one might say, of the ideas of another thinker, stand out as a rare expression of Lonergan's appreciation for a kind of ontology that some may know from Coreth but many more know from the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. I have in mind the kind of ontology that identifies the phenomenon of question as a first phenomenon for its inquiry and insists on maintaining the centrality of that phenomenon throughout the whole of the philosophical project, even as that project analyzes the being of the questioner and the beings that are within the world that the questioner questions. By "question," in this context, neither Heidegger nor Lonergan (nor Coreth, for that matter) would intend merely the particular questions that are asked regarding particular things and events, but the underlying dynamism that motivates every question from within and heads toward being even as it comes from being. This underlying, primary reality Lonergan invoked with many names: "pure question," "questioning itself," "the principle of inquiry," "radical intending," or "the inner light." <sup>2</sup> Similarly, it seems to be implied

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<sup>1</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Metaphysics as Horizon," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 192. Emerich Coreth, *Metaphysik: Eine methodisch-systematische Grundlegung* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1961).

<sup>2</sup>"Metaphysics as Horizon," in *Collection*, 190; Bernard Lonergan, "Theories of Inquiry" in *Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (Philadelphia: The Westminster

in the terms by which Heidegger's writings, beginning in the 1930s, name the fundamental phenomenon of his philosophical concern: the "opening," "clearing," or "lighting" in being.<sup>3</sup>

Lonergan, who studied Heidegger's work only after his own philosophical framework and terminology were well established, rarely interprets Heidegger's thought in a manner that reaches to its theoretical core,<sup>4</sup> but in his gloss of Coreth Lonergan approaches that core. Lonergan's appreciation of such central Heideggerian ideas is significant not merely as a moment of convergence between two thinkers who seem frequently to diverge, but also because this particular convergence provides an opportunity to use Heideggerian insights to emphasize the richness of Lonergan's own thinking on the question of being and the being of question. In the following pages I shall attempt to seize upon that opportunity, explaining and employing the relevant Heideggerian notions to highlight ways in which Lonergan can be found working on the same problems at an equivalent depth of thought. Although this fairly specific program of mine will not yield a general overview of the points on which Lonergan and Heidegger can be said to agree and disagree, it will nevertheless contain some of the interpretive clues that I consider keys to the success of that more general comparative project.

### HEIDEGGER ON THE BEING OF QUESTION

The question of the meaning of being is the permanent focus for Heideggerian thinking. Heidegger's readers tend to be most familiar with the question as Heidegger pursued it through the "analytic of *Dasein*" in *Being and Time*, where Heidegger attempts something that we might be inclined to call a

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Press, 1974), 34; Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 11; Bernard Lonergan, "Theology and Praxis," in *Third Collection*, 193.

<sup>3</sup>Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. D. F. Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1993), 229, *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 9 (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1976), 325; Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in *Basic Writings*, 441-43, *Zur Sache des Denkens*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1988), 71-73.

<sup>4</sup>I have in mind here especially the treatment in the lectures published as *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). Here Lonergan works, to a large extent, from Alphonse de Waelhens, *La philosophie de Martin Heidegger* (Louvain: Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, 1942), the limitations of which have been noted by William J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), 687.

phenomenology of the human subject were it not for Heidegger's insistence upon defining *Dasein* primarily and persistently as an openness to being and only secondarily (and by virtue of that openness) as an entity caught up in myriad involvements with other worldly entities.<sup>5</sup> This decision to approach the being question strictly through the ontological disclosiveness of *Dasein* is meant to avoid the misstep by which the philosophical tradition has consistently fallen short of the demands of the question of being. The traditional approach has been to give first priority to the metaphysical analysis of the worldly objects of inquiry, or to the analysis of the "human subject" or "ego" or "rational animal" that inquires of the world, or to the abstract concepts that logically structure all such analyses – all of which strategies end up putting assumptions in place that prevent the inquiry from reaching the full scope of the question of being. "*Dasein*," by contrast, is an entity considered strictly and purely as the being that raises the question of being. The being of *Dasein* is analyzed, from the beginning, not as a thing among things or a subject defined in relations to objects, but as the site of the question of being, whose worldly involvements come to be articulated only by virtue of the light that emanates from that site. By this reversal of the more traditional approach to human subjectivity Heidegger situates the being of question – as the constitutive, defining character of the questioner, as the self-disclosive moment of being – at the heart of ontological inquiry.

The reversal permits some surprising conclusions in the analysis. Among them is the claim that the notion of *Dasein* as "substance," "substrate," or even "subject" all employ a mistaken and merely assumed view of *Dasein* as stasis amid movement, whereas in fact *Dasein*, when defined strictly with regard to what the question of being reveals, is movement.<sup>6</sup> What may appear to be a static presence (both temporally, in the present moment, and physically, in relation to a field of relatively stable objects) is, in fact, the manifestation of a relentlessly temporalizing movement wherein the dimension of futurity, and nothing else, founds our transcendence to a world; the temporal passing of all things, and nothing else, establishes our situatedness (our being-already-involved, our "thrownness"); and the

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<sup>5</sup>Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962); *Gesamtausgabe*, 2.

<sup>6</sup>Here I follow Thomas Sheehan in characterizing "movement" as an interpretive key to Heidegger's project. See, for example, Thomas Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger: A Paradigm Shift* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield, 2015), 49-53, 100-105, 141-43. See also Thomas Sheehan, *Karl Rahner: The Philosophical Foundations* (Athens, OH: University of Ohio Press, 1987), chap. 3.

combined working of futural transcendence and passing absence, and only those, make possible our ongoing presence to a world. The temporality that is invoked in this analysis, moreover, is not the empty form of time, but the time of concrete history: our temporality is also our historicity.<sup>7</sup>

By the late 1930s we find that Heidegger has shifted even further away from making the phenomenology of the existential subject his central focus. While never repudiating anything in the project of *Being and Time*, the language in which the question of being is now posed stresses more than ever the structure of the event of question over the nature of the questioner and the contents of particular questions. One hears this in Heidegger's references to "ontological difference" – the difference between "being" as a quality of entities or as the totality of those entities, and "being" in a sense invoking that which grants the being of entities – a difference embedded, to be sure, in the program of *Being and Time*, but given emphasis, now, in the call to think the difference more deliberately *as* difference. One hears Heidegger's shift of emphasis, too, in the revival of such ancient philosophical terms as "*aletheia*," (truth), which Heidegger employs in a manner that stresses the alpha-privative structure of the Greek word: "*a*" negates the "*-lethe*," the darkness or hiddenness, such that truth may be understood as the disclosure that is encompassed by that which is hidden.<sup>8</sup> One hears the shift in the many metaphorical terms that Heidegger uses to evoke the first and irreducible phenomenon from which philosophizing begins and within which its deepest concerns lie: the "opening," "clearing," or "lighting" in being. While each of these terms in Heidegger serves a distinct purpose, they all refer back to what I am calling the first and irreducible phenomenon for ontological thinking: the eruption of being into the question of being.

A term of this period that correlates with these formulations (and for some scholars, epitomizes them) is "*Ereignis*," a neologism that carries so many connotative meanings that it receives a broad variety of English translations – for example, "Appropriation," "E-vent,"<sup>9</sup> "Enowning."<sup>10</sup> Certain Heideggerian texts support the interpretation of *Ereignis* as the event of *aletheia*, the event of disclosure out of hiddenness, which is, of course, also

<sup>7</sup>Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Sections 62, 65, 67, and 68.

<sup>8</sup>Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth," in *Basic Writings*, 125-26, 130-32 (*Gesamtausgabe*, 187-89, 193-96).

<sup>9</sup>Richardson, *Heidegger*, 638.

<sup>10</sup>Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999).

the event through which ontological difference is differentiated.<sup>11</sup> In light of this interpretation, we may be justified in saying that this differentiation points back to a prior unity, which, as the hidden source for the granting of truth, forms the ultimate ground of truth, and perhaps should be called, in the purest sense, the "being" to which all Heideggerian thinking aspires. The sense of "appropriation" in the term, "*Ereignis*," would then have everything to do with accepting what is granted in the opening, or lighting, as differentiating out of the ineluctable mystery of being.

Question, in light of the notion of *Ereignis*, then, can be described as a manifestation of presence-bestowing-absence. Question is an anticipation of truth born of the experience of its absence, yet formed within worldly involvements in such a way as to make them to-be-questioned. Heidegger's formulation here recasts, without negating, the account of the temporality and historicity of *Dasein* in *Being and Time*, for the structures are fundamentally the same. In its reworking of these structures, and particularly in considering the concern (*Sorge*) that lies at the heart of the act of questioning being, Heidegger continues to emphasize question as something that comes from being – being in its luminosity, being in its openness to being.

As I conclude this brief review of central Heideggerian ideas on the nature of question, I should note that I generally follow what has been a standard paradigm for Heidegger interpretation at least since the publication of William Richardson's *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*. In recent years that paradigm has been notably challenged by Thomas Sheehan's skillfully wrought study, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, and related articles. Through meticulous analysis of subtleties and ambiguities in Heidegger's technical use of terms such as *aletheia* and *Ereignis*, along with the thorough treatment of the Aristotelian and Husserlian background, Sheehan has argued that Heidegger's ontology remains within the scope of a phenomenological reduction – that is, it does not determine any truths beyond human experience, so that whoever takes Heidegger to be speaking of the kind of being that lies beyond that experience lapses back into the same sort of metaphysical hypostatization that Heidegger so fervently sought to overcome. One of Sheehan's respondents, Richard Capobianco, has argued that Sheehan's interpretation, for all of its care and precision, has made another kind of error: that of encapsulating it in a phenomenology

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<sup>11</sup>Richardson, *Heidegger*, 638-39.

of human subjectivity, which is another pitfall that Heidegger worked assiduously to avoid.<sup>12</sup> The debate here is obviously a crucial one, and one that bears a certain resemblance to debates over phenomenology and ontology in Lonergan, but as yet it is unclear whether Sheehan's interpretive approach will indeed establish the new paradigm in Heidegger scholarship that its author has envisioned.

#### LONERGAN ON THE QUESTION OF BEING

To see the full extent to which Lonergan's ontology resonates with the Heideggerian themes that I have presented it is necessary to face several questions of interpretation, for Lonergan's language and his approach to metaphysics seem to be very far from the Heideggerian project. While this distance between the two is in some ways unbridgeable, a pointed interpretation of Lonergan's ontology reveals connections that are intriguing nonetheless.

A first interpretive issue to address is the ostensible priority of cognitional theory in Lonergan. There is a habitual way in which Lonergan and those who study him refer every philosophical question back to questions of cognitional theory. The oft-stated reason for doing so is that metaphysical and methodological issues always rest on epistemological assumptions and that these, in turn, rest upon implicit conceptions of the cognitional process. In his own cognitional theory, as is well known, Lonergan insists that the operations of intelligence – the raising of questions, the focusing of attention, the puzzling over problems, the achievement of insights that solve the puzzles by grasping the intelligibility intrinsic to them, the posing of further questions that challenge the correctness of those insights, the bringing-to-term of that further process of questioning in judgments of truth or falsity, and the pursuit of implications for appropriate courses of action in response to the judgments reached – must be given precedence, in the analysis of philosophical questions, over the analysis of the products of that intelligence – that is, the images, concepts, theoretical frameworks, metaphysical constructs, and normative theories of action – that issue from the operations, for the products of intelligence are notoriously revisable, but only by means of the further operations of intelligence. It is for this reason that epistemolo-

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<sup>12</sup>See Richard Capobianco, *Heidegger's Way of Being* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014).

gies that have been founded on types of products of cognition, or upon some restricted subset of the full range of intelligent operations, must be critiqued by referring them back to cognitional theory. The oversights on basic questions of cognition explain the chronic inability of such epistemologies to engender confidence that human intelligence is capable of knowing anything about the world as it truly is.<sup>13</sup>

By extension of this same critical purpose, the weaknesses that one finds in most attempts at metaphysics can be best illuminated by showing how the metaphysics in question has been abstracted or extrapolated from what is known of reality, which abstraction or extrapolation rests upon a theory as to what *can* be known of reality, which in turn relies upon a theory (or perhaps only an assumption) as to how knowing is to be described and explained. A prime target in Lonergan's criticism of the metaphysical tradition is "conceptualism," defined as a propensity to take concepts as the building blocks of thought, therefore of truth, and therefore of reality. For Lonergan, concepts vary in the degree to which they satisfactorily articulate the intelligibility grasped in insights, and are therefore not only revisable, but (as centuries' worth of revolutions in human thought should have rendered obvious), they are too frequently revised to serve as the ultimate categories for metaphysics.<sup>14</sup>

I have been showing how the priority of cognitional theory in Lonergan derives from its critical function. But now I wish to claim that because the critical function is not the sole purpose of Lonergan's thought the priority of cognitional theory is not, for Lonergan, absolute. In fact, I would argue, any reading of Lonergan's philosophy that would render that philosophy merely or primarily a cognitional theory or an epistemology misses much of its point and diminishes much of its power to provoke thought. As a passage in "Insight: Preface to a Discussion" puts it:

... the ontological and the cognitional are not incompatible alternatives but interdependent procedures. If one is assigning ontological causes, one must begin from metaphysics; if one is assigning cognitional

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<sup>13</sup>See, for example, Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), chaps. 1, 2, 9, 10, and 14; *Method in Theology*, chaps. 1 and 10; "Cognitional Structure," in *Collection*, 205-21; "The Subject," in *A Second Collection*, 69-86.

<sup>14</sup>"The Subject," in *A Second Collection*, 73-75. See also *Insight*, 426 ff., 717-18, and "Cognitional Structure," in *Collection*, 214-19.

reasons, one must begin from knowledge. Nor can one assign ontological causes without having cognitional reasons; nor can there be cognitional reasons without corresponding ontological causes.<sup>15</sup>

Lonergan, here, is not granting ultimate priority to cognitional theory; he is endorsing, in fact, a completion of his philosophy in terms of an ontology. The ontology that he offers to fulfill this function, however, diverges in striking ways from traditional forms of metaphysics.

This brings us to a second interpretive point, one pertaining to the definition of "being." In *Insight*, Lonergan introduces being as a "tricky topic" that is best approached by a "second-order definition." Here he defines being as "the objective of the pure desire to know."<sup>16</sup> The trickiness that Lonergan refers to in this passage is in part due to some very traditional puzzles regarding the notion of being, puzzles that trace their lineage at least as far back as Parmenides. Being, in this tradition, is a unique notion, for being is not a thing or a relation among things, because all things and relations are within being. It is not a quality of things, for every quality also is. For the same reason it cannot be called a highest genus from which all other genera and species are derived. To deal with some of these difficulties Aristotle approached being as something "spoken of in many senses."

Lonergan similarly understands being as a "protean" notion. One can speak of it in many senses, but one cannot bring unity to it by any straightforward conceptual means. In fact, Lonergan's anti-conceptualism intensifies the difficulty of speaking directly of being. According to him, Aristotle's "many senses" are often, themselves, conceptualizations of ontological causes that lack a fully explanatory set of cognitional reasons. Lonergan's own account of cognitional reasons confirms that we know something of being when we make verified judgments – as, for example, in our concrete judgments of fact. But he insists that the generalizations that are drawn from such judgments of fact are, by their nature, revisable in light of further investigation, such that they cannot serve as the general categories that would form the essential structure of being. Hence our definition of being has to assume that our present body of knowledge may tell us very little about being. It must anticipate a potential expansion of familiarity with the intelligible world that we cannot, within our present horizon, know

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<sup>15</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Insight: Preface to a Discussion," in *Collection*, 114.

<sup>16</sup>*Insight*, 372.

how to fathom. To form any unitary notion of being, we must define it, not in terms of our knowledge, but in terms of the fullness that our knowing activity ultimately intends.

On the basis of these considerations it is easy to avoid the mistake of reading "the objective of the desire to know" as meaning "an object of knowledge." It is, in fact, precisely the impossibility of holding being *per se* within one's knowledge that forces Lonergan to approach it as an index rather than as content of knowing, to identify it simply as that which the most open-ended of human desires anticipatorily intends. The term of this desire is present in every engagement with the world, but every engagement reveals itself, at the same time, as manifesting only something that is, rather than the being of being as such.

A third interpretive issue concerns Lonergan's tendency to emphasize methodology over metaphysics. Already in *Insight*, Lonergan is committed to the idea that all disciplines, not simply metaphysics, study being. When, in the course of philosophy's history, metaphysicians have claimed to possess the most general categories into which all of reality may be divided, there have inevitably come along thinkers in particular disciplines (especially the natural sciences) who have shown those categories to be unequal to the task of generating insights into the particular problems of their disciplines. *Insight's* early chapters, in fact, are devoted to showing just how woefully the structures of traditional substance metaphysics fall short of the criteria of "explanation" demanded by twentieth-century science and mathematics. Many of the categories that come to us from Aristotle are, in this light, shown to be unverifiable and to be derived not from the structure of being but from the generalization of commonsense experiences of human persons.<sup>17</sup>

The solution to this perennial dilemma, according to *Insight*, is for metaphysics to play an integrating role rather than a comprehensive-categorical one. Metaphysics functions as the means of showing that all of the disciplines are indeed investigating being. It does so, once again, in a second-order fashion, identifying not the most general products of human inquiry, but the most general patterns by which that inquiry must proceed. What is being? Being is the intelligibility intended by questions for intelligence, being is the truth intended by questions for reflective judgment, being is the normativity intended in questions of value, and being is the transcendence

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<sup>17</sup>*Insight*, 151-57.

of all of these that is manifested in the propensity for questioning to push beyond every answer.

In the reworking of his main philosophical ideas for his book, *Method in Theology*, Lonergan seems to move one step further from the basic project of metaphysics. In identifying the means by which the methods of particular disciplines are to be joined he chooses to speak of "transcendental method" rather than metaphysics.<sup>18</sup> "Transcendental method" refers to the basic operations of human intentionality that are adapted to the tasks of the disciplines and therefore constitute the conditions for their success. This transcendental role, which is essentially the integrative role that had been played by metaphysics in *Insight*, seems to have taken on even more of a cognitional, as opposed to ontological, form. But while the changed terminology does indeed indicate a shift in Lonergan's program (away from a primarily philosophical project and toward the task of situating theology among other disciplines), Lonergan has not shifted in his understanding of the fundamental realities at stake. As with the book *Insight*, so in *Method in Theology* knowing is understood as intending being. Moreover, this knowing changes not only the knower but the world that is known, opening it up to the knower through its intelligibility, truth, and value, and permitting the shaping of that world by the informed actions of the knower. Thus, because human intentionality functions always in a concrete, historical world, a sense of the ontological corollaries to the operations of transcendental method is crucial to grasping the full context of historical reality within which any method operates. Being has not been left behind.

I have taken up three interpretive issues pertaining to the relationship of knowing and being in Lonergan, and I have attempted to resolve each of them in such a way as to permit an interpreter of Lonergan to speak in a more or less unqualified way of Lonergan's "ontology." It is necessary to justify such a way of speaking if we are to move from the question of being to the being of question in Lonergan. Let us turn, now, to that task.

#### LONERGAN ON THE BEING OF QUESTION

In Lonergan's philosophy, as in Heidegger's, question functions as a first phenomenon for philosophical understanding. By "question," in this context,

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<sup>18</sup>*Method in Theology*, 13-25.

is meant, once again, not simply the particular question formulated in a verbal query, nor just the inquisitiveness experienced when a given instance of random gazing becomes focused looking, nor just the feeling embodied in a particular moment of uncertain apprehension, but the originary potential that initiates all of these, the primitive source that simultaneously grounds, inspires, and guides them. Question, in this sense, is the fundamental drive that makes possible each particular question, even as it reveals the incompleteness of each and points beyond each to a plenitude of further questions.

Question may not be the first thing that one notices about one's experience; it may not be the first topic that a philosophy takes up. But a successful course of self-reflection and philosophical analysis will reveal that question is the phenomenon upon which every other act of conscious intelligence depends. And because intelligence brings normative direction to every aspect of human life, fidelity to the pull of the further question functions for Lonergan as the ultimate normative existential reality. It is in this sense that the priority of question emerges as a first phenomenon for philosophical analysis. Once this priority is grasped the task of Lonergan's program in *Insight* and other works can be seen to be a task of clearing the way for the singular normativity of question to be recognized, appropriated, and put in opposition to any philosophy that would usurp its priority in favor of a priority of concepts, sense experience, self-awareness, affectivity, or any other phenomenon. These latter phenomena, in coming to light only through questioning and being verified only by virtue of the norms immanent to the questioning process, must be recognized as secondary phenomena after the primary phenomenon of question itself. Jerome Miller has put this point as follows:

...we can be genuinely ourselves *not* by taking possession of ourselves . . . but only by entirely surrendering ourselves (cognitionally, volitionally, affectively) to an exigence that will turn out to be nothing less than the exigence of being itself.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Jerome Miller, "A Reply to Michael Maxwell," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12, no. 1 (1994): 113-14. See also Jerome Miller, *In the Throes of Wonder: Intimations of the Sacred in a Post-Modern World* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1992), chap. 3.

The priority of question comes explicitly to light through the process of self-inquiry, and in that sense (and ironically) its priority is not experienced as "first." But once question *does* come to light it comes to light as that which has drawn the self-understanding process forward from the beginning.

Miller's way of putting the point returns us also to Lonergan's resistance to the idea of knowledge as possession. The human tendency to overestimate the degree to which our present knowledge comprehends the essential features of reality is a tendency born of the desire to possess reality rather than the desire to know it. To overestimate, in this manner, the achievements of human questioning is to underestimate its potential. What knowledge we have of being is achieved by a kind of surrender to the inherent finality of question itself, sacrificing the desire to control the inquiry's outcome. Lonergan speaks of the task of the inquirer as the task of "self-appropriation," which is an illuminating term in many respects. But it can also mislead one into thinking that Lonergan's philosophy is ego-centered and concerned with taking possession of knowledge, whereas, in fact, what self-appropriation reveals above all is not one's possession of being but one's possession *by* being.<sup>20</sup>

For this reason the term "transcendence," as Lonergan employs it, is an important one to set next to the term, "self-appropriation." "Transcendence" has two important significations for our present inquiry. For one, it designates the way in which being per se always exceeds what we know of it. While being is truly known in the knowledge of particular things and relations, and while more of being is known as knowledge of beings expands, still being in the full sense, the being of beings, must be understood as transcending all of our knowledge and functioning for finite inquirers as an index rather than as a content of knowledge. But secondly, the sense of transcendence that Lonergan has in mind here does not place being in some far-off, hidden region, for the experience of transcendence is one of the most common in human experience. As Lonergan writes, ". . . despite the imposing name, transcendence is the elementary matter of raising further questions."<sup>21</sup> Being is present in what is known, but being as transcending the known is present in the experience of transcending the known world, that is, the experience of question. Being thus can function as an index for every question because its transcendence is indicated in every question. The mystery of being consists

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<sup>20</sup>Miller, "A Reply," 112-14.

<sup>21</sup>*Insight*, 658.

not in a pure hiddenness, but in the far more uncanny fact that being, in its most obscure aspect, that is, its transcendence, is also intimately familiar to us in our most ordinary inquisitive acts.

This point, I would say, brings Lonergan's thinking surprisingly close to Heideggerian ontology. In emphasizing the transcendence of the inquirer in the process of inquiry, in characterizing the inquirer as possessed by the question that "comes from being," Lonergan is putting movement at the heart of the inquirer's ontological constitution. And what Thomas Sheehan has said of Heidegger's notion of being could be equally said of Lonergan's: being as absent (that is, hidden), in being anticipated (in the movement of questioning transcendence), "gives being" to the anticipating entity, disclosing what the anticipating being is: the movement of finite transcendence.<sup>22</sup>

This movement, for Lonergan no less than for Heidegger, is temporal and historical by its very nature. The birth of questioning is always from a horizon, which functions as both a limit and as the source of questions that could expand the horizon. Thus, as the question initiates temporal movement within the horizon, so the effects of questioning bring historical movement to the horizon. Moreover, since the unrestricted scope of the questioning of being intends being in all of its concreteness, rather than in abstract generalities, the inquiry must include the whole of the world as mediated by, and partially constituted by, human meaning – which is to say, human history as both heritage and as developing reality.

#### THE DIFFERENCE REGARDING "DIFFERENCE"

One ought not to point out this proximity of Lonergan and Heidegger on the meaning of being without acknowledging what is probably an intractable difference between the two over what Heidegger calls "ontological difference." The singular focus of all of Heideggerian thinking is being (*Sein*) as that which grants the being of all-that-is, as opposed to being in the sense of *a* being, or the totality of beings, or a supreme being. Because it is crucial for Heidegger's philosophy to distinguish these meanings of "being," any abrogation of the distinction, or any preoccupation with beings that distracts from the fundamental question of being, will quickly be deemed "forgetfulness of being" or, more precisely, "forgetfulness of difference." For

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<sup>22</sup>See Thomas Sheehan, "Geschichtlichkeit/Ereignis/Kehre," *Existentialia (Meletai Sophias)*, 11, no. 3-4 (2001): 249.

Heidegger, the granting of being in the "lighting" occurs in every instance of openness to beings, giving every moment of existence the potential starting point for the meditation of being. Hence, while the opening occurs always in historical situations and under circumstances of personal and intellectual development, one does not, according to Heidegger, have to live in a particular historical time or have a particular body of knowledge in order to pursue the being question in the manner that he intends. No intellectual horizon constitutes, for him, a world-historical breakthrough of ontological disclosure as such. On the contrary, the founding structure of the disclosure of being is accessible, in his view, as much in the age of ancient philosophy as in the age of modern science.<sup>23</sup>

Lonergan, of course, is very comfortable putting ontological issues in cognitional terms, defining being as the objective of the desire to know, or as "everything about everything," and devoting enormous amounts of attention to the development of human knowledge in the sciences and humanities. It is easy for a Heideggerian to see such a focus on knowledge and the progress of knowledge in history as a textbook case of obliviousness to the central concern of Heidegger's thought. But I do not think that this is the case. Ontological difference *does* function in Lonergan's thought, though in a different way from Heidegger's. It functions as the fact that being transcends knowledge in unimaginable ways, and that this transcendence forces us to treat being as the unknown, as an index, as mystery. For Lonergan, once again, the mystery is that being can be *both* that which is known *and* that which is so utterly unknown that our knowledge cannot begin to envision it, even as our questions intend it. The differentiating factor in Lonergan's conception of ontological difference is, in other words, human finitude.

Lonergan himself never fully grasped what Heidegger meant by "ontological difference," but if he had, he might yet complain, from the perspective of his own understanding of these same questions, that Heidegger's formulation of the difference had put too great a wedge between being and beings for it to adequately function as a philosophy of the being *of* beings.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings*, 238-42 (*Gesamtausgabe*, 335-38).

<sup>24</sup>I have considered these points of disagreement at greater length in "The Lonergan-Heidegger Difference," *Philosophy and Theology* 15, no. 1 (2003): 273-98. See also William J. Richardson, "Being for Lonergan: A Heideggerian View," in Philip McShane, ed., *Language Truth and Meaning: Papers from the International Lonergan Congress 1970* (Notre Dame, IN.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972), 272-83.

## CONCLUSION

By virtue of this disagreement, then – a disagreement in formulation, perhaps, more than in substance, yet a thoroughgoing and obstinate one nonetheless – we would be wrong to say that Heidegger and Lonergan are of one mind on the being of question. Yet the degree to which each puts the phenomenon of question at the heart of his ontology creates a remarkable confluence of thought. The insights that emerge from reflection on this point of confluence, occurring despite a significant gulf of disagreement, are intriguing – and not simply from the point of view of scholarship, but in terms of the ongoing challenge of the thinking of being.

Lonergan and Heidegger were both such original thinkers that it can come as a surprise to find proximities in some of the most distinctive, unusual, and profound features of their thinking. But both were also “original” in the sense of returning repeatedly to the origins of the Western philosophical tradition. At the beginning of that tradition, with the thinking of Parmenides and Plato, stands the challenge of the mystery of being and the mystery of the human power of interrogating being. Lonergan and Heidegger are both in league with this tradition. But both, too, have their strongest ancient affinities with the philosophy of Aristotle, who stands, in many ways, as the third interlocutor in this discourse regarding being. If both Heidegger and Lonergan seek a single meaning of “being” that stands behind the many senses in which being is spoken of, it is because Aristotle had set out the problem in terms of multiple senses. If Heidegger and Lonergan formulate the nature of the being that reflects on being in term of movement, it is because they are carrying further the Aristotelian meditation on *physis* that brought the question of movement to the Platonic and Parmenidean conceptuality that Aristotle inherited.

In this connection, then, as Heidegger and Lonergan both understood, the question of being always demands innovative, even radical thinking, but the kind that also continually returns to its origins, both in experience and in history.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON  
PROFESSOR WILKINS'S PAPER,  
"METHOD AND METAPHYSICS IN THEOLOGY:  
DORAN AND LONERGAN"

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**A**T FOCAL ISSUE in Professor Wilkins's recent paper, "Method and Metaphysics in Theology: Doran and Lonergan,"<sup>1</sup> is what, if any, are the precise implications for methodical theology of Bernard Lonergan's remark in *Method in Theology*, "For every term and relation there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness."<sup>2</sup> Wilkins is opposed to what he understands as Robert Doran's interpretation of the remark and the remark's significance in methodical theology. Against Doran, he claims to "establish" and "demonstrate the lucidity" of his positive contention that Lonergan's remark should properly be interpreted as including neither "the generically metaphysical categories of scholastic theology," nor even the special categories of Lonergan's scholastic theology, but just the "metaphysical notions alone" or "metaphysical categories in the

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremy D. Wilkins, "Method and Metaphysics in Theology: Doran and Lonergan," in *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, n.s. 5, no. 2 (2014): 53-85. Page references to Wilkins's paper occur parenthetically, either in the text or, occasionally, as part of a footnote.

<sup>2</sup>Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 343. In the second paragraph of his paper (54) and in two subsequent places (56, 62), when he quotes this sentence, Wilkins inserts "metaphysical" in brackets as a qualification of "term and relation," presumably intending the insertion to be a clarification for the reader's benefit. As will become clear, in his estimation (see, for example, 55) both he and Doran agree that the terms and relations referred to in Lonergan's remark are, in some sense, metaphysical terms and relations, but they disagree over which metaphysical terms and relations Lonergan intended to include in his remark.

strict sense," namely, potency, form, and act (55, 59, 61, 84). And as if to provide an additional buttress for his position, he claims to "show" also that Lonergan never intended his remark "to refer to scholastic theological categories" and that it "quickly loses its lucidity" when it is made to do so (55). Moreover, the "correspondence" mentioned in the remark is the "isomorphism of cognitional and ontological structure" (61) or, again, "the isomorphism of ontological to cognitional elements," with the "direction of the derivation" being from the cognitional elements to the ontological elements and not the other way round (59, 61, 63-64, 84).<sup>3</sup>

Wilkins, then, is (1) claiming that Lonergan, in making his remark in *Method in Theology*, is alluding to what he affirmed in *Insight* when he put forward the major premise for effecting the transition from latent to explicit, critical metaphysics;<sup>4</sup> (2) arguing that Lonergan intended to affirm nothing less but also nothing more than what he affirmed when he initially put forward the premise in *Insight*. Thus, in Wilkins's commentary on what he designates as Lonergan's paragraph [B], the quoted paragraph (60) from *Method in Theology* in which Lonergan's remark is located, he connects the remark with Lonergan's "metaphysical program" in *Insight*, namely, the development of a critical metaphysics "on the basis of the isomorphism of knowing and being" (see 62, 63-64). Again, he connects Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark with Lonergan's statement regarding the systematic function of transcendental method, in which the objectification of transcendental method yields a basic set of terms and relations ("the substance of cognitional theory") that are "found to be isomorphic with the terms and relations denoting the ontological structure of any reality proportionate to human cognitional process."<sup>5</sup> And later in his paper, under the heading, "A Broader

<sup>3</sup>At one point (57), after quoting Doran quoting Lonergan's remark, Wilkins characterizes Doran's understanding of Lonergan's remark as implying, among other things, that "the 'corresponding element' seems to entail a direct correspondence to data in our experience." Is this not a puzzling characterization of Doran's understanding of the remark? In Lonergan's remark, the terms and relations are *that for which* there will exist a "corresponding element" in intentional consciousness. So the element in intentional consciousness is the "corresponding element." The terms and relations are not in Lonergan's remark, nor, I presume, in Doran's understanding of the remark, characterized as the "corresponding element" but as that for which there is a corresponding element. Perhaps Wilkins means simply that for Doran the *correspondence* mentioned in Lonergan's remark "seems to entail . . ."

<sup>4</sup>See Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 424.

<sup>5</sup>*Method in Theology*, 21.

Context," Wilkins will quote in full Lonergan's statement regarding the major premise and the set of primary minor premises involved in effecting the transition from latent metaphysics to explicit, critical metaphysics (except for leaving out Lonergan's clarifying remark that the major premise is analytic) and says that the method indicated by these premises "is very compendiously described in our passage from *Method in Theology*" (70), meaning, I presume, Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark. Lonergan's statement, Wilkins repeats toward the end of his paper, "means precisely the isomorphism of knowing and being" (84). Accordingly, if one distinguishes, as Lonergan does, between the basic anthropological and the specifically religious component of theological method,<sup>6</sup> Wilkins's interpretation of Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark effectively regards its significance as pertaining directly to the anthropological component of theological method, in particular to Lonergan's position that cognitional theory, not metaphysics, is the "basic science."<sup>7</sup> Its significance does not pertain directly to the formulation of new theological categories in methodical theology by working back from the metaphysical categories of scholastic theology or even from the special categories of Lonergan's scholastic theology, though Wilkins allows that Lonergan's remark may have an indirect, regulative function in that it provides a control that enables one to identify and so discard empty theological categories (see 64-69).<sup>8</sup>

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Wilkins says he takes Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark as including just the metaphysical notions "in the strict sense" or "metaphysical notions alone," as exemplified by potency, form, and act (55, 59). A few pages later, he repeats his interpretation of Lonergan's remark, but the terminology shifts slightly: now potency, form, and act are said to be "categories of a critical metaphysics" (61). Again, he states that in medieval theology form and act

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<sup>6</sup>See *Method in Theology*, 25.

<sup>7</sup>Thus, Wilkins writes, "As a whole, the present passage is not concerned with the generation of new categories or how the new categories are to be related to the scholastic categories. Rather, it is concerned to explain why metaphysics has been made not basic but derivative, and what advantages result from its displacement as the basic science" (63; compare with 59, 69).

<sup>8</sup>Wilkins also allows for the possibility that Doran's program, although expressly based on a mistaken interpretation of Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark, may still in fact have a "sufficient warrant" from the plausible theological expectation that the order of grace will be analogous to the order of Trinitarian relations (see 55; compare with 81-82, 84-85).

are among “the generic metaphysical categories” pertaining to metaphysics, considered as the basic science; they are general categories that “become specific to theology only by further determinations” (74). Finally, toward the end of his paper Wilkins reiterates his position that Lonergan’s remark “is restricted to metaphysical categories in the strict sense” (84).

Let me register some unease regarding the way in which Wilkins uses the expression “metaphysical categories” in his paper to refer to potency, form, and act. My unease arises not because I hold that the expression cannot legitimately be so used, and not because such usage is relatively infrequent in Lonergan’s writings on metaphysics,<sup>9</sup> but because such usage

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<sup>9</sup>A brief, cursory examination of some of Lonergan’s published texts written prior to the publication of *Method in Theology* and of some archival texts reveals the following. In an early set of notes, “Intelligence and Reality,” Lonergan says that categories are “general lines of cleavage, division, ordering of the universe of being” (Bernard Lonergan, “Intelligence and Reality,” Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/10400DTE050.pdf>, 23). He speaks of potency, form, and act as “terminal categories,” meaning by that “what is understood or anticipated as intelligible” (28), and he distinguishes them from descriptive, heuristic, and dialectical categories (23). These terminal categories are said to be the “conditions of true propositions as true” (24). The expression “metaphysical categories” occurs nowhere in *Insight* apart from the passing reference to the “bloodless ballet of metaphysical categories” (570; but see 329 and note e on 795). “Intelligence and Reality” (14) also speaks of the “bloodless ballet of categories.” (Just as a peripheral matter of interest, F. H. Bradley in *Principles of Logic* [New York: G. E. Stechert & Co., 1912], 533, rather famously uses the expression “unearthly ballet of bloodless categories.” Lonergan says in one place that he never read Bradley, and in another place that he did read about Bradley [see Bernard Lonergan, “Transcription Q&A 2 LW 1979,” Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/96400DTE070.pdf>, 9 and “Q&A June 21 79 LW,” Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/32610DTE070.pdf>, 7 ], so it is at least possible that during his time in England in the late nineteen-twenties, he might have heard or read someone referring to Bradley and using the more compactly alliterative and rhetorically telling variant of Bradley’s memorable expression). On occasion, Lonergan will speak of potency, form, and act as the fundamental categories of metaphysics (see Bernard Lonergan, *Early Work on Theological Method 2*, vol. 23 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, trans. Michael G. Shield and ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013], 137, 501; see also Bernard Lonergan, “Q&A 3 LW 1976 transcription,” Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/88800DTE070.pdf>, 7, where in response to a question Lonergan speaks of “the metaphysical categories of potency, form, and act”). Finally, in “Bernard Lonergan Responds (2),” in *Shorter Papers*, vol. 20 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert C. Croken, Robert M. Doran, and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 280, Lonergan remarks that “. . . potency and act are relevant categories for the whole of reality . . .” A more lengthy and thorough examination of Lonergan’s texts would likely reveal other instances of such usage. But at least in *Insight*, the work in which we find Lonergan’s most extended and carefully thought-through discussion of metaphysics, when speaking of potency, form, and act, he preferred the expression “metaphysical elements” over “metaphysical categories.” And, as I shall argue, in *Method in Theology* his express use of “category” and its derivatives to refer to determinations made the word and its derivatives unsuitable as a way of characterizing potency, form, and act. As he says, “. . . metaphysics is transcendental, an integration of heuristic structures, and not

fits awkwardly with Lonergan's preferred way of using "category" and its derivatives in *Method in Theology*. In that work, "metaphysical categories" occurs once as a subentry in the index (which was not compiled by Lonergan) but nowhere in the text, not even on the page cited by the subentry, and it is certainly not used to refer to potency, form, and act.<sup>10</sup> Lonergan uses "category" / "categories" / "categorical" in *Method in Theology* to refer to *determinations*, specific in connotation and limited or restricted in denotation.<sup>11</sup> Given this usage, if Lonergan had had occasion in *Method in Theology* to engage in an express discussion of potency, form, and act, for him to have referred to them as categories would have risked confusion, the avoidance of which would have necessitated an explanation that such categories are, as such, not determinations specific in connotation and limited or restricted in denotation.<sup>12</sup>

There is, I suggest, a similar risk of confusion for anyone using the expression "metaphysical categories" to refer to potency, form, and act in the context of a discussion of the meaning of a text in *Method in Theology*. For such usage can easily result in one proceeding in one's discussion and in the presentation of one's arguments as if potency, form, and act are, like typical categories, *determinations* that are specific in connotation and limited or restricted in denotation.

Potency, form, and act are not like typical "categories"; considered just as metaphysical elements, they are not *determinations* that are specific in connotation and limited or restricted in denotation.<sup>13</sup> So discourse

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some categorial speculation that reveals that all is water, or matter, or spirit, or process, or what have you" (*Method in Theology*, 25).

<sup>10</sup>See *Method in Theology*, 383, the index entry under "Grace." The subentry cites page 288, a page which mentions grace in terms of metaphysical psychology. The closest Lonergan comes in *Method in Theology* to speaking of a metaphysical element as a "category" is the following from page 11: "They [categories] need not be called categories, as were the four causes, *end, agent, matter, form, . . .*"

<sup>11</sup>"Categories are determinations. They have a limited denotation" (*Method in Theology*, 11). "The categorial are the determinations reached through experiencing, understanding, judging, deciding. The transcendental notions ground questioning. Answers develop categorial determinations" (*Method in Theology*, 73-74).

<sup>12</sup>The one reference to potency, form, and act in *Method in Theology* occurs in a footnote on page 95 in which Lonergan refers the reader to a page in *Insight* that "gives the basis for the generality of the terms, potency, form, act."

<sup>13</sup>"By "unrestricted in denotation" I mean that they [the intelligible, or the true, or the real, or the good] are not tied down to some limited category. Everything is intelligible; otherwise we would be wasting our time trying to know it through understanding. Similarly, everything real is being. Reality in its every aspect is being. There is no restriction. If you talk about man, or the

about them is not like discourse about men and women, horses and dogs, hydrogen and oxygen, and so forth.<sup>14</sup> "Potency, form, and act . . . are defined by their relations to one another. On the one hand, therefore, their contents aren't determined, but on the other hand, you can use those terms to refer, not simply to whatever has this relation to this other, but to *all* of what has this relation to the other. And you save the concreteness of being, and the developing character of human knowledge, by that type of approach to metaphysics."<sup>15</sup> More basically, they are defined not solely by their relations to one another but "by their relations to human knowing."<sup>16</sup> Thus, "... 'act' names what is to be known insofar as we say 'is,' 'form' names what is to be known insofar as we understand, and 'potency' names what is to be known insofar as we experience."<sup>17</sup> So, whether defined by their relations to one another or, more basically, by their relations to human knowing, "potency," "form," and "act" are general concepts and names whose reference "is exclusively to concrete potencies, forms, and acts."<sup>18</sup> Accordingly, they are unlike typical categories that are determinations specific in connotation and limited or restricted in denotation.

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earth, or anything else, you are talking in some category and you have something restricted in denotation" (Bernard Lonergan, "Q&A period 1, Dublin Institute 1971 on Method in Theology," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/640Q0DTE070.pdf>, 5-6, reply to q. 4).

<sup>14</sup>"Potency, form, and act are constituents of what is known by experience, understanding, and judgment, where potency corresponds to the experiencing, form to the understanding, and act to the judging. Quite clearly, then, potency itself is not known by experiencing, understanding, and judgment, and so it is not composed of a further potency, form, and act. But if this is so, then there is a profound difference between discourse about horses and dogs and discourse about potency, form, and act; for from the former through the rules of metaphysical equivalence one arrives at constituent potencies, forms, and acts; but from the latter one cannot legitimately proceed to a repetition of the analysis with respect to the elements themselves. It is this difference that is expressed in traditional metaphysics when it is affirmed that, while horses and dogs exist and change, potency, form, and act are, not what exists or changes, but that by which are constituted the beings that exist and change" (*Insight*, 535-36).

<sup>15</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Understanding and Being: The Halifax Lectures on Insight*, vol. 5 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli, rev. and augmented by Frederick E. Crowe with the collaboration of Elizabeth A. Morelli, Mark D. Morelli, Robert M. Doran, and Thomas V. Daly (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 344.

<sup>16</sup>*Insight*, 757.

<sup>17</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Early Works on Theological Method 3*, vol. 24 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, trans. Michael G. Shields and ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 100.

<sup>18</sup>*Insight*, 527. Again, "By potency, form, act I do not mean anything abstract. Those three terms are always concrete for me, and they are defined by their relations to one another" (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], 334).

In his discussion of Lonergan's criticisms of the "old situation" in metaphysics, Wilkins seems at times to proceed as if at least some of the metaphysical elements are themselves typical categorical determinations. Thus, he writes:

As long as metaphysics was the basic science, the special categories were formulated as further determinations of metaphysical categories. Scholastic special categories like sanctifying grace and the habit of charity are generically metaphysical. To conceive them as accidental habits is to add further determinations to the generic metaphysical categories of form, which is related to act, and quality, an accident related to substance. In medieval theology substance, accident, form, act, quality are all basic, for they pertain to metaphysics, the basic science. They are all general, for they become specific to theology only by further determinations. (74)

As best as I can understand the salient points suggested by these remarks and the surrounding remarks, Wilkins is interpreting Lonergan as saying that in the scholastic tradition (deriving from Aristotle), metaphysics was considered as the basic science, and its categories were considered basic categories. Other disciplines and their categories were considered as "generically metaphysical" because their categories "added determinations" to the basic "generic" categories of metaphysics, prominent among which is form. Thus, the special categories of scholastic theology were considered as being "generically metaphysics" because they add further "determinations" to the basic categories of metaphysics, and they do so in the same way as a difference adds a further "determination" to an already somewhat determinate genus.

If I have correctly understood Wilkins's interpretation of Lonergan's claims on these points, I find it difficult to reconcile the last part of his interpretation with some of the positions on the metaphysical elements that Lonergan argued for in *Insight*. Taken literally, Wilkins's remarks amount to treating form as itself a genus, that is, "a determinant content quite distinct from the content of its difference"<sup>19</sup> but open to *differentiae*. But then that determinant content would be only part of what a thing is and as such would be abstract. For Lonergan, however, potency, form, and act

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<sup>19</sup>*Insight*, 386.

are general without being abstract.<sup>20</sup> They are general without being *generic*, for they are utterly concrete. Accordingly, I cannot see how, for Lonergan, there can, properly speaking, be any such thing as the generic metaphysical category of form.<sup>21</sup> And even if one takes into account all of his criticisms of the Aristotelian ideal of science and of Aristotelian architectonics,<sup>22</sup> I doubt that Lonergan is actually saying that Aristotle in his thinking on metaphysics understood form as generic and so as abstract and that the scholastic tradition, as represented by Aquinas, likewise understood form as generic and so as abstract. For that would completely undermine his claim that the results of applying the method for metaphysics worked out in *Insight* “bears an astounding similarity to the doctrines of the Aristotelian and Thomist tradition.”<sup>23</sup>

One can, I suggest, follow the thrust of Lonergan’s argument without invoking a *generic* metaphysical category of form. Leaving aside his frequent discussions in his later writings of the shortcomings of the Aristotelian ideal of science, for present purposes two of his critical observations of Aristotelian architectonics warrant a brief mention. First, as Wilkins himself notes (74), Lonergan observes that the Aristotelian framework, with psychology (general theory of being as sensitive and intelligent),

<sup>20</sup>*Insight*, 527-28.

<sup>21</sup>Lonergan’s account of generic and specific differences is stated briefly as follows: “There are generic differences inasmuch as conjugate forms emerge on successive higher levels, and there are specific differences inasmuch as different unities are differentiated by different sets of conjugates” (*Insight*, 531).

<sup>22</sup>The expression is one Lonergan used. See Bernard Lonergan, “Christology Today: Methodological Reflections,” in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 76. The Aristotelian framework he has in mind is described briefly in, for example, Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, vol. 2 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 3-4. Compare with Lonergan, “Bernard Lonergan Responds (2),” in *Shorter Papers*, 276; Bernard Lonergan, “Is It Real?,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, vol. 17 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 132; and in the same work, “Lecture 1: Philosophy of God,” 166 and “Lecture 2: The Functional Specialty ‘Systematics’,” 190.

<sup>23</sup>*Insight*, 545; compare with 425, where in his discussion of method in metaphysics Lonergan says that the results arrived at in the Aristotelian and Thomist schools “largely anticipate our own.” Of course, “astounding similarity” and “largely anticipate our own” do not imply complete identity. Thus, speaking of potency, form, and act, Lonergan says the following on page 458 of the same work: “. . . while we employ the names introduced by Aristotle and while we assign them a meaning that Aristotle would recognize as his own, nonetheless Aristotle’s ready use of merely descriptive knowledge and our insistence on explanation involve different starting points, different tendencies, and differences in implication.”

biology (general theory of being as living) and physics (general theory of being as mobile) subalternate to metaphysics or first philosophy (general theory of being as being), impeded the development and recognition of autonomous departments of knowledge concerned with different domains of data and equipped with specific methods for attaining, with respect to those different domains of data, their own proper terms and relations that are not mere prolongations of the common notions of metaphysics or first philosophy.<sup>24</sup> His second critical observation is really a pointed application of the first. Lonergan does not claim that there is a total neglect of the data of consciousness in Aristotelian and Thomist thought. He does claim, however, that there is lacking in Aristotelian and Thomist thought a prolonged, methodical attention to and explanatory integration of the data of consciousness on their own terms.<sup>25</sup> As a consequence, a metaphysical psychology replete with its various faculties developed but not a theory in terms of consciousness and intentionality – one that flows out of following a way of sustained and guided concrete self-attention and self-discovery.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>See, for example, Bernard Lonergan, "Revolution in Catholic Theology," in *A Second Collection*, vol. 13 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadosky (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 199, and in the same work, "Theology and Man's Future," 116-17; "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation," in *A Third Collection*, 41-42, 46-47, and in the same work, "Christology Today: Methodological Reflection," 75-76, "Religious Knowledge," 135-36, "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," 146-48; *Method in Theology*, 85, 94-96. Perhaps a too ready use of descriptive knowledge as a stand-in for knowledge of forms contributed to the longevity of this arrangement. On common notions, see Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. from *De Deo Trino: Pars systematica* (1964) trans. Michael G. Shields and ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 147, 171, 173, 179. Note his remark on page 171: "We know things immediately and naturally in two ways: in one way, according to the common notions such as being, one, true, good, the same and the diverse, act and potency, the absolute and the relative, and other notions of this kind; in the other way, according to the generic and specific natures of things." And on page 179: "A systematic analogy [in theology] is based either on common notions and principles elaborated in general metaphysics, or in some determinate created nature such as the physical, the chemical, the biological, the sensitive, the intellectual."

<sup>25</sup>"Thomism had much to say on the metaphysics of the soul, but it was little given to psychological introspection to gain knowledge of the subject. Behind this fact there did not lie any neglect of introspection on the part of Aristotle and Aquinas; I believe they hit things off much too accurately for that to be true. The difficulty was, I think, that while Aristotle did practice introspection, still his works contain no account of introspective method" ("The Future of Thomism," in *A Second Collection*, 43, and see in the same work, "The Subject," 62-63. See also *Verbum*, 5-6, 9-10).

<sup>26</sup>"The priority of metaphysics in the Aristotelian tradition led to a faculty psychology. For other sciences were subordinate to the first science; from it they derived their basic terms and theorems; and so Aristotelian psychology had to be a metaphysical psychology in terms

But even granted all of his criticisms of the consequences of taking metaphysics as the basic science, what Lonergan argued for in *Insight* still holds: just as the notion of being is all-pervasive, underpinning all cognitional

of potencies, forms, and acts" ("Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, 395; see also 396-98). Although the list that follows is hardly exhaustive, it may be useful to assemble in one note a not strictly chronological sampling of places where one can find Lonergan alluding to or remarking on the shortcomings of faculty psychology: Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, vol. 10 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, revising and augmenting the unpublished text by James Quinn and John Quinn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 83, 209-10, 265; "Faith and Beliefs," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, 37, and in the same work, "Lecture 2: The Functional Specialty 'Systematics,'" 190, "A New Pastoral Theology," 234; "The Subject," in *A Second Collection*, 69, and in the same work, "The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World," 144, "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J.," 188, "Insight Revisited," 232; "Mission and Spirit," in *A Third Collection*, 28, and in the same work, "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation," 45-46, "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections," 75-76, "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," 159-60, "Theology and Praxis, 200n33, referring back to page 191; *Method in Theology*, 96, 268-69, 340-44; "Foreword to Bernard Tyrrell, *Bernard Lonergan's Philosophy of God*," in *Shorter Papers*, 290-92, and in the same work, "A Response to Fr. Dych," 301-302; Bernard Lonergan, "Thrusts and Breakthroughs," in *Caring About Meaning: Patterns in the Life of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Pierrot Lambert, Charlotte Tansey, and Cathleen Going (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1982), 43; Bernard Lonergan, "Grace after Faculty Psychology," in *Curiosity at the Center of One's Life: Statements and Questions of R. Eric O'Connor*, ed. J. Martin O'Hara (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1987), 402; Bernard Lonergan, "1969 Institute on Method Lecture 3B Transcript," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/52000DTE060.pdf>, 17; Bernard Lonergan, "1969 Institute on Method Lecture 9 Transcript," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/53100DTE060.pdf>, 10-13, 35; Bernard Lonergan, "Religious Commitment," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/23360DTE070.pdf>, 26-27; Bernard Lonergan, "Lecture 8, part 1, of Dublin Institute 1971 on Method in Theology," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/647A0DTE070.pdf>, 3, 8; Bernard Lonergan, "Q&A period 1, Dublin Institute 1971 on Method in Theology," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/640Q0DTE070.pdf>, 2-3; Bernard Lonergan, "Q&A period 3, Dublin Institute 1971 on Method in Theology," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/643Q0DTE070.pdf>, 6-7; Bernard Lonergan, "Q&A 2 LW 1974 transcription," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/810A0DTE070.pdf>, 3; Bernard Lonergan, "Q&A 5 LW 1974 transcription," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/815A0DTE070.pdf>, 8; Bernard Lonergan, "Q&A 1 LW 1976 transcription," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/88500DTE070.pdf>, 1-2; Bernard Lonergan, "Q&A 3 LW 1976 transcription," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/88800DTE070.pdf>, 7; Bernard Lonergan, "Transcription of Q&A1 LW 1977," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/91600DTE070.pdf>, 1; Bernard Lonergan, "Transcription Q&A 3 LW 1977," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/91900DTE070.pdf>, 1-2; Bernard Lonergan, "Transcription Q&A 3 LW 1978," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/94400DTE070.pdf>, 2; Bernard Lonergan, "Transcription Q&A 1 LW 1979," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/96300DTE070.pdf>, 5-6. As far as I can see, in none of these places does Lonergan attribute to Aristotelian and Thomist thought a generic metaphysical category of form.

contents, penetrating them all and constituting them as cognitional, so metaphysics, as he understands it, "is the department of human knowledge that underlies, penetrates, transforms, and unifies all other departments."<sup>27</sup> In one way or another, the genuine results of all other departments of human knowledge still instantiate the basic structure of potency, form, and act; these constitute a nucleus to be continually enriched; a riverbed of stable contours, within which all genuine results continually flow.<sup>28</sup> And this remains the case irrespective of whether metaphysics is regarded as basic or in third place after cognitional theory and epistemology, or whether it exists in a culture predominantly in a latent, problematic, or explicit and critical stage or form.<sup>29</sup>

There is a further issue giving rise to my unease. Wilkins does seem at times to argue his case as if potency, form, and act are capable somehow of existing in their own right. Thus, he says that the terms and relations mentioned in Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark are limited to metaphysical categories "in the strict sense" or, again, to "metaphysical notions alone,"<sup>30</sup> which at least suggests that potency, form, and act can, as such, somehow stand separately and fully-fledged, just by themselves, in their own right. He will not allow that the terms and relations mentioned in Lonergan's remark refer to any "larger group of categories" such as "the terms and relations of scholastic theology," which at least suggests that, for him, the "metaphysical categories in the strict sense" are categories in the same way as the "larger

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<sup>27</sup>*Insight*, 380-81, 415-16.

<sup>28</sup>"[The metaphysical elements] express the structure in which one knows what proportionate being is; they outline the mold in which an understanding of proportionate being necessarily will flow . . ." (*Insight*, 521). "When science reaches its ultimate goal of explaining all phenomena, what will it consist in? It will be a theory verified in endless instances. Because there are endless instances, you have matter, potency. Because you have a theory, something corresponding to understanding, you have form. Insofar as you have verification, you have judgment and existence of what is known by the theory" (Bernard Lonergan, *Early Work on Theological Method 1*, vol. 22 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Robert C. Croken [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010], 135). The reference to potency, form, and act as "a nucleus to be enriched" occurs, for example, in *Insight*, 758. The image of a riverbed occurs, for example, in Bernard Lonergan, "Lonergan Notes, *Insight*," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/84400DTE060.pdf>, 1; "Theology and Praxis," in *A Third Collection*, 194; compare with "The Philosophy of History" in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 67.

<sup>29</sup>On these three stages or forms of metaphysics, see *Insight*, 416.

<sup>30</sup>Italics added.

group of categories" are categories – only smaller or less determinate. Again, Wilkins writes:

On the interpretation proposed here, (1) the terms and relations are the categories of a critical metaphysics (for example, potency, form, act); (2) the correspondence is the isomorphism of cognitional and ontological structure; and (3) the precept is for the derivation of ontological structure from cognitional structure, and not the other way round. (61)

Now the elements of metaphysics or intrinsic principles of proportionate being – potency, form, act – “do not themselves exist, but something exists through them.”<sup>31</sup> However, there is no mention or indication in this quote from Wilkins, which purports to encapsulate his interpretation of Lonergan’s paragraph [B] remark, that potency, form, and act are always potency, form, and act *of* some being, some reality. Lonergan’s “major premise” in *Insight* certainly does affirm an isomorphism. But it does not affirm an isomorphism between the structure of knowing and some free-floating structure of potency, form, and act. It speaks, rather, of the isomorphism that obtains between the structure of knowing and the structure of *the known*. Accordingly, even though Wilkins insists that the terms and relations referred to in Lonergan’s paragraph [B] remark are just the metaphysical categories “in the strict sense” or “metaphysical notions alone,” they would still have to be the terms and relations of some being, some reality. To put it another way, since every reality of proportionate being instantiates the structure of potency, form, and act, Wilkins’s “metaphysical categories in the strict sense” or “metaphysical notions alone” applies to either each and every reality of proportionate being or to nothing.

Next, there is the issue of direction implied in Lonergan’s paragraph [B] remark. In his interpretation of the remark, Wilkins lays considerable stress on his claim that the direction of derivation intended in the remark is from the cognitional structure to the ontological structure and not the other way round. The way in which Lonergan chose to state his meaning in the remark,

<sup>31</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, vol. 7 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, trans. from the fourth edition of *De constitutione Christi ontologica et psychologica* by Michael G. Shields (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 17; compare with *The Triune God: Systematics*, 241: “There are the constitutive principles of being, such as essence and existence, matter and form, substance and accident, potency and act; none of these themselves are, but by them something is.”

however, does not in any obvious way accommodate Wilkins's exclusive claim. At the very least, Lonergan's remark, taken just by itself, does not in any obvious way absolutely disallow a movement from a term and relation, already given in some way, to a concomitantly existing element in intentional consciousness. Again, Lonergan's remark does not speak of a corresponding point-by-point term and relation in intentional consciousness, which is what one would expect if Wilkins's interpretation were clearly correct. It speaks more vaguely, and perhaps ambiguously, of "a corresponding element in intentional consciousness."

The entire issue surrounding an adequate interpretation of Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark involves, I suggest, more intricacies than Wilkins allows himself to envisage when he insists, against Doran, that the remark is not in any way directly concerned with the formulation of new theological categories but just with bringing to mind the derivation of explicit, critical metaphysics, as outlined in *Insight*, and that, as a consequence, the direction of derivation intended in the remark must be from cognitional categories to ontological categories, not the other way round.

Let me attempt to give an inkling of some of the intricacies. When he quotes Lonergan's statement of the isomorphism obtaining between the structure of knowing and the structure of the known, Wilkins omits both Lonergan's sentence stating that the major premise is analytic and any mention of what Lonergan calls the set of secondary minor premises (see page 70). Now if the major premise is analytic, as Lonergan claims, then analyticity would be preserved if, having followed and accepted Lonergan's argument for the emergence of explicit, critical metaphysics, one were subsequently to reverse the order in which the two sets of patterned elements in the apodosis of the major premise are mentioned. For "A cannot be similar to B without B being similar to A."<sup>32</sup> Thus, like Lonergan's major premise, the following statement would also be analytic:

If the knowing consists of a related set of acts and the known is the related set of contents of these acts, then the pattern of the relations between the contents of the acts is similar in form to the pattern of the relations between the acts.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>*Insight*, 530.

<sup>33</sup>"Why does our knowledge begin with presentations, mount to inquiry, understanding, and formulation, to end with critical reflection and judgment? It is because the proportionate

And if this statement preserves analyticity, then in principle the "direction of derivation" need not be rigidly one way: the direction depends upon one's purpose, on what one is trying to achieve. In particular, if, following Lonergan's lead in *Insight*, one has managed to attain some degree of competence in critical metaphysics, there is nothing to prevent one from taking some proposition or set of propositions (some secondary minor premise or set of secondary minor premises) which one has previously come to understand and accept as true and attempting to work back and identify the corresponding actual, individual, concrete formal content or contents (formal intelligibility) that one arrived at when one exercised one's cognitional structure in coming to understand and accept as true that proposition or set of propositions. Indeed, this is what is involved in the procedures Lonergan outlines in his discussion of metaphysical equivalence and the essential appropriation of truth.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, when one considers some true proposition or set of true propositions taken from some particular departments of human inquiry, including theological inquiry, with a view to ascertaining its or their metaphysical equivalents, one is not confined to considering a purely heuristic structure. One is considering the conceived and affirmed end-product(s) of cognitional process, whose filled-out contents await transposition and resolution in accordance with the requirements of the already delineated structure of ontological elements of potency, form, and act. Such transposition and resolution may not be easy. It is impeded in a number of obvious ways. For example, the meaning of such propositions may be expressed descriptively, symbolically, or metaphorically; they may not be concrete but abstract or general; one proposition may refer obliquely to several realities or, again, several propositions may in fact refer obliquely to one reality. One attempts the transposition and resolu-

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object of our knowing is constituted by combining different types of intelligibility. Insofar as that object is only potentially intelligible, it is to be known by mere experience; insofar as it is formally intelligible, it is to be known inasmuch as we are understanding; insofar as it is actually intelligible, it is to be known inasmuch as we posit the virtually unconditioned yes. Again, experience is of things as potentially intelligible, but through experience alone we do not know what the things are. Understanding is of things as formally intelligible, but through understanding we do not know whether things are what we understand them to be. Judgment is of things as actually intelligible, but through judgment alone we would not know either the nature or the merely empirical difference of what we affirm to be" (*Insight*, 525-26).

<sup>34</sup>On these procedures, see *Insight*, 526-33, 581-85. Lonergan describes formal intelligibility as "the dominant element" in any consequent conceptual expression (see *Insight*, 524). Working back from some set of secondary minor premises, then, is attempting to identify these dominant elements.

tion to attain a more precise hold on what one has understood and, perhaps, to make further progress in understanding more likely. For the essential appropriation of truth and metaphysical equivalence provide techniques for the precise control of meaning. In particular, they are a way of pinning down or identifying the concrete formal content compacted or folded up in the conceptual expression of the proposition or set of propositions one is considering.<sup>35</sup> Again, besides this positive function, there is a negative function: as a control of meaning, implementing these techniques aids in identifying and eliminating propositions that are in fact "empty or misleading."<sup>36</sup>

There is, I suggest, no justification for emphasizing the negative role these techniques can play in human inquiry and downplaying, disregarding, or discounting their possible positive function. And this applies even in the case of theological inquiry:

Insofar as there is a demand for exactitude, for stating precisely what you mean, all you mean, and nothing but that, you are going to start using techniques, and among them metaphysical techniques. The fundamental use of metaphysics in theology is, Do you mean something or do you not? and if you have two propositions, Do they mean the same thing or do they not? The principle of metaphysical equivalence is worked out in chapter 16 of *Insight*. Most so called metaphysical questions in theology simply reduce to that: put down your true propositions on one side; and on the other side, the metaphysical conditions of the proposition being true . . . .

. . . if you are not just talking through your hat, then you mean something, and there is some corresponding reality implied. What is that reality? You have further propositions; does the same reality account for their truth, or do you require a further reality? Are you saying the same thing when you make the second statement as when you make the first, as far as real difference goes, or are you not?

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<sup>35</sup>See *Insight*, 526-31. Again, ". . . once the insight is reached, one is able to find in one's own experience just what it is that falls under the insight's grasp and what lies outside it. However, ability is one thing, and performance is another. Identification is performance. Its effect is to make one possess the insight as one's own, to be assured in one's use of it, to be familiar with the range of its relevance" (*Insight*, 582).

<sup>36</sup>*Method in Theology*, 343. Compare with Lonergan's remarks in *Insight* (530-31) on the significance of metaphysical equivalence as providing a critical technique for the precise control of meaning.

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Practically all the metaphysical questions in theology reduce to that, as far as I know. And the three fundamental metaphysical realities are in the order of potency, form, and act.<sup>37</sup>

Wilkins does mention metaphysical equivalence in one place in his paper (see pages 83-84), but only to dismiss the procedure as irrelevant to the issue at hand because it is "not, in itself, a method of theological transposition" and because it moves "opposite to the direction required." Neither of these reasons, I submit, is convincing. "[T]he objects of theology," Lonergan remarks, "do not lie outside the transcendental field."<sup>38</sup> They may be mysteries hidden in God, the understanding of which remains imperfect, obscure, analogical, and gradually developing, but they do not lie outside being. If the mysteries hidden in God are in some way accessible to the knowing processes of human beings; if they can be expressed in theological propositions that are true; then there will perforce be some kind of correspondence between the objects of such propositions and at least some of the metaphysical elements, though it is unlikely to be a simple one-to-one correspondence.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, if there is some kind of correspondence between the objects of true theological propositions and the metaphysical elements, since those elements, considered as elements of realities accessed in some way, however inadequately, through the human knowing process of experiencing, understanding, and affirmation, they are intelligible contents of conscious operations. Suppose, then, that one has been schooled in transcendental method and become practised and somewhat proficient in applying the operations as intentional to the operations as conscious and objectifying the normative pattern of one's conscious and intentional operations. One is then in possession of an habitual set of skills, techniques, and concepts that one can bring into play to facilitate and inform one's attempts to apply the operations as intentional also to the *contents* of the operations as conscious, to their felt sense, in order to select, pin down with some precision, identify and, in some measure, objectify those

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<sup>37</sup>*Early Works on Theological Method 1*, 368.

<sup>38</sup>*Method in Theology*, 23.

<sup>39</sup>"... since metaphysical elements and true propositions both refer to being, there must be some correspondence between them. On the other hand, since metaphysical analysis has a quite different basis from grammatical or logical analysis, one must not expect any one-to-one correspondence between metaphysical elements and grammatical or logical elements" (*Insight*, 526).

conscious contents. And in methodical theology, if one is dealing initially with intelligible contents drawn from the scholastic theological tradition, the subsequent objectification of those conscious contents will not always be confined to the terms and relations of that tradition but frequently will undergo a reorientation and transformation and come to be expressed in the terms and relations informed and enriched by intentionality analysis. This, I suggest, is the process involved in the shift from conceiving sanctifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*) as an entitative *habitus*<sup>40</sup> radicated in the essence of the soul to conceiving it with greater richness and concreteness as the dynamic state of being-in-love with the transcendent mystery to which one is oriented, being-in-love in an unrestricted fashion – with one's whole heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30), as upheld and sustained by an unrestricted, absolute objective – being-in-love with God.<sup>41</sup>

Revert now to Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark. I have already given a reason for saying that if one takes Wilkins's words literally, it is difficult to make clear sense of his claim that the terms and relations mentioned in Lonergan's remark are just "metaphysical notions alone," just the terms and relations of metaphysics "in the strict sense," that is, just interrelated potency, form, and act. For one would always have to ask: the potency, form, and act of *what*? I do not see how Wilkins can legitimately disallow this question and continue to insist that the terms and relations mentioned in Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark are just "the 'terms and relations' of metaphysics in the strict sense only," that is, just potency, form, and act, and not any "larger group of categories" (59). Even at the textual level, this interpretation of Lonergan's remark lacks plausibility: if Lonergan meant just potency, form, and act and the relations among these metaphysical elements, why did he say, "[f]or *every* term and relation . . ."? With so few terms and relations, indeed with the elements themselves constituting a unity of order, choosing to use "every" seems unlikely.

Perhaps Wilkins will say that I have misconstrued his meaning when he speaks of the metaphysical notions "alone" (55) or the metaphysical

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<sup>40</sup>I retain the word *habitus*, bearing in mind Yves Simon's argument regarding the unsuitability of translating it as *habit*. See Yves R. Simon, *The Definition of Moral Virtue*, ed. Vukan Kuic (New York: Fordham University Press, 1986), 48-61.

<sup>41</sup>See *Method in Theology*, 105-107. And see in the same work pages 14-15 for a discussion of what it means to apply the operations as intentional to the operations as conscious. Perhaps one should add that being-in-love with God, as experienced, surpasses any and every subsequent objectification of it.

categories "in the strict sense" (55, 59, 84). Despite the restriction implied by these expressions, perhaps he does mean the potency, form, and act of any known or knowable reality attained or attainable through cognitional process. That would at least reflect more clearly Lonergan's analytic major premise from *Insight*, which has application to the structure of any known or knowable reality of proportionate being. Later, when I come to comment on some specific passages from Wilkins's paper, I shall argue that Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark does involve his major premise from *Insight* but, more particularly, it points to a *characteristic* that theological categories in methodical theology will be required expressly to satisfy: for every term and relation constitutive of a theological category that is arrived at in methodical theology, there will need be a corresponding identifiable element in intentional consciousness from which the theological category is or can be in some way derived. And if that *characteristic* is not present, if there is no corresponding identifiable element in intentional consciousness from which a purported category is or can be in some way derived, then one has a warrant for discarding the purported category.<sup>42</sup> I shall further argue that such a position is a decidedly more accurate interpretation of Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark than one that insists that the terms and relations mentioned in the remark refer just to "metaphysical notions alone," just to "the metaphysical categories in the strict sense."

Now, if such a position is indeed a more accurate interpretation of Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark, a further question arises: if the metaphysical formulations of scholastic theology or, more narrowly, the formulations of Lonergan's scholastic theology, contain at least some true propositions, and so count as veridical affirmations of known realities attained through cognitional process; and if there is, in principle, a pathway by which these veridical affirmations can come to fulfil the requirement that theological categories in methodical theology need to satisfy; then what basis does one have for expressly excluding these technical formulations from being among the "terms and relations" one attends to, as one attempts to make a contribution to the functional specialty Systematics? It makes no difference to the legitimacy of this question that such categories were the products of a cognitional process that had not itself been objectified or made thematic in cognitional theory. For the isomorphism that obtains between

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<sup>42</sup>Thus, as Wilkins himself notes (see 64-68), it was largely on this basis that Lonergan argued against the Scotist "formal distinction *a parte rei*" and the Suarezian "mode."

the structure of knowing and the structure of the known is operative even in the absence of explicit articulation of the isomorphism. And once one has acknowledged the isomorphism explicitly, say, by following and accepting Lonergan's argument in *Insight* for the emergence of explicit, critical metaphysics, the only difference would be that in following the pathway to satisfying the requirement of categories in methodical theology, the "direction of derivation" would initially be opposite to the one-way direction that Wilkins countenances. Moreover, the deliberate inclusion of metaphysical categories from scholastic theology as part of what one attends to in methodical theology is readily understandable if we take into account a general pattern of development familiar from Lonergan's writings:

As the world of common sense and its language provide the scaffolding for entering into the world of theory, so both the worlds of common sense and of theory and their languages provide the scaffolding for entering into the world of interiority.<sup>43</sup>

From within the world of interiority . . . mental acts as experiences and as systematically conceived are a logical first . . . Still this priority is only relative. Besides the priority that is reached when a new realm of meaning is set up, there also is the priority of what is needed if that process of setting up is to be undertaken. The Greeks needed an artistic, a rhetorical, an argumentative development of language before a Greek could set up a metaphysical account of mind. The Greek achievement was needed to expand the capacities of commonsense knowledge and language before Augustine, Descartes, Pascal, Newman could make their commonsense contributions to our self-knowledge. The history of mathematics, natural science, and philosophy and, as well, one's own personal reflective engagement in all three are needed if both common sense and theory are to construct the scaffolding for an entry into the world of interiority.<sup>44</sup>

Now if the worlds of common sense and theory and their languages provide the "scaffolding" for entering the world of interiority, once one has entered and gained at least some proficiency in operating in that world, it seems entirely likely that attainments in the worlds of common sense and theory

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<sup>43</sup>*Method in Theology*, 259.

<sup>44</sup>*Method in Theology*, 261-62; compare with *Insight*, 558-60.

can continue to provide “scaffolding,” contributing to one’s attempts to build up further that world of interiority. Thus, it seems understandable how the metaphysical formulations of scholastic theology or, more narrowly, the formulations of Lonergan’s scholastic theology could continue to function as providing “scaffolding,” contributing to one’s continual attempts in methodical theology to build up terms and relations or categories that are systematically related and have, in one way or another, a conscious basis within the world of religious interiority.

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In his paper, Wilkins is largely silent on functional specialties.<sup>45</sup> This is hardly surprising, since he does not consider Lonergan’s paragraph [B] remark to be directly concerned with the generation and formulation of new theological categories in methodical theology. But if one is at least willing to entertain and explore the possibility that Lonergan’s brief remark could function as pointing to a procedure by which the terms and relations of systematic scholastic theology, including Lonergan’s scholastic theology, could function as “scaffolding” continuing to assist one in the generation and formulation of theological categories in methodical theology, one is less likely to emulate Wilkins’s silence.

What, then, does “doctrines” refer to in the functional specialty Doctrines? Lonergan distinguishes primary sources, church doctrines, theological doctrines, and methodical doctrine operating in accordance with the functional specialties and reflecting on theology and theologies. In particular, methodical doctrine is reflection on the myriad, sometimes contradictory, options exhibited in Dialectic and selecting from among those options the judgments of fact and the judgments of value that are compatible with the foundational realities of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. The three conversions function together as a “control of the process” of decreasing darkness increasing light, and adding discovery to discovery,<sup>46</sup> and the resulting judgments of fact and judgments of value are the normative theological doctrines referred to in the functional specialty

<sup>45</sup>The one explicit but passing reference to functional specialties I noticed occurs on page 76: “In his fuller discussion of the formation of the special categories in ‘Foundations,’ he [Lonergan] explains that ‘the functional specialty, Foundations, will derive its first set of categories from religious experience.’”

<sup>46</sup>See *Method in Theology*, 270.

Doctrines. They are, so to speak, the goal the doctrinal theologian, operating according to the norms of the functional specialty Doctrines, and so sensitive to historical vicissitudes, seeks to attain: methodically informed judgments of fact and judgments of value of the Christian message.<sup>47</sup>

But doctrinal theology, as distinct from dogmatic theology,<sup>48</sup> is a fledgling endeavour; doctrines, in the sense meant by the functional specialty Doctrines, are, as yet, not an abundant store. Faced with such a situation, what is a systematic theologian seeking to conduct his or her investigations according to the norms of the functional specialty Systematics to do?

Early in *Method in Theology*, Lonergan made the observation that introducing and assigning transcendental method a role in theology, in a sense, "adds no new resource to theology but simply draws attention to a resource that has always been used. For transcendental method is the concrete and dynamic unfolding of human attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility. That unfolding occurs whenever anyone uses his mind in an appropriate fashion . . . [T]heologians always have had minds and always have used them."<sup>49</sup> Similarly, the "specifically religious component" involved in faith seeking understanding of the Christian message has been operative since New Testament times. This religious component has Christian witness as one of its responsive outer manifestation, and part of Christian witness has found expression throughout the ages in church doctrines and in theological doctrines.<sup>50</sup> It is not unreasonable, then, for a systematic theologian to expect that among such church doctrines and theological doctrines there are genuine achievements that have been guided by the *reality* of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion operative in individual theologians, even if such conversions were not explicitly objectified or made thematic. Indeed, it would be folly or hubris, or both, for present-day systematic theologians, seeking to conduct theological investigation in accordance with the functional specialties, to expect or suppose otherwise.

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<sup>47</sup>"A final variation in the meaning of the word "doctrine" is when one sets up a methodological entity and functional specialties and one of them named doctrines; doctrines as generated within that methodological specialty are theological doctrines but with a methodological basis" (Bernard Lonergan, "Lecture 8, part 2, of Dublin Institute 1971 on Method in Theology," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/647B0DTE070.pdf>, 5).

<sup>48</sup>For one statement by Lonergan of how he understands the difference between dogmatic theology and doctrinal theology, see *Method in Theology*, 333.

<sup>49</sup>*Method in Theology*, 24.

<sup>50</sup>"... the function of church doctrines lies within the function of Christian witness" (*Method in Theology*, 327). Could not one say the same for theological doctrines?

Lonergan lists four factors making for or promoting continuity in theology, a continuity that excludes neither development nor revision: (1) the normative structure of our conscious and intentional acts; (2) God's gift of the love; (3) the permanence of dogma; and (4) the occurrence in the past of genuine achievement.<sup>51</sup> All of these were operative prior to the emergence and formulation of cognitional theory and the subsequent relegation of metaphysics to a derivative position. Now, an acknowledgement and appreciation of genuine achievements handed down from the past better positions one to promote and manifest continuity between past achievements and the products of present endeavours informed by interiorly differentiated consciousness – provided, of course, that the norms of our conscious and intentional acts continue to be adhered to, and one, in some measure, consents to and cooperates with the gift of God's love and strives to allow the inherent dynamics of one's being-in-love to be operative throughout one's life, including in one's attempts at systematic theological investigation. Taking continuity seriously, but not naïvely, it is not unreasonable, then, for a present-day systematic theologian, seeking explicitly to conduct his or her investigations according to the norms of the functional specialty Systematics, to have as one focus church doctrines and theological doctrines that have been part of Christian witness handed down from the past. And as regards theological doctrines, the focus quite naturally will be especially on those that have attained some degree of widespread acceptance. These may not be doctrines precisely in the sense meant by the functional specialty Doctrines. But as manifestations of Christian witness handed down from the past, and as at least probably true judgments of fact and judgments of value, they are genuine achievements, possessing a kind of permanence of their own, achievements which, in principle, are open to transposition in accordance with the requirements of interiorly differentiated consciousness.

Nor is there anything in Lonergan's use of the expression "term(s) and relation(s)" in *Method in Theology* that would disallow such a focus. In that work, the expression "term(s) and relation(s)" occurs about thirty-one times. In some instances it refers to models or ideal-types, to some constellation of concepts of possible use for describing reality or forming hypotheses. On other occasions it refers to the operations of cognitional process and the relations linking the operations to one another, or to the ontological

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<sup>51</sup>*Method in Theology*, 351-52.

structure of any reality isomorphic with terms and relations of cognitional process,<sup>52</sup> or to the results of various ways in which these basic, isomorphic structures can be enriched or complicated. Again, it can be used to refer to the special theological categories rooted in religious experience. But it can also refer specifically to the products of technical science, technical philosophy or technical theology in Lonergan's second realm of meaning, the realm of theory:

In this [theoretical] differentiation [of consciousness], which knows only two realms, technical science, technical philosophy, technical theology are all three located in the realms of theory. All three operate principally with concepts and judgments, with terms and relations, with some approximation to the logical ideal of clarity, coherence, and rigor.<sup>53</sup>

... the terms and relations of systematic thought express a development of understanding over and above the understanding had either from a simple inspection or from an erudite exegesis of the original doctrinal sources. So in Thomist trinitarian theory such terms as procession, relation, person have a highly technical meaning. They stand to these terms as they occur in scriptural or patristic writings much as in modern physics the terms, mass and temperature, stand to the adjectives, heavy and cold.<sup>54</sup>

For Lonergan, then, the products of systematic or technical theology can be structured as "terms and relations." In the development of Catholic theology in the West, Aristotle's thought provided a framework or systematic substructure facilitating the ordering of such products as terms and relations.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, such products included both church doctrines that reflect in some measure the influence of systematic theological doctrines and theological doctrines that can make no claim to be church doctrines. But as

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<sup>52</sup>See, for example, *Method in Theology*, 21. Note that Lonergan speaks not of some free-floating ontological structure but of "the ontological structure of any reality proportionate to human cognitional process."

<sup>53</sup>*Method in Theology*, 258.

<sup>54</sup>*Method in Theology*, 346.

<sup>55</sup>"There can be little doubt that it was necessary for medieval thinkers to turn to some outside source to obtain a systematic substructure. There is little doubt that they could not do better than to turn to Aristotle" (*Method in Theology*, 310).

doctrines – judgments of fact or judgments of value – each is concerned to propose what is true.<sup>56</sup>

The presumption of truth, I suggest, provides the warrant for claiming that Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark can be brought to bear upon the products of systematic scholastic theology, structured as terms and relations or as nests of terms and relations. Lonergan's remark names a requirement that terms and relations in methodical theology will fulfill. The requirement itself springs from Lonergan's major premise enunciating the isomorphism that obtains between the structure of knowing and the structure of the known. With the presumption of truth extended to the products of systematic scholastic theology, so that they can be presumed to be part of "the known," the requirement encapsulated in Lonergan's remark is rightly applicable to the products of systematic scholastic theology. Indeed, the requirement ushers in a program of filtering, of enriching transposition and retrospective integration of those products into methodical theology, and preserving in the transposition and integration all genuine distinctions previously attained in systematic scholastic theology.<sup>57</sup> "And if modern theologians were to transpose medieval theory into categories derived from contemporary interiority and its real correlatives, they would be doing for our age what the great Scholastics did for theirs."<sup>58</sup>

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If Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark does have a bearing upon or an application to the doctrines of scholastic theology, it does not follow that it applies in just one way. One can distinguish Christian theological doctrines very broadly under five headings:

- (1) Doctrines concerning common necessary truths about God
- (2) Doctrines concerning proper necessary truths about God

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<sup>56</sup>"Doctrines aims at a clear and distinct affirmation of religious realities: its principal concern is the truth of such an affirmation; its concern to understand is limited to the clarity and distinctness of its affirmation" (*Method in Theology*, 349).

<sup>57</sup>"Because the true is unconditioned, it is not tied to a context. It can be uttered in another context, even if it is uttered in a different way" (*Early Works on Theological Method* 3, 125). Note also that if in systematic scholastic theology *A* as real is truly distinct from *B* as real, that distinction will need be reflected in some way in any genuine transposition to another context.

<sup>58</sup>*Method in Theology*, 327-28.

- (3) Doctrines concerning God the Creator and Conserver
- (4) Doctrines concerning God the Redeemer and Sanctifier
- (5) Doctrines concerning God the Consummator

The doctrines under (1) and (2) are not doctrines true of human beings. Some of the doctrines under (5) concern human beings but none of them is true of human beings still journeying in history and still subject to the law of death. That leaves doctrines under (3) and (4). Among the doctrines under these headings are some that are or can be *true of* human beings as created and conserved, redeemed and sanctified, in relational dependence upon God as creator and conserver, redeemer and sanctifier. Let us label these (3') and (4').<sup>59</sup> To the extent that such truths concerning human beings can register or be manifest in the preliminary and unstructured contents of conscious acts and states in those human beings, and that with varying intensity, they can also come to be objectified and affirmed through the application of the operations as intentional to the contents of those conscious acts and states. Moreover, as regards (3') and (4'), methodical theology will focus particularly on doctrines under (4'), for these are connected more directly

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<sup>59</sup>One could, I suppose, easily complicate matters by distinguishing under (3') and (4') doctrines that are or can be true of human beings individually, those that are or can be true of human beings both individually and collectively and those that are or can be true of human beings just collectively. In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan's first set of special theological categories have to do with the religious experience of the single subject, while the second set arises when systematic theologians broaden their focus to consider not just the single subject but subjects together in community, service, and witness, the history that arises from such togetherness and the role of this history in promotion of the kingdom of God among human beings. But from the developmental perspective of a single subject, the realities with which this second set of categories is concerned enjoy a certain priority over the realities with which the first set is concerned. For just as with ordinary human development, so with development in the spiritual life, we acquire the skills and come to share in the common meanings of the communities into which we are born and, later, in the common meanings of the communities in which we participate. In a 1968 statement by Lonergan, there is, perhaps, a hint pointing to this priority. In this statement, the second set of categories he mentions, after the first set involved in setting up the eight functional specialties in theology, arises when we turn to concrete instances of subjects in love with God, "... their togetherness in community, the history of salvation that is being in love with God, the function of this history in promoting the kingdom of God among men. It is turning to concrete instances, the group, the history of the group, the role of the group in human history" (*Early Work in Theological Method 1*, 485). Only then is *Method in Theology's* first set of special theological categories concerned with the religious experience of single subjects mentioned. For one brief statement by Lonergan on the genesis of common meaning, see *Method in Theology*, 357. For present purposes, it is not necessary to enter into these complications.

with mysteries hidden in God, and with supernatural realities connected with those mysteries, and true of human beings in relational dependence upon God as redeemer and sanctifier.<sup>60</sup>

Besides being part of Christian witness handed down from the past, doctrines under (4') are presented as *true of* human beings in relational dependence upon God as redeemer and sanctifier and so, one would hope, true of oneself in some degree. Further, they are or can be true of oneself and others not merely at unconscious levels of one's reality, in ways appropriate to each of those levels; they can also register at the conscious level. At the conscious level, they are manifest as part of one's own graced conscious reality, though in a way that, in itself, is diffuse in its immediacy. This is not to deny that there are differences present, and differences of different significance; but considered just as conscious contents, these differences are unassigned. Nor is this graced conscious reality itself unchanging. For one's personal growth in the spiritual life tends to bring the virtualities of one's graced human reality to greater pervasiveness and more pronounced manifestations in one's consciousness.

Now Lonergan's first set of special theological categories is concerned with the religious experience of individual subjects, including those Christians who happen to be systematic theologians. In his brief remark concerning their derivation, Lonergan refers to the need for various kinds of studies:

... [religious] experience is something exceedingly simple and, in time, also exceedingly simplifying, but it also is something exceedingly rich and enriching. There are needed studies of religious interiority: historical, phenomenological, psychological, sociological. There is needed in the theologian the spiritual development that will enable

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<sup>60</sup>It would, I suggest, be a mistake to identify the conscious manifestation associated with what is true of human beings in relational dependence upon God as redeemer and sanctifier with their full reality. Thus, at least in *Insight*, Lonergan was prepared to affirm a penetration of the conjugate forms of faith, hope, and charity "to the physiological level[,] though the clear instances appear only in the intensity of mystical experience" (*Insight*, 763). Being conscious "... adds nothing to being"; it "... is simply being, at a higher level of ontological perfection," while being unconscious "... is simply being, at a lower level of perfection" (*The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 187). One can plausibly conjecture that supernatural realities true of human beings and manifested in their consciousness, also have a penetration to levels of their being that are, in principle, unconscious. God as redeemer and sanctifier provides the initiative gently but persistently calling for adjustment and integration on all levels of one's being, not just at conscious levels (see *Insight*, 496-97).

him both to enter into the experience of others and to frame the terms and relations that will express that experience.<sup>61</sup>

It is interesting to compare this statement with two other statements. In *Early Works on Theological Method 1*, we find the following from 1968:

Being in love with God is exceedingly simple, but it is also exceedingly rich. To fill out the basic structure [of conscious intentionality as fulfilled with the ultimate actuation of infused charity] is to work out a theology of Christian subjectivity that pays special attention to psychology, phenomenology, history, fieldwork, that involves blending into the theology not merely dogmatic but also ascetical and mystical and pastoral theology.<sup>62</sup>

And in the 1971 Dublin Institute on Method in Theology, we find the following simple statement:

... the special categories are derived from religious experience, from studies of religious experience, from one's own personal development.<sup>63</sup>

The 1971 statement says clearly that the development of special categories requires personal development in the systematic theologian. In the 1968 statement, the working out of a theology of Christian subjectivity is said to involve blending into that theology dogmatic, ascetical, mystical, and pastoral theology. These are among the "outer determinants" of the dynamic state of other-worldly love and the process of conversion and developments.<sup>64</sup> The formulated doctrines of systematic scholastic theology falling under (4'), then, can be considered as among the "outer determinants" for a theology of Christian subjectivity.

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<sup>61</sup>*Method in Theology*, 290.

<sup>62</sup>*Early Works on Theological Method 1*, 486.

<sup>63</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Lecture 8, part 1, of Dublin Institute 1971 on Method in Theology," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/647A0DTE070.pdf>, 14.

<sup>64</sup>"The data . . . on the dynamic state of other-worldly love are the data on a process of conversion and development. The inner determinants are God's gift of his love and man's consent, but there also are outer determinants in the store of experience and in the accumulated wisdom of the religious tradition" (*Method in Theology*, 289).

While it is true of systematic theologians, as of everyone who has in some measure accepted the gift of God's love, that their graced consciousness is in itself diffuse in its givenness and immediacy, still Christian witness, as outer determinant of other-worldly love and as common meaning, has, to some extent, carried forward their diffuse, immediate consciousness to a mediation of immediacy in a sustaining flow of expression.<sup>65</sup> Some of these theologians may have even added contributions to this flowing store of expressions that are sufficiently valuable to have withstood the test of time. Generally speaking, religious expression, of course, will "move through the stages of meaning and speak in its different realms."<sup>66</sup> For systematic theologians operating in accordance with what Lonergan calls the second stage of meaning, formulated doctrines under (4') will belong to the realms of transcendence and of theory in that second stage. One goal of systematic theologians with interiorly differentiated consciousness, and so striving to operate in accordance with the norms and procedures of Lonergan's third stage of meaning, will be to move from categorial articulations in the realms of transcendence and of theory in the second stage of meaning to categorial articulations in both the realm of transcendence and the realm of "theory," but now of "theory" with this difference: its foundation is in the realm of interiority, and it is informed and enriched by norms and procedures proper to the third stage of meaning.

There is no algorithm that would enable systematic theologians to move from the first kind of categorial articulations to the second, and no logic of discovery that would automatically generate the second kind of categorial articulations. There are only general directives like the directive to heighten one's consciousness, to shift one's attention as best as one can to one's own subjectivity.<sup>67</sup> Again, to offset one's own shortcomings and lack of development, one should also become familiar with and draw upon studies of religious interiority, "historical, phenomenological, psychological,

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<sup>65</sup>On the general phenomenon of expression of religious experience, see *Method in Theology*, 108, 112-15. The expression associated with systematic theologians is a particular and specialized instance of a more general phenomenon.

<sup>66</sup>*Method in Theology*, 114.

<sup>67</sup>"Heightening one's consciousness" can mean (1) attending or shifting and broadening one's attention to conscious acts or operation and the conscious subject of those acts or operations; (2) the movement, subsequent to the performance of attending to the conscious subject and his or her acts to objectifying the conscious subject and its conscious operations; and (3) the movement from lower to higher levels of activity.

sociological."<sup>68</sup> And perhaps more concretely, it may not be completely amiss for systematic theologians to seek out and learn from those persons who are well advanced in holiness and the spiritual life.

Loneragan says that special basic terms are God's gift of his love and Christian witness which results from God's gift.<sup>69</sup> One is seeking some understanding of graced subjectivity, including one's own, and, as always, understanding in this life requires an image or sensible presentation. Is it unreasonable to suppose that already formulated doctrines under (4'), such as doctrines formulated in scholastic theology, as carriers of affirmed meaning and part of Christian witness that result from God's gift of his love, once filtered through metaphysical equivalence, provide one set of images, a set of associative trains<sup>70</sup> which facilitate one's attempted forays into one's diffuse conscious immediacy? Is it unreasonable to suppose that such formulated doctrines can function as a kind of selecting principle, offering a lead for one to pick out, indicate, or refer directly to some aspect, some difference in the diffuse conscious immediacy, which may then yield to some understanding, and so be carried forward to conceptual objectification and categorial articulation? That objectification and categorial articulation will have intentionality analysis not Aristotelian metaphysics as its underlying framework. It will still be a kind of systematic Christian witness, but now one enriched with somewhat novel features.

There is no reason to expect any simple one-to-one correspondence between elements in these two kinds of categorial articulations. Nor do I believe there is anything in Doran's writings on the issue that would lead one to suppose that he adheres rigidly and universally to such a simple correspondence. But if the understanding is of the same or of overlapping sets of data, and if one accepts that both kinds of categorial articulations are or can be true of human beings, then one would rightly expect that various kinds of correspondence would obtain. Alternatively, no such expectation would be present if one effectively regards theological categories that draw upon features of Aristotelian metaphysics for their underlying framework as being not merely insufficient but as so tainted with obsolescence, inadequacy, or explanatory insignificance that whatever validity they once might have

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<sup>68</sup>*Method in Theology*, 290.

<sup>69</sup>*Method in Theology*, 343; compare with 363.

<sup>70</sup>See "Christ as Subject: A Reply," in *Collection*, 173.

possessed has been superseded by a "paradigm shift" in theology.<sup>71</sup>

Let us now turn or at least allude briefly to doctrines under (1), (2) and (5), and those under (3) and (4) excluding those under (3') and (4'). Doctrines under these heading are doctrines either not true of human beings or not true of human beings still journeying in history and still subject to the law of death. Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark would still have application, as it has for every veridical affirmation; for the structure of human knowing is not abrogated when one considers or affirms these doctrines. Now, however, the application of Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark involves a particular implementation of his analytic major premise in *Insight*. Lonergan envisions implementation as generally including both transformation and integration.<sup>72</sup> If we think of his analytic major premise not as idling in its analyticity, like a car stopped in traffic, but as an implemented analytic principle,<sup>73</sup> a principle engaged not just in generating explicit, critical metaphysics but as having a particular implication and application in methodical theology, as it has in other branches of knowledge, and if we consider the doctrines under the headings mentioned above as secondary minor premises, there will be not merely an heuristic structure of potency, form, and act to consider but a filled-out structure, some set of terms and relations drawn from or at least informed by the scholastic theological tradition. Further, if one has attained some understanding of these doctrines, there will exist corresponding formal elements in one's intentional consciousness, namely, the concrete

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<sup>71</sup>Wilkins believes Lonergan intended a "new paradigm for theology" (53), one which encompasses not simply a new method for theology but also new kinds of theological categories which are not in any "... straightforward correspondence to the terms and relations of scholastic theology" (73). I am unsure whether he means by this to rule out any kind of correspondence between the new kinds of theological categories and the terms and relations of scholastic theology or just certain kinds of correspondence. There is also the issue of continuity in theology. Speaking of paradigm shifts in general, and perhaps also of the "paradigm shift" in theology, Wilkins writes: "There is no reason to expect a continuity of basic concepts or even anything like the kind of structural isomorphism anticipated by Doran's rule" (73-74). To me at least, the exact implications of this sentence for continuity in theology are unclear. For example, is Wilkins suggesting that there is some kind of incommensurability between the "basic concepts" prior to the "paradigm shift" and those subsequent to the shift, or, more particularly, between the new kinds of theological categories and the terms and relations of scholastic theology? And if so, what has become of continuity in theology?

<sup>72</sup>See *Insight*, 421.

<sup>73</sup>On the difference between an analytic proposition and an analytic principle, see *Insight*, 329-31. In the case of Lonergan's major premise, the set of primary minor premises provides the factual affirmations that shift the major premise from being an analytic proposition to being an analytic principle.

formal *contents* involved in coming to understand these doctrines. Finally, if one has acquired some competence in transcendental method, one will likely have at least some ability to shift one's attention from these terms and relations to the corresponding concrete elements in one's intentional consciousness and apply the operations as intentional to the concrete formal contents as conscious and carry forward one's understandings of these doctrines to an enhanced objectification and categorial articulations. These categorial articulations will be enhanced because now they will be informed and guided by transcendental method and explicit, critical metaphysics and by the controls inherent in transcendental method and explicit, critical metaphysics.

There are, however, some refinements to be added. In *Insight* Lonergan remarks that ". . . the theologian is under no necessity of reducing to the metaphysical elements, which suffice for an account of this world, such supernatural realities as the incarnation, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the beatific vision."<sup>74</sup> Again, in a 1976 Q&A period, he responded to a question about burning one's bridges to the metaphysical context:

. . . the place where you must not burn the bridges to the metaphysics is if you want to talk about the angels and God. Very few people want to talk about the angels anymore. But if you want to talk about God, you are going to need the capacity to move out of the human area and to speak objectively of intelligence in God and love in God and so on. And that is where a metaphysical analysis or structure becomes much more appropriate.<sup>75</sup>

Next, in *Early Works on Theological Method 1*, Lonergan writes:

If our thinking, our notion, of the reality of material things is in terms of potency, form, and act, where potency corresponds to experiencing, form to understanding, and act to judging, then one proceeds to the purely spiritual order of God and the angels by dropping off potency in the case of the angels, and identifying form and act in the case of God.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>*Insight*, 756.

<sup>75</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Q&A 3 LW 1976 transcription," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/88800DTE070.pdf>, 7.

<sup>76</sup>*Early Works on Theological Method 1*, 34.

Finally, in *Early Work on Theological Methods 2*, Lonergan writes:

Being that lies beyond the scope of properly human knowledge is twofold, namely, the angels and God. In this life we cannot understand either what an angel is or what God is. But we do know that they exist and that they have a quiddity or nature. There is, however, this difference between them, that in an angel essence and existence are different, whereas in God they are the same; and again, that in an angel existence and understanding are different, whereas in God they are the same.<sup>77</sup>

Now, although the human knowing process always involves experiencing, understanding, expression of understanding in conceptual formulation, and judging, as regards doctrines under (1) and (2) especially, we must distinguish between what such doctrines signify and the manner in which they signify:

... nouns that are used of God have the way of signifying that is suitable for speaking of composite creatures. Regarding the divine names, therefore, we must distinguish between what they signify and their way of signifying. What they signify is always that supreme and absolute simple being; but the way they signify, especially in the case of abstract terms, is better suited to composite creatures than to the simple God.<sup>78</sup>

Moreover, in this life theological understanding of supernatural realities is inescapably analogical. In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan remarks that the functional specialty Systematics

is concerned to work out appropriate systems of conceptualizations, to remove apparent inconsistencies, to move towards some grasp of spiritual matters both from their own inner coherence and from the analogies offered by more familiar human experience.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>*Early Works on Theological Method 2*, 501.

<sup>78</sup>*The Triune God: Systematics*, 243.

<sup>79</sup>*Method in Theology*, 132; compare with 321, 323, 336, 339, 349.

Analogies can be drawn from common notions and the requirements of the common notions, such as ". . . anything that is contingently true of God or of a divine person lacks the correspondence needed for truth unless there is posited some external, created, contingent, appropriate term."<sup>80</sup> Again, analogies can be drawn from the common notions enriched with proper notions, for example, with some feature that is true of human beings – as when intellectual processions in human beings are used as analogies for the divine processions.<sup>81</sup> Indeed, transcendental method and the clarifications that result from it provide a greatly enhanced source from which to draw apt analogies. Of course, no matter how apt the analogies, their use always involve the way of affirmation, the way of negation, and the way of eminence. There is the way of eminence because the primary and fundamental meaning of the name "God" designates the term or goal of the conscious orientation to transcendent mystery, with the orientation itself, by its absoluteness, revealing at least something of its mysterious, transcendent term or goal.<sup>82</sup> There is the way of affirmation because God, the term of the conscious orientation to transcendent mystery, enters within the world mediated by meaning in various ways.<sup>83</sup> There is the way of negation because neither the prime potency of proportionate being nor the inherent imperfections and shortcomings present in the sources from which the analogies are drawn are to be projected onto the divine realities being affirmed. So the apex of mystery present in those realities is retained, with no pretense of elimination.

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In these reflections on Wilkins's paper, I have been attempting to offer some reasons for querying the adequacy of his interpretation of Lonergan's

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<sup>80</sup>*The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 139.

<sup>81</sup>See *The Triune God: Systematics*, 147, 171, 173, 179, 181. See also *Early Work on Theological Method* 3, 119-20: "Proper notions and principles arise from understanding the intelligibility of various kinds of things, and so in a process that is moving towards understanding determinate natures. They do not have philosophical generality, but are the proper principles of physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, or human studies. In theology, the proper principles and notions have to do with the understanding of the mysteries: the psychology analogy for the Trinity, the consciousness of Christ . . . , the satisfaction of Christ, the nature of grace, the organization of the church."

<sup>82</sup>See *Method in Theology*, 341-42, 350.

<sup>83</sup>*Method in Theology*, 341-42, 350.

paragraph [B] remark and to indicate why I consider his specific criticisms of Doran's interpretation of the remark and of the procedure Doran advocates on the basis of his interpretation to be largely ineffective. To conclude these reflections, and perhaps bring them into slightly sharper focus, let me now present and comment on a few of Wilkins's actual statements:

(1) In the first place, the comparison of the old and new categories in [A] suggests, not a correspondence, but a contrast. The old were derived from metaphysics. The new are not derived from metaphysics, not even from the generically metaphysical categories of Lonergan's scholastic theology. They are developed in a manner set forth in three earlier chapters, none of which mention a program of correlating scholastic categories to consciousness. (61)

First, when Wilkins says that "[t]he old were derived from metaphysics," I presume he does not mean that the old theological categories are simply reducible to metaphysics, with no proper theological content, but that in their categorial articulations of the mysteries hidden in God theologians in the medieval period made use of resources drawn from (Aristotelian) metaphysics to express proper theological content. Secondly, by "not a correspondence, but a contrast" does Wilkins mean striking differences between the old and prospective new theological categories such that any kind of correspondence from one to the other is excluded? If he does not mean that, that is, if he just means striking differences between the old and new theological categories – for example, differences that result from anticipating that the new categories will enrich the old and possess a greater degree of concreteness – he would be asserting something that is not necessarily in dispute.

Now, if there are proper theological contents in both the old and the largely yet-to-be-developed and systematically ordered new theological categories, it would be odd indeed if every kind of correspondence between them were to be excluded. For that would be tantamount to denying any kind of doctrinal continuity between the judgments of fact and judgments of value in dogmatic theology and the judgments of fact and judgments of value of a proposed doctrinal theology, and consequently, between the achievements of systematic theological understanding in past times and the achievements of present endeavours to advance the functional specialty

Systematics. Moreover, affirmations of continuity are not tantamount to affirmations of a simple one-to-one correspondence. Finally, I doubt if Doran would dispute the claim, so far as it goes, that the new categories "... are developed in a manner set forth in three earlier chapters ...," that is, the chapters in *Method in Theology* on method, on religion, and on foundations. For that is a kind of loose paraphrase of what Lonergan himself says in paragraph [A]. What is not clear is why Wilkins seems to think this proposed manner of development is incompatible with Doran's procedure of taking into account and probing the categories of scholastic theology with the goal of attaining a transposition and re-expression of the kernel of what are proposed and/or affirmed in those categories, in accordance with the norms and procedures of methodical theology.

(2) Besides the contrast, there is also the derivation. Metaphysics is to be derived from cognitional theory; nothing is said about the derivation of new categories from metaphysics. The section itself concerns the consequences of shifting from faculty psychology. In [A] Lonergan names the fourth consequence: the displacement of metaphysics from basic to derivative. The development of new categories, on the basis of interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness, is mentioned only incidentally. (61)

First, I would ask: Who at the present time is claiming that the "derivation" of new categories is "from metaphysics"? I doubt if Doran is making this claim. Next, I have already quoted Lonergan saying that: "[t]he history of mathematics, natural science, and philosophy and, as well, one's own personal reflective engagement in all three are needed if both common sense and theory are to construct the scaffolding for an entry into the world of interiority."<sup>84</sup> In a similar way, it seems completely reasonable for a present-day theologian, while recognizing "the displacement of metaphysics from basic to derived," to use the products of technical theology and their expression as useful scaffolding and points of entry for operating fruitfully in the world of religious interiority, and in particular, in that part of the world of religious interiority concerned with the systematic understanding of the mysteries hidden in God – all the while anticipating that there will be a large measure of continuity in difference between the systematically

<sup>84</sup>*Method in Theology*, 261-62.

developed products of technical theology and those that will be developed in the functional specialty Systematics. Third, it is not easy to see the exact reason Wilkins says that the “development of new categories on the basis of interiorly . . . is mentioned only incidentally.” As I read his remarks, he seems to be saying that in the section headed “Closed Options” that Lonergan is concerned to list four consequences of shifting from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis<sup>85</sup> and that the fourth consequence, as stated in the excerpt above, is the displacement of metaphysics from being basic to being derived. I would have thought, rather, that a shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis is itself a consequence of, or at least is warranted by, the displacement of metaphysics from being basic to being derived.<sup>86</sup> And this leads me to question the accuracy of Wilkins’s reading of the section. Lonergan himself lists the fourth consequence “of the shift from a faculty psychology to intentional analysis” – “It is that the basic terms and relations of systematic theology will be not metaphysical, as in medieval theology, but psychological.”<sup>87</sup> So the fourth consequence is concerned with specifying and highlighting a particular *characteristic* or *property* of the largely yet-to-be-developed basic terms and relations of systematic theology in methodological theology and not with some overall displacement of metaphysics from being basic to being derived.<sup>88</sup> No doubt, Wilkins might argue that the fourth consequence, as I, following Lonergan, have stated it, is intimately tied to the displacement of metaphysics from being basic to being derived. That can be readily granted; indeed, it has already been granted, for the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis is itself a consequence of, or at least warranted by, the displacement of metaphysics from being basic to being derived. But the point is that

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<sup>85</sup>Thus, we read: “The immediate context of Lonergan’s statement is an enumeration of the consequences, for the systematic function of theology, of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis (‘Closed Options’). Four consequences are named . . .” (59).

<sup>86</sup>“The priority of metaphysics in the Aristotelian tradition led to a faculty psychology” (“Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, 395); “Faculty psychology is a corollary of Aristotle’s hierarchy of the sciences, a hierarchy in which metaphysics, which studies being as being . . . is the most general science and provides all other sciences with their basic terms” (Bernard Lonergan, “Q&A 1 LW 1976 transcription,” Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/88500DTE070.pdf>, 1).

<sup>87</sup>*Method in Theology*, 343.

<sup>88</sup>An earlier statement by Wilkins of the fourth consequence says simply that it is that “metaphysics no longer supplies the basic terms and relations of systematic theology” (59). Again, I cannot see how this statement is an adequate paraphrase of Lonergan’s own statement of the fourth consequence of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis.

Loneragan's fourth consequence, as he states it, has a *particular* focus, namely, with the specification of a characteristic or property of the terms and relations of systematic theology in methodical theology. So, in light of this rather important specification and Lonergan's directing the reader to three earlier chapters in *Method in Theology*, and in particular to the chapter on the functional specialty Foundations, which gives at least some indication of how "... [theological] categories with the desired qualities and validity are to be obtained,"<sup>89</sup> I am again led to wonder what justification Wilkins has for saying that in Lonergan's remarks here, "[t]he development of new categories, on the basis of interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness, is mentioned only incidentally."

(3) In [B], Lonergan assigns "the point to making metaphysical terms and relations not basic but derived." This point is not that scholastic concepts can be correlated with psychological data. It is not that the technique provides a "prescription" or a "basic rule" for developing theological categories. The point is that "a critical metaphysics results," because "for every [metaphysical] term and relation there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness." A critical metaphysics is developed on the basis of the isomorphism of knowing and being, so that every metaphysical term and relation is derived from some element in cognitional structure . . . .

The ontological structure of proportionate being is the topic of metaphysics. Both in this passage and in ours, cognitional theory (intentionality analysis) is said to be basic, and metaphysics derived. In both places, ontological elements are elucidated on the basis of the cognitional. The derivation is making explicit what is implied by the isomorphism of cognitional and ontological structure. Because of the isomorphism, all the terms and relations in a critical metaphysics (the ontological structure of proportionate being) will be grounded in corresponding terms and relations verified in cognitional structure. The elements of this structure cannot be the special categories of scholastic theology, first because these regard supernatural being, and also because they are not themselves the structural elements, but rather are analyzed into their structural elements. (61-62)

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<sup>89</sup>*Method in Theology*, 282.

Wilkins reports accurately that for Lonergan the point of making metaphysical terms and relations not basic but derived is that a critical metaphysics results. And when he says here that a critical metaphysics results "because for every . . ." and then proceeds to mention the "isomorphism of knowing and being," I presume he is taking Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark as alluding to Lonergan's analytic major premise and to the factual factor, the set of primary minor premises, effecting the transition from latent to explicit, critical metaphysics.<sup>90</sup> In this way, the significance of Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark is safely ensconced within the procedure for establishing explicit, critical metaphysics. So Wilkins can then say that the remark has nothing to do with correlating scholastic concepts with psychological data or providing a rule or guide for developing theological categories.

As already mentioned, Wilkins is not altogether accurate in his statement regarding Lonergan's fourth consequence of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis. It is not the displacement of metaphysics from being basic to being derived, as Wilkins claims. As Lonergan states it, the fourth consequence has to do with a specified *characteristic* or *property* that terms and relations in systematic theology in the functional specialty Systematics will have.

Let me suggest, then, an alternative reading of these paragraphs in *Method in Theology* dealing with the fourth consequence of the move out of faculty psychology. And to lessen the risk of going astray, let us disregard Wilkins's insertion of "metaphysical" in brackets when he quotes Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark in the excerpt above.

First, to repeat what Lonergan actually says: "It [the fourth, further consequence] is that the basic terms and relations of systematic theology will be not metaphysical, as in medieval theology, but psychological."<sup>91</sup> Immediately, then, one's focus is directed quite deliberately to the basic terms and relations of systematic theology and to a specified characteristic they will possess. Four sentences follow in this paragraph. In them, Lonergan refers the reader back to three earlier chapters in *Method in Theology*, those on method, on religion, and on foundations, in which one can find support for his claim that the terms and relations he has been presenting and advocating for<sup>92</sup> are indeed psychological. For as presented, they name conscious and

<sup>90</sup>See *Insight*, 424-25.

<sup>91</sup>*Method in Theology*, 343.

<sup>92</sup>I say "advocating for" in light of Lonergan's remark in *Method in Theology*, 282: "The task

intentional inter-related operations, and conscious states. And although not explicitly stated in the paragraph, "name" here most likely refers to the process of objectification discussed in the chapter on method, in which one applies the operations as intentional to the operations as conscious.<sup>93</sup>

In methodical theology, one distinguishes and classifies such terms and relations broadly as either general theological categories or special theological categories.<sup>94</sup> Both general theological categories and special theological categories are built up upon their own conscious and transcultural basis or inner core.<sup>95</sup> And in the "naming" of these conscious bases or inner cores, one can in each case distinguish a privileged set of basic terms and relations, referring most directly to their conscious basis or inner core and possessing a kind of imperviousness to radical revision, and subsequent elaborations and differentiations with varying degrees of distance from the conscious basis or inner core and varying degrees of precariousness.<sup>96</sup>

Secondly, as Wilkins reports, the next paragraph in *Method in Theology*, Prof. Wilkins's paragraph [B], begins with Lonergan stating that the point of making metaphysical terms and relations not basic but derived is that "a critical metaphysics results." Now in a set of notes for his 1971 Dublin lectures on method in theology, Lonergan has made the following brief remarks regarding this paragraph and the preceding paragraph:

A fourth consequence of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis: The basic terms and relations of systematic theology will not be metaphysical, but psychological.

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of working out general and special categories pertains, not to the methodologist, but to the theologian engaged in this fifth functional specialty. The methodologist's task is the preliminary one of indicating what qualities are desirable in theological categories, what measure of validity is to be demanded of them, and how categories with the desired qualities and validity are to be obtained."

<sup>93</sup>See *Method in Theology*, 14-15.

<sup>94</sup>"General [theological] categories regard objects that come within the purview of other disciplines as well as theology. Special [theological] categories regard the objects proper to theology" (*Method in Theology*, 282).

<sup>95</sup>See *Method in Theology*, 282-85. Earlier in the same work (see 19-20), Lonergan used the image of a "rock" in relation to the conscious basis or inner core of general categories. A different kind of "rock," but one just as firm and unassailable, is implied in his remarks that the conscious basis or inner core of special theological categories is "self-justifying." See *Method in Theology*, 123, 284.

<sup>96</sup>See *Method in Theology*, 284-85.

Hence a metaphysics which can be critically controlled.<sup>97</sup>

The use of "Hence" here in these notes provides us with an additional clue enabling us to follow more surely Lonergan's train of thought in these paragraphs from *Method in Theology*. The first sentence of this paragraph [B] harks back to the second sentence of the previous paragraph and in some sense follows from this second sentence. Why does it follow? Or, equivalently, why does a critical metaphysics result? Because a consequence of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis is that the basic terms and relations of systematic theology, the general and special categories of systematic theology, are *psychological*. And what in the present context does that mean? To put the answer in its simplest terms, it means that for every term and relation in systematic theology, for every general or special category in systematic theology, there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness or, at least, an associative train that links elaborated or non-basic terms and relations in systematic theology with corresponding elements in intentional consciousness. There is, then, a principle of critical control by means of which "empty or misleading terms and relations can be eliminated, while valid ones can be elucidated by the conscious intention from which they are derived."<sup>98</sup>

To understand these paragraphs correctly, there is, I suggest, no need to suppose by way of background that a *generic* metaphysical category of form was in any way involved in giving rise to a faculty psychology; Lonergan's criticisms of Aristotelian architectonics, with its effective denial of autonomous sciences, are entirely independent of any such claim. Again, I do not think that distinguishing between metaphysical notions alone or metaphysical categories in the strict sense, on the one hand, and generically metaphysical categories of scholastic theology, on the other, has anything useful to contribute to an accurate understanding of Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark. For, as I have argued, Wilkins's "metaphysical notions alone" or "metaphysical categories in the strict sense" applies to either each and every reality of proportionate being or to nothing. Finally, I suggest that Wilkins's insertion of "metaphysical" in brackets when quoting Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark is not an innocuous clarifying insertion but somewhat misleading. For in that remark Lonergan is dealing with what, in the context of the

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<sup>97</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Systematics 1319," Lonergan Archive, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/pdf/13190DTE070.pdf>, 2.

<sup>98</sup>*Method in Theology*, 343.

discussion of the fourth consequence of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis, he characterizes as psychological terms and relations, not metaphysical terms and relations. The terms and relation of methodical theology, the general and special categorial determinations, are said to be psychological precisely because "there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness" to which they can be linked.

Wilkins contends that Lonergan is here just presenting a brief recapitulation of the program in *Insight* to establish a critical metaphysics on the basis of the isomorphism of knowing and being. Now, Lonergan's definition of explicit metaphysics includes the word "implementation."<sup>99</sup> Together, Lonergan's major premise and the set of primary minor premises provide just an integrating structure.<sup>100</sup> The set of secondary minor premises provides a filling out of the structure and materials to be integrated.<sup>101</sup> And as providing a filling out and materials to be integrated for the integrating structure, the set of secondary minor premises, whether drawn from common sense or the natural and human sciences, undergo a reorientation: they are initially assumed, critically assessed for inadvertently harboring counterpositional accretions, transformed with the aid of the technique of metaphysical equivalence, and then unified within a coherent and ever-expanding whole, in accordance with the requirements of the integrating structure.

Now, the fourth consequence, as Lonergan states it, goes beyond what is involved in just an integrating structure. Even in paragraph [B], Lonergan's concern is not just with the analytic major premise and the set of primary minor premises of critical metaphysics but with the significance of critical metaphysics as providing a "critical control" that is able to cut through "the vast arid wastes of theological controversy" by elucidating valid theological terms and relations "by the conscious intention from which they are derived" and eliminating empty and misleading ones. Now, as Lonergan tells it, the demand for method in metaphysics arose out of

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<sup>99</sup>"... explicit metaphysics is the conception, affirmation, and implementation of the integral heuristic structure of proportionate being" (*Insight*, 416). Of course, for Lonergan "the metaphysics of proportionate being becomes a subordinate part of a more general metaphysics that envisages the transcendent idea of being" (*Insight*, 688; compare with *Understanding and Being*, 195). And implementation is involved in both.

<sup>100</sup>"From the major and the primary minor premises there is obtained an integrating structure . . ." (*Insight*, 425).

<sup>101</sup>"... from the secondary minor premises there are obtained the materials to be integrated" (*Insight*, 425).

medieval theology.<sup>102</sup> And in one place in *Insight*, it is at least suggested that the secondary minor premises can include assertions drawn from theology, along with those from common sense and science.<sup>103</sup> Accordingly, beyond the point of making the terms and relations of metaphysics not basic but derived, so that a critical metaphysics results, there is a further question that the paragraph quite naturally gives rise to: if critical metaphysics opens the way for a shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis; and if such a shift means that the basic terms and relations of systematic theology in the functional specialty Systematics will be not metaphysical but psychological, as Lonergan asserts; then will not the basic terms and relations of systematic theology in the second stage of meaning themselves be rightly attended to by theologians so that they can undergo a reorientation in line with the requirements of theology conducted according to the norms of the functional specialty Systematics? Is it an unwarranted stretch to suppose that in these paragraphs the integrating structure is envisaged as being brought to bear or implemented in systematic theology, so that the already extant terms and relations of systematic theology in the second stage of meaning will be able to undergo a reorientation, a critical assessment, transformation, and unification such that they come to acquire the characteristic or property called for by the fourth consequence of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis? Lonergan's use of "every" in his paragraph [B] remark seems quite compatible with such attending and reorientation.

I do not find the last sentence in the excerpt above especially clear. Does the "this" in the sentence refer back to "ontological structure of proportionate being" or to the more proximately placed "cognitional structure"? Proximity suggests the latter; but if one supposes the former, it seems one can more easily make sense of the sentence. If we suppose the former, perhaps Wilkins is saying:

The elements of this structure, that is, the ontological structure of proportionate being, the terms and relations of a critical metaphysics – potency, form, and act – cannot be the special categories of scholastic theology, because: (1) these categories, that is, the special categories

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<sup>102</sup>*Insight*, 550.

<sup>103</sup>See *Insight*, 548, where he claims that the method for metaphysics he is offering has the capacity for putting an end to mere disputation and where he proposes a series of disjunctions that facilitate the separation of metaphysical assertions from those of common sense, of science, and of theology.

of scholastic theology, regard supernatural being [and the elements of the ontological structure of proportionate being do not]; (2) these categories, that is, the special categories of scholastic theology, are not themselves the structural elements, that is, the ontological structure of proportionate being – potency, form, and act – but rather are analyzed into their structural elements of potency, form, and act.<sup>104</sup>

Supposing, tentatively, that Wilkins's intends this reading, I offer the following comments.

First, there seems to be a certain tension between (1) and (2). If the special categories of scholastic theology cannot be identified with the ontological structure of proportionate being because those special categories regard supernatural being and the ontological structure of proportionate being does not, how can the special categories of scholastic theology nevertheless be "analyzed into their structural elements" of potency, form, and act?

Next, leaving this first point aside, in (2) it seems that Wilkins allows that the special categories of scholastic theology can be "analyzed" into the structural elements of potency, form, and act. Now, to refer again to a point previously mentioned, for Lonergan "[t]he concepts and names of the metaphysical elements are general" but "this generality does not involve them in abstractness."<sup>105</sup> For present purposes, even more pointed is Lonergan's remark that ". . . there is nothing to a thing apart from its potencies, forms, and acts."<sup>106</sup> So analyzing a being into its structural elements of potency, form, and act provides no reason for saying that that being is not its structural elements. And to suppose otherwise is to suppose that that being is something other than its potency, form, and act.

As for (1), what is affirmed in Lonergan's major premise did not await the advent of his critical metaphysics to become operative. In latent

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<sup>104</sup>If we suppose that Wilkins intends the latter, he would seem to be saying the following: The elements of this cognitional structure, which grounds all the terms and relations in proportionate being (the ontological structure of proportionate being) cannot be the special categories of scholastic theology because: (1) these categories of scholastic theology regard supernatural being [and the elements of cognitional structure do not]; (2) the special categories of scholastic theology are not themselves the cognitional structural elements, but rather are analyzed into their cognitional structural elements. This second reading seems less likely because "analyzed into their structural elements" in the original text suggests an analysis of the special categories into ontological elements, not cognitional elements.

<sup>105</sup>*Insight*, 527.

<sup>106</sup>*Insight*, 527.

metaphysics, the isomorphism is operative but unconsidered. Indeed, the isomorphism comes into play in some way whenever human knowing is operating, including when human knowing is considering theological realities.<sup>107</sup> But it is also the case that “. . . the theologian is under no necessity of reducing to the metaphysical elements, which suffice for an account of this world, such supernatural realities as the incarnation, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the beatific vision.”<sup>108</sup> If human knowing is not to be confined to proportionate being, it must have a manner of operating that affords the isomorphism a degree of flexibility. Such flexibility is indicated in the distinction between what concepts and affirmations concerning supernatural realities signify and their way of signifying, and the flexibility is implemented in the use of analogy with its ways of affirmation, negation, and eminence.

(4) Like [A] and [B], paragraph [C] is also concerned, not with scholastic theological concepts and the method of correlating them with experiences, concepts, or language proper to the new context, but rather with “the positive function of a critical metaphysics.” This function is twofold: heuristic and critical. The heuristic function of metaphysics is the provision of a “basic heuristic structure, a determinate horizon” for inquiry. The critical function is the provision of a criterion for controlling meaning and classifying distinctions . . . .

As a whole, the present passage is not concerned with the generation of new categories or how the new categories are to be related to the scholastic categories. Rather, it is concerned to explain why metaphysics has been made not basic but derivative, and what advantages result from its displacement as the basic science. This coheres with the overall purpose of this section of *Method in Theology*, which is not to reprise the earlier discussion of theological categories, but rather to name some consequences of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis. From both the literary context and the nest of interrelated

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<sup>107</sup>Thus, the Lonergan paragraph [B] remark is true not just for theological terms and relation in the third second stage of meaning but also for theological terms and relations in the second stage of meaning. The difference is that in the second stage of meaning the corresponding elements in intentional consciousness are largely unconsidered, or if considered, considered not in their own right as conscious and intentional but through the prism of Aristotelian metaphysical psychology.

<sup>108</sup>*Insight*, 756.

questions, it is clear that the statement, "for every term and relation there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness," enunciates Lonergan's familiar strategy for developing metaphysics from the isomorphism of knowing and being. It does not enunciate a new precept for correlating the scholastic special categories with "psychological" special categories. (63-64)

I have already mentioned several times that Wilkins is not altogether accurate in identifying Lonergan's fourth consequence of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis as "the displacement of metaphysics from [being] basic to [being] derived" (61). It is, I suggest, more accurate to say that for Lonergan the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis is itself a *corollary* of the displacement of metaphysics from being basic to being derived and that the actual fourth consequence of this corollary, as Lonergan states it, is that "the basic terms and relations of systematic theology will be not metaphysical, as in medieval theology, but psychological."<sup>109</sup> So, as Lonergan states it, the fourth consequence of the shift from faculty psychology identifies a *characteristic* or *property* that theological terms and relations in the functional specialty Systematics will have, either in themselves or by way of association.

In his commentaries on paragraphs [A], [B], and [C], Wilkins seems less concerned with the actually stated fourth consequence and more concerned to emphasize and highlight Lonergan's references to critical metaphysics, the fact that metaphysics has been displaced from being basic to being derived, and the benefits that accrue from such a displacement. And with these emphases, Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark can be cocooned, so that it merely "... enunciates Lonergan's familiar strategy for developing metaphysics from the isomorphism of knowing and being. It does not enunciate a new precept for correlating the scholastic special categories with 'psychological' special categories" (63-64).

Everything that Lonergan says in paragraph [C] about critical metaphysics and the advantages that accrue to it, namely, that it provides a determinate horizon, a basic heuristic structure within which questions arise and a criterion for settling certain kinds of differences, can be readily accepted without agreeing that Wilkins has proposed an adequate

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<sup>109</sup>*Method in Theology*, 343.

interpretation of the three paragraphs. Thus, even if Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark is alluding to or echoing Lonergan's major premise regarding the isomorphism that obtains between the structure of knowing and the structure of the known, a premise which was originally formulated by Lonergan in the context of a process for arriving at critical metaphysics, it does not follow that that isomorphism is tied to just that context. Considered or not considered, the isomorphism is operative in some way *whenever* the human knowing process is operative. So if the human knowing process was operative in developing the categories of scholastic theology, then the isomorphism was operative in some way. And if the isomorphism was operative in some way in that development, then there were corresponding elements in the intentional consciousness of the theologians who developed those categories and in the intentional consciousness of any later theologian who came to understand them. So if present-day theologian come to understand these categories, there are corresponding elements in their intentional consciousness. And if there are such corresponding elements in their intentional consciousness, and if they have also been schooled in Lonergan's intentionality analysis, then are those elements not susceptible to objectifications as terms and relations informed and enriched by norms and procedures proper to the third stage of meaning? And would not such objectifications carry with conspicuous transparency the characteristic or property that Lonergan identifies as the fourth consequence of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis?

If theologians read paragraphs [A], [B], and [C], bearing in mind Lonergan's actually stated fourth consequence; and if, while remaining mindful of the factors that safeguard continuity in systematic theological thinking, they are questioning on the look-out for ways in which special theological categories with the requisite characteristic or property identified by the fourth consequence can gradually be developed, as they seek to operate effectively in the functional specialty of Systematics; then I suggest there is no good reason for them to neglect the categories of scholastic theology or to cease attempting to reorient and integrate them into methodical theology. For there is no good reason to suppose that the only function and implication of Lonergan's paragraph [B] remark is to remind readers of the major premise in *Insight* for arriving at explicit, critical metaphysics from cognitional theory and of the advantages that accrue to metaphysics when it is displaced as the basic science.

## MEETING HEGEL HALFWAY: THE INTIMATE COMPLEXITY OF LONERGAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HEGEL

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MY AIM IN this essay is to provide a schematic account of Lonergan's relationship with Hegel and so also of the relationship of his critical realism to Hegel's absolute idealism. The relationship is intimate and, like most intimate relationships, it's complicated by a variety of strains and stresses.<sup>1</sup> A more thorough investigation is needed to do justice to its complexity. But my hope is that this brief account is detailed enough to enable us to understand why Lonergan suggests, in the introduction to his foundational philosophic work, that those who wish to reach his critical realist standpoint should get to know and come to terms with Hegel.

As a first approximation to an understanding of the intimate complexity of Lonergan's relationship with Hegel, I'll draw your attention to four images Lonergan employs to depict it. From these, we'll obtain a number of clues.<sup>2</sup> As a second approximation, I'll draw your attention to the place

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<sup>1</sup>The relationship is also a long one. Ample evidence of Lonergan's interest in Hegel in the 1930s, long before *Insight* was conceived, has been provided by Patrick Brown in his doctoral dissertation completed at Boston College. See his article, "System and History in Lonergan's Early Historical and Economic Manuscripts," *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis* 1 (2001): 32-76. See also my article, "Lonergan's Reading of Hegel," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, 8, no. 3 (summer 2014): 513-34. But, my concern here is not the origin and history of the relationship but its nature in its maturity.

<sup>2</sup>The standard set of geometrical diagrams Lonergan employs to promote identification of the experience of insight are given prominence by Lonergan; consequently, they have received plenty of attention. But his use of imagery in other contexts, while still pedagogical, is obviously more casual, and it is largely ignored. As his choice of the words of Aristotle for the frontispiece of *Insight* suggests, Lonergan was well aware of the necessity and fecundity of imagery. Imagine the mathematician, as Lonergan suggested we do as we read his remarks on the necessity of imagery, working with pen and paper. But images are required for all understanding, even for

of privilege Lonergan assigns to Hegel's dialectical method in his critical discussion in *Insight* of the dialectic of philosophic methods leading up to his own transcendental method. Third, I'll turn to Lonergan's more general account of this movement as the transition from the order of logic to the order of method. I'll expose Hegel's place in this transition and coin the phrase "Hegel's halfwayness." Fourth, I'll provide a sampling of Lonergan's complaints about Hegel that place a limit on the closeness of their relationship. Fifth, I'll locate the root of Hegel's halfwayness in the excessive determinateness of the determinate negation of the order of logic by which he mediates his transition to the order of method, and I'll give four examples of its determining influence on his negation of that negation, his absolute idealism. I'll conclude by returning to the most differentiated and thought-provoking of Lonergan's images, and I'll elaborate it to depict the intimacy and some of the complexity of Lonergan's relationship with Hegel.

#### FOUR IMAGES

Lonergan uses four images to depict his relationship with Hegel. The first depiction is a vertical image of *ascension by stages*. It is the now familiar image of the idealist halfway house at the midpoint between materialism and critical realism that appears in the introduction to *Insight*.

For the appropriation of one's own rational self-consciousness . . . is not an end in itself but rather a beginning. It is a necessary beginning,

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philosophical understanding of a bloodless ballet of metaphysical categories (*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], 570; the image is an adaptation of F. H. Bradley's "unearthly ballet of bloodless categories." As Lonergan remarks in *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, vol. 2 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997], 405: ". . . [I]n this life we understand absolutely nothing except in a phantasm." However, Lonergan usually leaves his readers to conjure their own heuristic images; except in contexts where Lonergan is illustrating insight, images are few and far between in his works. All the more reason, then, to pay close attention to the few he does provide. In addition to the four discussed here, there are, for example, his depictions of the mind misconceived as a Noah's ark, of the logician as a mortician, of transcendental method as the bed in which the river flows, of the counterposition sprouting another head each time its head is cut off, of marching on the capital and assaulting the citadel (borrowed from Hume's *Treatise*), and of the plaster cast of a man (borrowed from Kant's Doctrine of Method in the *Critique of Pure Reason*). All of these images evoke insights.

for unless one breaks the duality in one's knowing, one doubts that understanding correctly is knowing. Under the pressure of that doubt, either one will sink into the bog of a knowing that is without understanding, or else one will cling to understanding but sacrifice knowing on the altar of an immanentism, an idealism, a relativism. From the horns of that dilemma one escapes only through the discovery – and one has not made it yet if one has no clear memory of its startling strangeness – that there are two quite different realisms, that there is an incoherent realism, half animal and half human, that poses as a halfway house between materialism and idealism, and on the other hand that there is an intelligent and reasonable realism between which and materialism the halfway house is idealism.

While Lonergan does not identify the idealism of the halfway house as Hegel's, I have argued elsewhere that it must be Hegel's absolute idealism that he has in mind.<sup>3</sup> From a consideration of this image of the halfway house, then, we obtain two clues about Lonergan's relationship with Hegel. One is that, despite obvious philosophical differences, Lonergan does not regard Hegel as a basically counterpositional thinker. A halfway house lies

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<sup>3</sup>*Insight*, 22. This quotation requires some unpacking. I have argued elsewhere that the halfway house to which Lonergan refers is not Kant's Critical Philosophy, and certainly not Berkeley's idealism, but Hegel's Absolute Idealism. I invite readers to consult my argument if they have any doubts about this conclusion. See my articles, "Going Beyond Idealism: Lonergan's Relation to Hegel," in vol. 20 of the *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2008): 305-36, and "Lonergan's Debt to Hegel, and the Appropriation of Critical Realism," in *Meaning and History in Systematic Theology: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Doran, SJ*, ed. John D. Dadosky (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2009), 403-21 and in *Fifty Years of Insight: Bernard Lonergan's Contribution to Philosophy and Theology*, ed. Neil Ormerod, Robin Koning, and David Braithwaite (Adelaide: ATF Theology, Australian Catholic University Series, 2011), 1-16. Lonergan borrows the image of idealism as the halfway house between critical realism and materialism directly from Maréchal. See vol. 5 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, 276-77. The image also occurs in Leo W. Keeler's *The Problem of Error from Plato to Kant: A Historical and Critical Study* (Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University, 1934), 6, which Lonergan reviewed in the 1935 volume of *Gregorianum*. However, the image is not Keeler's but occurs in a quotation from A. E. Taylor's *Plato* and is used with reference to the Eleatic doctrine. Why Lonergan did not identify Hegel as the idealist with whom we have to come to terms is an interesting question. One plausible answer is that, given the persistent resistance of "Thomists" of his time, who remained naïve realists despite their reading of Thomas, to taking even Kant seriously (for example, Etienne Gilson, Armand Maurer, Joseph Owens), an explicit reference to Hegel in the introduction to *Insight* would have been excessively off-putting. See the archival document 32610DTE070, [www.bernardlonergan.com](http://www.bernardlonergan.com), where Lonergan observes, "My position does not escape the naïve realist's equally naïve idea of idealism."

on the path to our destination; a basically counterpositional philosophy *qua* counterpositional diverts us from that path.<sup>4</sup> The other clue is that to adopt Hegel's absolute idealism is to be at the midpoint of the intellectual ascent to Lonergan's critical realism. If we are to reach that standpoint, we must pass through, that is, enter into, rest in, and then go beyond, Hegel's absolute idealism.

The second depiction is the image of the *parallel movements* of the argument of *Insight*, on one side, and of Hegel's thought, on the other, that appears in the final footnote in the chapter on the notion of being in *Insight*.

It is not to be inferred that my attitude towards Hegel is merely negative. In fact, characteristic features in the very movement of his thought have their parallels in the present work. As his *Aufhebung* both rejects and retains, so also in their own fashion do our higher viewpoints. As he repeatedly proceeds from *an sich*, through *für sich*, to *an und für sich*, so our whole argument is a movement from the objects of mathematical, scientific, and commonsense understanding, through the acts of understanding themselves, to an understanding of understanding.<sup>5</sup>

From this image, we obtain a few more clues. One is that the relation between Lonergan and Hegel is more methodological than conceptual. That is to say, what binds them lies, not in the contents of their philosophies and their conclusions, which are obviously very different, but in the dynamic structures of their philosophies. Another is that their methods, if parallel, are not identical; they move in the same direction, but they proceed, as it were, side by side. While the paths followed by Hegel and Lonergan may differ in length, in their specific points of origin, and in their specific points of

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<sup>4</sup>This is why it is a mistake to think it is Kant's Critical Philosophy that is the halfway house. As Lonergan remarks in an archival note: "For two hundred years people have been swallowing the first sentence of the Transcendental Aesthetic of the First Critique" (2851D0E070, www.bernard-lonergan.com). That sentence reads: "In whatever way and through whatever means a cognition may relate to objects, that through which it relates immediately to them, and at which all thought as a means is directed as an end, is intuition" (*Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge University Press, 1998). In connection with Hegel's quasi-positionality, see Thomas Cappelli's discussion of two moments of intellectual conversion in his paper, "The Unfolding of Intellectual Conversion," in the proceedings of the Lonergan on the Edge Conference at Marquette University, Sept. 16-17, 2011, posted at lonerganresource.com.

<sup>5</sup>*Insight*, 398n21.

termination, where they run in parallel we may expect characteristic features of the movement of Hegel's thought to be isomorphic with characteristic features of the movement of Lonergan's thought.

The third depiction of his relationship with Hegel appears in an image in archival notes (see Figure 1 and the larger redrawn version in Figure 2 on the following page). It is a diagram of *circular mediation*. It is a diagram of the commonsense, theoretic, interior, and religious realms of meaning and their mediation by responses to the systematic, critical, and methodical exigences.<sup>6</sup> In the accompanying key to the diagram, Lonergan assigns Hegel to the realm of interiority.

From this image we obtain still more clues. One is that Hegel's philosophy, like Lonergan's, is not a product of the realm of theory but is constructed in the realm of interiority. Another is that Hegel, like Lonergan, responds to the methodical exigence and, in doing so, sublates his prior responses to the systematic and critical exigences. Another is that Hegel's response to the methodical exigence, like Lonergan's, is a systematic integration that is informed and governed by a critical foundation in the realm of interiority.

The fourth and final image is a depiction by Lonergan of the dynamics of his relationship with Hegel as a process of eversion or turning-inside-out.

Marx was right in feeling that the Hegelian dialectic needed to be adjusted, but he was content to turn it upside down. What it needed, I should say, was to be turned inside out. Instead of endeavoring to insert movement within logic, the relatively static operations of logic had to be inserted within the ever ongoing context of methodical operations.<sup>7</sup>

From this image, we obtain the idea that Lonergan's reservations about Hegel's system have less to do with its constituent parts and their movement and more to do with the interior depth, as it were, of those parts and their movement. It suggests that Hegel's response to the methodical exigence

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<sup>6</sup>Archival document 54700D0L060, [www.bernardlonergan.com](http://www.bernardlonergan.com). See Figure 1, the original, and Figure 2, the original redrawn and altered slightly to highlight Lonergan's assignment of Hegel to the realm of interiority. For Lonergan's account of the exigences, see *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 81-85.

<sup>7</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, vol. 17 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 36. What Marx actually said, in *Kapital*, was that Hegel's idealism left his dialectic standing on its head, and that it must be turned right side up again if we are to discover the rational kernel in the mystical shell.

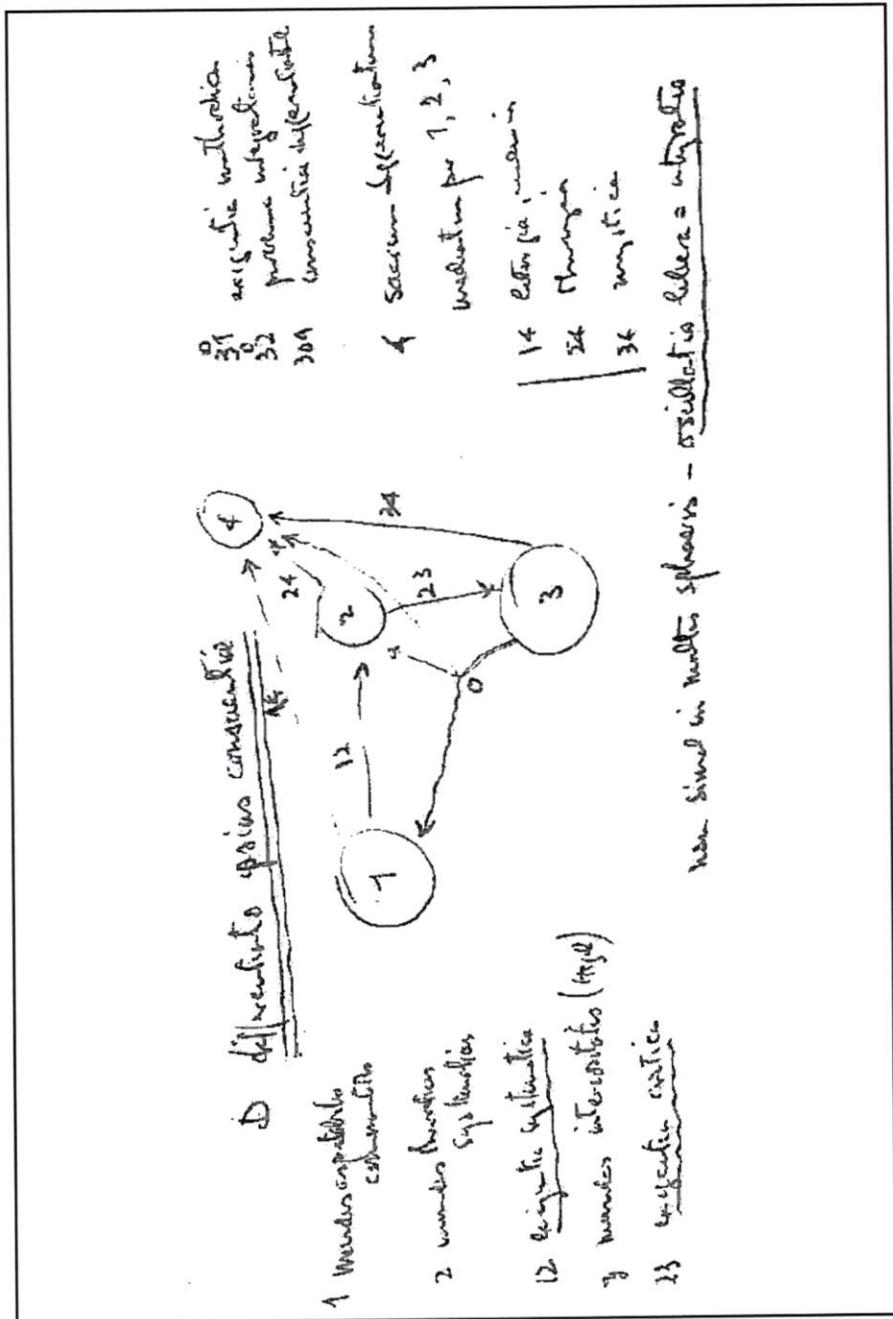


Figure 1

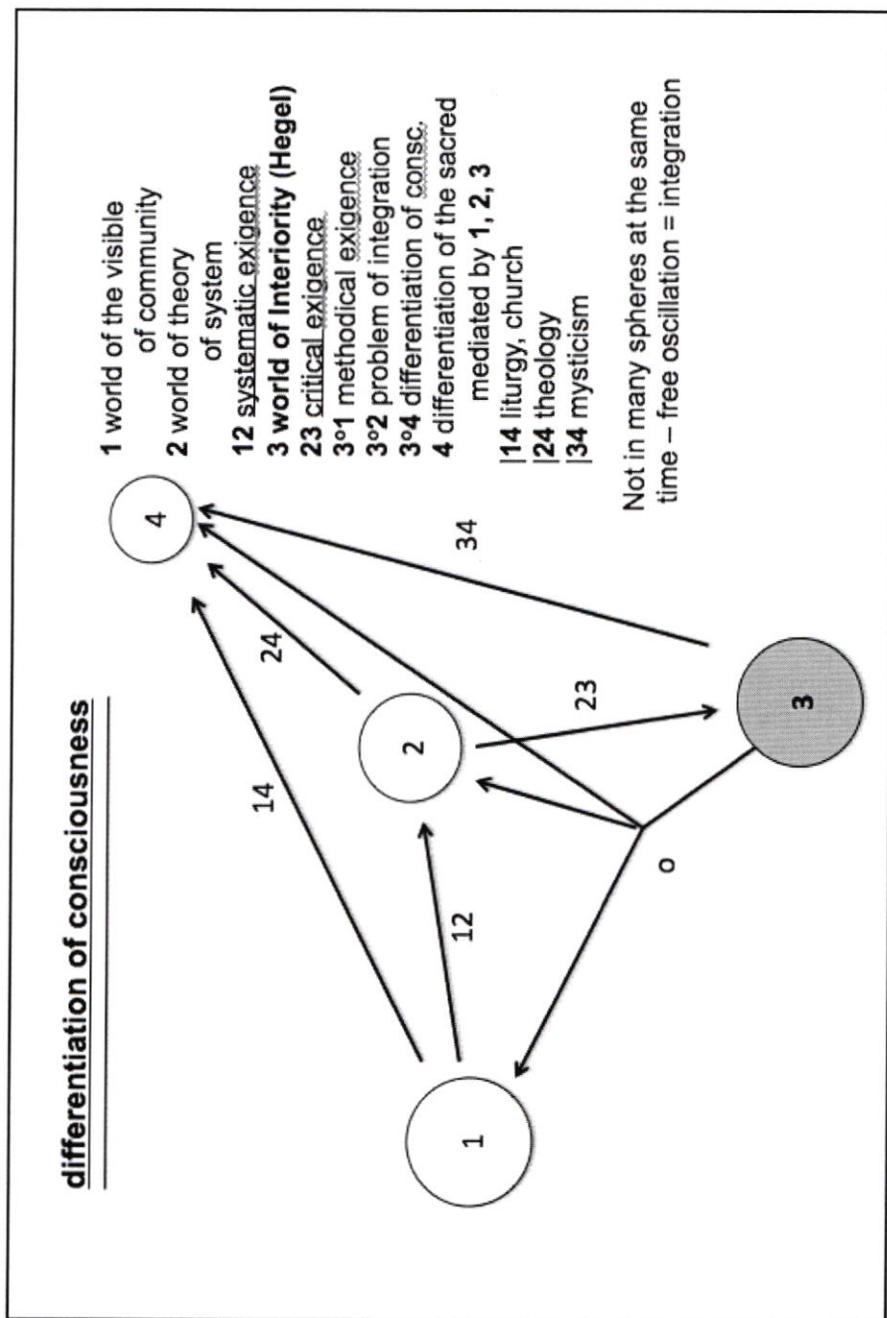


Figure 2

pivots on an interior foundation that is still only the exterior of the interior, so to speak.

All four of these images depict a relationship of considerable intimacy. But, even intimate relationships have their ups and downs. Hegel's idealism may be half way to critical realism, but it is not there yet. Hegel's methodical path may run parallel to and in the same direction as Lonergan's, but the two paths are not identical in points of origin or in length. Hegel may respond to the methodical exigence and fashion a systematic integration that rests upon an interior foundation, but Hegel's dialectic is not Lonergan's transcendental method, and Hegel's absolute knowledge is not Lonergan's explicit metaphysics. Finally, if Hegel's philosophy is woven of the same fabric as Lonergan's, as Lonergan's image of eversion implies, and so cannot be refuted and set aside in the manner in which a basic counterposition is reversed, it is nevertheless to be turned inside out.

Lonergan's philosophy, then, does not stand to Hegel's philosophy as a philosophy grounded in interiority stands to a philosophy grounded in the realm of theory, for Lonergan tells us that Hegel's philosophy, like his own, is grounded in the realm of interiority. Nor does Lonergan's philosophy stand to Hegel's philosophy as a basically positional interior philosophy stands to a basically counterpositional philosophy. As the image of the halfway house suggests, and as Lonergan states explicitly elsewhere, Hegel has broken with the counterposition.<sup>8</sup> Lonergan's philosophy seems to stand to Hegel's as the more interior side of a basically positional philosophy stands to its less interior side. Hegel's philosophy, then, is only quasi-positional or transitional, his method is only relatively isomorphic with Lonergan's because it is displaced, his terminal integration rests upon an interior foundation, but that foundation lacks depth, and so the terminal integration is inadequate.

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<sup>8</sup>*Insight*, 372: "Five hundred years separate Hegel from Scotus . . . [T]hat notable interval of time was devoted to working out in a variety of manners the possibilities of the assumption that knowing consists in taking a look. The ultimate conclusion was that it did not and could not. If the reader does not himself accept that conclusion as definitive, certainly Hegel did. . . ." Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* may be described as an account of Spirit's self-overcoming of this counterpositional presupposition (but, as we shall see in what follows, not its complete abandonment). See also, note 57 below. See *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 224: "Pure thinking knows that it alone, and not feeling or representation, is capable of grasping the truth of things, and that the assertion of Epicurus that the true is what is sensed, must be pronounced a complete perversion of the nature of mind."

THE PRIVILEGED PLACE OF HEGEL'S DIALECTICAL METHOD IN *INSIGHT*

We made a first approximation to an understanding of Lonergan's relationship with Hegel by considering four images employed by Lonergan. A second approximation can be made by considering the place Lonergan assigns to Hegel's dialectical method in the section of *Insight* titled "The Dialectic of Method in Metaphysics."<sup>9</sup> There, after exposing the limitations of deductive philosophic methods that "seek independence from the whims and fancies of the subject,"<sup>10</sup> Lonergan turns to the directive philosophic methods that emerge once it is recognized that "deductive method alone is not enough" and that "it is not so easy to leave the subject outside one's calculations."<sup>11</sup> Directive methods admit that "the subject cannot be ignored."<sup>12</sup> Lonergan proceeds to give critical accounts of the methods of universal doubt, empiricism, and commonsense eclecticism. In so doing, he recollects the historical experience of the displacement of one philosophic method by another. By this historical experience, says Lonergan, we are "forced to the conclusion that philosophic method must concern itself with the structure and aberrations of human cognitional process."<sup>13</sup> It is with this observation that Lonergan begins his critical discussion of Hegel's dialectical method.

In response to the historical experience of one philosophic method supplanting and replacing another, Hegel rises to a higher level of philosophical reflection, to the level of reflection on method itself, and introduces a conception of the method that is "the very process" by which one philosophic method supplants and replaces another. This, says Lonergan, was "approximately Hegel's inspiration."<sup>14</sup> That process is conceived by Hegel as one "that turns positions into their contradictories only to discover in such reversal a new position that begets its opposite to bring to birth a third position with similar consequences until through successive repetitions the totality of positions and opposites forms a dialectical whole."<sup>15</sup> There is

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<sup>9</sup>*Insight*, 426-55.

<sup>10</sup>*Insight*, 433.

<sup>11</sup>*Insight*, 433.

<sup>12</sup>*Insight*, 446.

<sup>13</sup>*Insight*, 446.

<sup>14</sup>*Insight*, 446.

<sup>15</sup>*Insight*, 446. See the preface to *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), § 2: "The more conventional opinion gets fixated on the antithesis of

a gradual movement, temporal if not necessarily chronological, to be noted in Lonergan's consideration of philosophic methods that terminates in a heightened reflexivity and a search for the method of all methods.<sup>16</sup> By its placement at the end of this movement, Hegel's dialectical method, which Hegel himself refers to as "the method,"<sup>17</sup> is given pride of place.

Let us note that Lonergan's entire treatment of the temporal sequence of philosophic methods, as its title "*The Dialectic of Method in Metaphysics*" suggests, not only terminates in a discussion of Hegelian dialectic, but is itself a response to the historical experience of methods displacing methods that inspired Hegel's ascent to reflection on method itself. But Lonergan's experience is enriched by the addition of Hegel's inspired attempt to conceive "the method"<sup>18</sup> that is "the very process."<sup>19</sup> From his consideration of Hegel's method as the last in a now prolonged sequence of properly philosophic methods,<sup>20</sup> Lonergan turns to his own method and its execution, that is, to the task of making explicit the latent metaphysics of the human mind on

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truth and falsity, the more it tends to expect a given philosophical system to be either accepted or contradicted; and hence it finds only acceptance or rejection. It does not comprehend the diversity of philosophical systems as the progressive unfolding of truth, but rather sees in it simple disagreements."

<sup>16</sup>"The . . . shift to interiority was essayed in various manners from Descartes through Kant to the nineteenth-century German idealists" (*Method in Theology*, 316).

<sup>17</sup>"For the method is nothing but the structure set forth in its pure essentiality. We should realize, however, that the system of ideas concerning philosophical method is yet another set of current beliefs that belongs to a bygone culture. If this comment sounds boastful or revolutionary – and I am far from adopting such a tone – it should be noted that current opinion itself has already come to view the scientific regime bequeathed by mathematics as quite *old-fashioned* – with its explanations, divisions, axioms, sets of theorems, its proofs, principles, deductions, and conclusions from them. Even if its unfitness is not clearly understood, little or no use is any longer made of it; and though not actually condemned outright, no one likes it very much" (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, § 48. See also, *Lectures on Logic: Berlin, 1831*, transcribed by Karl Hegel, trans. Clark Butler [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001], 230).

<sup>18</sup>Hegel, *Lectures on Logic: Berlin, 1831*, 229-30.

<sup>19</sup>*Method in Theology*, 304-305: ". . . [T]here is the emergence of method. It consists in the transposition of systematic meaning from a static to an ongoing, dynamic context. . . . Any given system, ancient or modern, is subject to logic. But the process from any given system to its successor is the concern of method."

<sup>20</sup>One might object that, in fact, Lonergan's preceding treatment of methods ends with an account of scientific method and philosophy. But, this is not properly speaking a consideration of a philosophic method. It is a critique of the attempt to transfer into philosophy and to substitute for philosophic method the method of natural science. It is, as it were, the critique of a disruptive aberration and derailment of the movement into interiority. The scientist concludes that "it is nonsense to talk about a philosophical method and . . . the plain fact is that philosophy has no method at all" (*Insight*, 450).

the interior foundation afforded by his cognitional theory.<sup>21</sup> It should come as no surprise, then, that Lonergan takes the trouble, in the footnote quoted above, to caution his readers about inferring that his attitude toward Hegel is merely negative and to point out that "characteristic features of the very movement of his [Hegel's] thought have their parallels" in *Insight* and, indeed, inform the structure of the entire work.<sup>22</sup>

THE TRANSITION FROM THE ORDER OF LOGIC  
TO THE ORDER OF METHOD

The movement of philosophic methods in which Lonergan assigns Hegel a place of privilege is what he refers to later, in *Method in Theology*, as the transition from a second, theoretic stage of meaning to a third, interior stage of meaning.

In the first stage conscious and intentional operations follow the mode of common sense. In a second stage besides the mode of common sense there is also the mode of theory, where the theory is controlled by a logic. In a third stage the modes of common sense and theory remain, science asserts its autonomy from philosophy, and there occur philosophies that leave theory to science and take their stand on interiority.<sup>23</sup>

The transition from the second, theoretic stage to the third, interior stage is a shift from logical to methodical control of meaning. It is a structural change,<sup>24</sup> a gradual reversal of priorities,<sup>25</sup> rather than a change in content. It is a shift from the order of logic to the order of method.

In the order of logic, priority is given (1) to logical premises, (2) to metaphysics, (3) to faculty psychology in terms of potencies and habits, (4) to relations of acts to objects by efficient and final causality, and (5) to speculative rationality. In the order of method, the priority is reversed, and primacy is given (1) to the concrete operating subject, (2) to self-appropriation

<sup>21</sup>*Insight*, chap. 15.

<sup>22</sup>*Insight*, 398n21. The editors of the Collected Works report that Lonergan added this footnote at the proof stage.

<sup>23</sup>*Method in Theology*, 85.

<sup>24</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1985), 45.

<sup>25</sup>"Aquinas Today," 46.

of the subject, (3) to intentionality analysis in terms of successive levels of conscious operation and their sublative relations,<sup>26</sup> (4) to relations of acts to objects by intentionality, and (5) to the sublation of speculative rationality by practico-existential rationality.<sup>27</sup>

In still more general terms, the shift from the order of logic to the order of method is a shift in the very notion of science and, consequently, a shift in the understanding of philosophy and its function.<sup>28</sup> Prior to this transition the sciences form "a single block under philosophic hegemony,"<sup>29</sup> as they did for Aristotle. With this transition, philosophy relinquishes to the natural sciences the task of explaining the data of sense, grants the sciences their autonomy, and takes its stand on the data of intentional consciousness. But the new autonomy of the natural sciences is not absolute; while the natural sciences are no longer under the control of a theoretic metaphysics, they remain "under the control of method."<sup>30</sup>

Those familiar with both Lonergan and Hegel might be inclined to object to the placement of Hegel firmly in the world of interiority. A host of characteristics of Hegel's philosophy seems to invite the assignment to him of a place in Lonergan's second, theoretic stage. They will recall Hegel's characterization of his method as "dialectical deduction," his monumental *Science of Logic* with its metaphysical starting point in a minimal concept of

<sup>26</sup>*Method in Theology*, 261: "From within the world of interiority, then, mental acts as experienced and as systematically conceived are a logical first. From them one can proceed to epistemology and metaphysics."

<sup>27</sup>*Method in Theology*, 45-46. This is Lonergan's 1974, post-*Method in Theology* characterization of the transition. In 1968, he characterized the shift in priorities as a transposition from logic to method, from the Aristotelian to the modern conception of science, from metaphysical soul to concrete subject, from human nature to human history, and from logical first principles to transcendental method. See, "The Future of Thomism," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974), 49-52.

<sup>28</sup>*A Third Collection*, 41. See the archival document 49200DTE050, www.bernard-lonergan.com. "Philosophy is conceived differently as a science depending on how science itself is conceived. It is conceived differently as philosophy where attention is paid to the history of notions and to human historicity. This is especially true ever since Hegel."

<sup>29</sup>*A Third Collection*, 43.

<sup>30</sup>*A Third Collection*, 46-47. See *Method in Theology*, 316: "Now the natural and human sciences aim at accounting for all the data of sense. Accordingly, if there is to be any general science [of being], its data will have to be the data of consciousness. So there is effected the turn to interiority. The general science is, first, cognitional theory. . . , secondly, epistemology. . . , and thirdly metaphysics . . . Such general science will be the general case of the methods of the special sciences and not, as in Aristotelianism, the general case of the content of the special sciences."

being, his bare sketch of a gnoseology in his *Encyclopaedia*,<sup>31</sup> the prominence and sublative role of organic teleology in his philosophy,<sup>32</sup> the primacy he gives to speculative thought and to the comprehensive and coherent system of systems that it generates, and his apparently hegemonic philosophy of nature.

But one might object in return, as I think Hegel himself would, that this is a one-sided view of his philosophy. In fact, in the preface to the first edition of his *Science of Logic*, Hegel states explicitly that he intends to transform logic to bring it into conformity with "the new spirit which has arisen both in Learning and in Life."<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the "smaller" *Logic* of the *Encyclopaedia* opens with a dialectical critique of three attitudes of thought to objectivity that functions to set the stage for his new position, just as Lonergan's critical discussion in his "Dialectic of Method in Metaphysics" functions to set the stage for his.<sup>34</sup> If Hegel's philosophy displays prominent characteristics of the order of logic, it also displays prominent characteristics of a philosophy in transition to the order of method,<sup>35</sup> although these are often expressed, as in the title of the *Science of Logic* itself, in language borrowed from the world of theory or from what Hegel calls the standpoint of the Understanding.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>31</sup>See Hegel's discussion of "theoretical mind" in *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*, 188-228, where he provides his account of "the formal course of the development of intelligence to cognition" (192) in three stages: (1) intuition (attention, sensation, intuition proper), (2) representation (recollection, imagination, memory), (3) thought (understanding, judgment, reason).

<sup>32</sup>Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller, 734 ff.

<sup>33</sup>Hegel, *Science of Logic*, preface, 34: "... [T]here are no traces in Logic of the new spirit which has arisen both in Learning and in Life. It is, however (let us say it once for all), quite vain to try to retain the forms of an earlier stage of development when the inner structure of spirit has become transformed; these earlier forms are like withered leaves which are pushed off by the new buds already being generated at the roots."

<sup>34</sup>*The Encyclopaedia Logic*, trans. T. F. Geraets, W. A. Suchting, and H. S. Harris (Cambridge, MA: Hackett, 1991), 45-124.

<sup>35</sup>See Hegel's *Lectures on Logic: Berlin, 1831*, 6: "The object of our study in these lectures [on logic] is to gain knowledge of thinking, to know what we as thinking beings are. A human being is spirit, and to come to know what lies therein is our highest achievement" (7): "Thinking, having concepts, seems far removed from us, but it is in fact what is closest at hand. In thinking I remain absolutely at home with myself. I am myself this thinking. We represent thinking to ourselves as separable from the I, but it is in fact what is most present in it" (*The Encyclopaedia Logic*, § 14): "The same development of thinking that is presented in the history of philosophy is presented in philosophy itself, but freed from that historical outwardness, i.e., purely in the element of thinking."

<sup>36</sup>Hegel consistently employs terms drawn from the indigenous language of the realm of theory when he is speaking from the standpoint of Reason, for example, concept, logic, system, deduction. This poses problems for theoretic interpreters of Hegel; for example, as Lonergan observes, "For the man who knows his logic and does not think of method, the term 'system' will have only one meaning. Systems are either true or false. True system is the realization of the

The principle of philosophy, says Hegel, is contained in meditative thinking [*Nachdenken*].<sup>37</sup> (1) He emphatically rejects the priority of merely logical premises, while retaining them in a subordinate position, and gives priority to the dynamism of the self-unfolding subject that he identifies with the *Begriff* or Concept.<sup>38</sup> (2) He rejects the priority of traditional metaphysics and its abstract objectivism,<sup>39</sup> and so (3) he also rejects the faculty psychological account of the subject-as-object<sup>40</sup> and gives priority to the phenomenological narration of the path of the natural consciousness in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*,<sup>41</sup> to thought's thinking itself in his *Science of*

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deductivist ideal that happens to be true, and in each department of human knowledge, there is only one true system" (Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophy of God and Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1973), 49.

<sup>37</sup>*The Encyclopaedia Logic*, § 17, 30-31.

<sup>38</sup>As Beatrice Longuenesse notes, Hegel's starting-point in the *Science of Logic* is being; but the fact that it is not a strictly logical starting-point is illustrated almost immediately by its collapse into nothing. See *Hegel's Critique of Metaphysics*, trans. Nicole J. Simek (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 11. Hegel's ideal of comprehensive coherence reveals both his sublation of logic (the ideal of coherence) and his concern with method (the ideal of comprehensiveness).

<sup>39</sup>*The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 70-71.

<sup>40</sup>*The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 71-72. See *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*, 189: "A favorite reflectional form is that of powers and faculties of soul, intelligence, or mind. Faculty, like power or force, is the fixed quality of any object of thought, conceived as reflected into self. Force is no doubt the infinity of form – of the inward and the outward: but its essential finitude involves the indifference of content to form. In this lies the want of organic unity which by this reflectional form, treating mind as a 'lot' of forces, is brought into mind, as it is by the same method brought into nature. Any aspect which can be distinguished in mental action is stereotyped as an independent entity, and the mind thus made a skeleton-like mechanical collection. It makes absolutely no difference if we substitute the expression 'activities' for powers and faculties. Isolate the activities and you similarly make the mind a mere aggregate, and treat their essential correlation as an external incident." See also, *Lectures on Logic: Berlin, 1831*, 6: "Thinking is called a mental power, a faculty. Embracing feeling, representation, imagination, the faculty of thinking taken as a whole is known as theoretical mind. Beyond theoretical mind lies the will, the faculty of desire. Thinking at once falls to intelligence, to which representation and intuition also belong. Thinking is said to be one mental activity, one activity – one among others. Each power is taken to be independent, and the soul is imagined to be what holds such and such faculties within itself. The soul is taken to be a kind of external medium in which every faculty independently operates for itself on its own account. When such representations are used we speak of mental powers, and relate them to one another through determining each to be tacked on as also present. What we have here is an only external compounding. Our immediate consciousness is held within such categories."

<sup>41</sup>On the primacy of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, preface, § 39, and *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, § 27. In *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-64*, vol. 6 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 37-38, Lonergan writes: "In his *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel has many useful things to say on the coming-to-be of mind."

*Logic*,<sup>42</sup> and to the analysis of shapes of consciousness and their sublative relations throughout his works. But because the self-unfolding *Begriff* is not quite the subject-as-subject, but rather *substance*-as-subject, his dialectical logic is simultaneously and fundamentally a dynamic ontology.<sup>43</sup> (4) He rejects the priority of relations of acts to their objects by efficient and final causality, while retaining them in a subordinate position, and he gives priority to a series of intentional relations of acts to their objects, but that series terminates in the overcoming of this intentional difference in the self-conscious identity of thought and being. The mechanism of the Concept-in-itself and the teleology of the Concept-for-itself are superseded by the Idea of the Concept-in-and-for-itself.<sup>44</sup> (5) Hegel does insist repeatedly on the priority of speculative rationality. But it cannot be speculative rationality in the traditional sense, as one faculty whose operations are isolated from those of the faculty of will, because Hegel rejects faculty psychology's mere aggregation of isolated powers. Moreover, there are clear indications of an overriding concern in Hegel for the extension, implementation, and fulfillment of speculative rationality in spiritual community.<sup>45</sup>

Finally, as Alison Stone has shown in her book *Petrified Intelligence*, in Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* the textual evidence available to determine once and for all Hegel's position on the autonomy of the natural sciences is inconsistent and equivocal.<sup>46</sup> Hegel claims in his *Philosophy of Nature* that

<sup>42</sup>*The Encyclopaedia Logic*, § 24, 58.

<sup>43</sup>Hegel at once rejects and retains the priority of metaphysics, but the priority he retains differs from the one he rejects. Beatrice Longuenesse describes Hegel's *Science of Logic* as a "critique of metaphysics," but not in the Kantian sense. Hegel's way of proceeding in his *Science of Logic* "does not consist in asking under what conditions metaphysics is possible. Rather, it consists in investigating what metaphysics is about, and how the project of metaphysics needs to be redefined if one is to come to any satisfactory accomplishment of its self-set goal." Hegel's *Logic*, she writes, "is inseparably a *metaphysical* and a *transcendental* deduction of the categories of metaphysics" (*Hegel's Critique of Metaphysics*, 5).

<sup>44</sup>Hegel, *Science of Logic*, 755 ff.

<sup>45</sup>See *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, (BB) Spirit, 263 ff.

<sup>46</sup>See Alison Stone, *Petrified Intelligence: Nature in Hegel's Philosophy* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2005), chap. 2. In his introduction to his *Philosophy of Nature*, Hegel likens his philosophy of nature to Aristotle's which deprived the natural sciences of their autonomy from metaphysics, but his motivation for doing so is to combat the modern claim that they are absolutely autonomous. At the same time, his reason for denying them absolute autonomy is his abandonment of faculty psychology which isolates the empirical scientific manner of thinking from the thoughtful manner of philosophy: "The Philosophy of Nature may perhaps be regarded *prima facie* as a new science; this is certainly correct in one sense, but in another sense it is not. For it is ancient, as ancient as any study of Nature at all; it is not distinct from the latter and it is, in fact, older than physics; Aristotelian physics, for example, is far more

he is taking a new approach that sublates and goes beyond the extremes of absolute philosophic hegemony and absolute natural scientific autonomy, and grants the natural sciences a relative autonomy under the control, not of logic strictly speaking, but of the “transformed logic” that he names “the method.”<sup>47</sup>

a Philosophy of Nature than it is physics. It is only in modern times that the two have been separated. . . . In connection with this distinction between physics and the Philosophy of Nature, and of the specific character of each as contrasted with the other, it must be noted, right from the start, that the two do not lie so far apart as is at first assumed. Physics and natural history are called empirical sciences *par excellence*, and they profess to belong entirely to the sphere of perception and experience, and in this way to be opposed to the Philosophy of Nature, i.e. to a knowledge of Nature from thought. The fact is, however, that the principal charge to be brought against physics is that it contains much more thought than it admits and is aware of, and that it is better than it supposes itself to be; or if, perhaps, all thought in physics is to be counted a defect, then it is worse than it supposes itself to be. Physics and Philosophy of Nature, therefore, are not distinguished from each other as perception and thought, but only by the kind and manner of their thought; they are both a thinking apprehension of Nature” (see *Hegel’s Philosophy of Nature*, trans. A. V. Miller [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970], 2-3). Again: “The science of philosophy is a circle in which each member has an antecedent and a successor, but in the philosophical encyclopaedia, the Philosophy of Nature appears as only one circle in the whole . . .” (2); “What distinguishes the Philosophy of Nature from physics is, more precisely, the kind of metaphysics used by them both; for metaphysics is nothing else but the entire range of the universal determinations of thought, as it were, the diamond net into which everything is brought and thereby first made intelligible. Every educated consciousness has its metaphysics, an instinctive way of thinking, the absolute power within us of which we become master only when we made it in turn the object of our knowledge” (11); “The difference of the philosophically systematic mode of treatment from the empirical is that it does not treat levels of concrete existences in Nature as totalities, but as levels of characteristic determinations. . . . This is precisely the case with the relationships here. The hierarchy of these relationships and their inter-relatedness is one thing, but the consideration of a concrete, individual body as such is another” (235). In other words, Hegel is clearly rethinking the relation and, as Stone argues, one can conclude neither that he grants the natural sciences absolute autonomy nor that he grants philosophy absolute hegemony over them. He seems to be granting them relative autonomy under the control of his dialectical method. The issue is whether or not “the method” which controls them in fact permits the relative autonomy he wants to preserve.

<sup>47</sup>*Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, preface, § 48: “It might seem necessary at the outset to say more about the *method* of this movement, i.e. of Science. But its Notion is already to be found in what has been said, and its proper exposition belongs to logic, or rather it is Logic. For the method is nothing but the structure set forth in its pure essentiality.” (*Lectures on Logic: Berlin, 1831*, 230: “Within each moment [of the absolute idea] the very same activity occurs, and the universal form of this activity we call the *method*. We already recognize this method, since it has been implicitly active in each of the circles we have already traversed in the science of logic. We call the universal form of this activity ‘the method’ to distinguish it from its variable particular content. Yet the form exhibited by this method has a content of its own. What we call ‘method’ is distinguished from the variable particular content so that the form of the method has its own content. The method is not the form as it comes to be explicated upon any particular empirically given material. The method is rather the universal inner life of every self-concept, it is the dialectical process of development as subjectively re-enacted” (232). “The method is the soul – the living self-activation – of the material itself” (275); “The *method* of logic is the

The apparent equivocation and inconsistency that Stone finds in Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* on an issue that Lonergan, for his part, regards as unequivocally settled by the movement from the order of logic to the order of method, is not limited to that single work. It is to be found, I think, at every point in Hegel's writings where the hallmarks of the transition from the realm of theory to the realm of interiority appear. In every case, of course, Hegel would deny that he is involved in either equivocation or inconsistency by appealing to the very nature of a dialectical speculative system and its propositions,<sup>48</sup> and he would argue that the charge of equivocation and inconsistency itself is a predictable product of Understanding's adherence to merely logical controls and a merely logical conception of system.<sup>49</sup> In short, he would argue that "*everything is inherently contradictory.*"<sup>50</sup> Lonergan, for his part, would maintain that the dialectical tension of Hegel's speculative propositions and of his speculative system as a whole, that Hegel takes to be necessary and ineradicable, is in fact an unnecessary and problematic instability to be superseded. He would attribute the instability of Hegel's system to Hegel's having barely crossed the border separating the realm of interiority from the realm of theory and to his being immersed, consequently, in the admixture of languages and meanings typical of most border cultures. He would attribute it to what we may name "Hegel's halfwayness," and he would regard its ubiquity as massive evidence of the need to deepen Hegel's interiority by adopting the unusual strategy of eversion.

#### LONERGAN'S OBJECTIONS TO HEGEL

Let us turn our attention to the strains and stresses Hegel's halfwayness imposes on Lonergan's relationship with Hegel and so to Lonergan's account of some of the differences that, despite the intimacy of their relationship, still keep them apart.

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absolute rhythm of all that is alive, the truth of everything in particular spheres as also in general, inclusive spheres."

<sup>48</sup>*Phenomenology of Spirit*, preface, § 66.

<sup>49</sup> Hegel, *Encyclopaedia Logic*, § 14: "The term *system* is often misunderstood. It does not denote a philosophy, the principle of which is narrow and to be distinguished from others. On the contrary, a genuine philosophy makes it a principle to include every particular principle."

<sup>50</sup>Hegel, *Science of Logic*, 439. The emphasis is Hegel's.

First, while Hegel rightly rejects the confrontationist ideal of knowing as looking,<sup>51</sup> there is still operative in his philosophy a prolongation of spontaneous tendencies to extroversion.<sup>52</sup> He regards extroverted consciousness, not as a permanent and unsublatable competitor with properly human knowing, but as a stage of human knowing to be dialectically retained and superseded.<sup>53</sup> In his philosophy, then, there are operative both an explicit rejection and a deliberate prolongation of spontaneous tendencies to extroversion.<sup>54</sup> As a consequence, Hegel's shift to interiority is attenuated by a residual concentration on metaphysics and a neglect of gnoseology.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>51</sup>*Insight*, 396. See Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, 224: "Pure thinking knows that it alone, and not feeling or representation, is capable of grasping the truth of things, and that the assertion of Epicurus that the true is what is sensed, must be pronounced a complete perversion of the nature of mind."

<sup>52</sup>*Verbum*, 194, on this prolongation in the standard type of conceptualism.

<sup>53</sup>*Insight*, 447-48. Human knowing, for Lonergan, goes beyond extroverted consciousness, but extroverted consciousness is not properly speaking a stage of human knowing. Inasmuch as consciousness is extroverted, there is no operative intention of being. Sublation requires a unitary thread of intention, common to the sublated and the sublating. Hegel places the pure desire in the confronted object as much as in the confronting subject. Consequently, extroverted consciousness can be, and given the inexorable intention of comprehensiveness, must be sublated.

<sup>54</sup>This is amply illustrated by the very structure and progression of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* in which the standpoint of consciousness, with its presupposition of a subject/object dichotomy is sublated *without residue* by self-consciousness and reason. Hegelian supersession leaves nothing behind. Hegel's "rejection" of the standpoint of extroversion is also its sublation by subsequent standpoints. Accordingly, while Hegel's rejection of empiricist confrontationism is emphatic, his ideal of comprehensiveness requires that it also be retained as an earlier stage in the development of consciousness; it is, in this sense, prolonged. In other words, while this prolongation closely resembles the prolongation of extroversion Lonergan attributes to "conceptualists," it is not properly speaking due to an absence of intellectual conversion. Hegel is unequivocal when it comes to the necessity of thoughtful mediation for the attainment of knowledge, and he does not fit the description Lonergan provides in "The Subject" of the conceptualist who, as a "truncated subject," not only does not know himself but also is unaware of his ignorance and so, in one way or another, concludes that what he does not know does not exist" (The self exists, for Hegel; it's the Concept), "cannot account for the development of concepts" (Hegel's philosophy is precisely an attempt to account for their development), and is committed to "an anti-historical immobilism" (The very field of data to be explained, for Hegel, is the dynamic conceptual field). See *A Second Collection*, 73-74. See also, in this connection, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, vol. 7 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. Michael Shield (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 29. "There are many different intermediate stages between the extremes of a coherent sensism and an equally coherent intellectualism. And one must not think that each individual lives consistently at one fixed stage but rather that we more or less go back and forth between stages. Just as the surface of the ocean is disturbed now by smaller and now by larger waves, and just as the water level falls and rises with the ebb and flow of the tides, so ought we to think of the various levels of perfection at which persons may 'exist'."

<sup>55</sup>*Insight*, 194. As Hegel's conceptualism differs from Lonergan's ideal type (see preceding

Second, while Hegel rightly acknowledges a pure desire with an unrestricted objective, he ignores the constitutive component in the act of judgment. As a consequence, he does not identify that objective with a realm of factual existents and occurrences but with a universe of all-inclusive concreteness that is devoid of the factual, the existential, the virtually unconditioned.<sup>56</sup> Hegel identifies the objective of the pure desire with the absolute idea that is the comprehensive and coherent objective of complete systematic understanding.

Third, while Hegel rightly aimed to rehabilitate rational consciousness after Kant, he failed to do so. To rehabilitate rational consciousness, it must be shown that the unconditioned is a constitutive component of judgment, but Hegel did not do this. As a consequence, the Hegelian system is an incomplete viewpoint that views everything as it would be if there were no facts.<sup>57</sup>

Fourth, while Hegel rightly recognizes the psychological fact that the pure desire or intention of being underpins and penetrates all conceptual contents and that it is a common factor in all conceptual contents, it is neither identified with conceptual contents nor distinguished from them. As a consequence, Hegel's notion of being is indistinguishable from the notion of nothing.<sup>58</sup> Of his own notion or intention of being Lonergan says

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note), so Hegel's neglect of gnoseology is not absolute neglect. As he writes in the *Philosophy of Right* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 21: "... [A]s I have said in the *Encyclopaedia*, scarcely any philosophical science is so neglected and so ill off as the theory of mind, usually called 'psychology'." It is true, on the other hand, that Hegel does, like the ideal conceptualist, "conceive human intellect only in terms of what it does" to the "neglect of what intellect is, prior to what it does," and so he doesn't "advert to the act of understanding." See *Verbum*, 186. But, his conception of intellect is not of an isolated faculty of which the activities are inferred. He actually attends to what "intellect" does, and he vaguely discerns what "intellect" is (the act of understanding) through conceptual doing, the dynamic conceptual field, darkly. Consequently, he virtually discerns the act of understanding: For a sign of this discernment, see his *Lectures on Logic: Berlin, 1831*, 10: "The chief characteristic of representation is that the references which two things bear to each other in representation lies within a third thing. The understanding posits essential referential relations, referring to terms such as cause and effect, but has no insight into the necessity of the relation. . . . Any insight into such necessity is lost on representation as such. Thinking is simply something else than representing. To thinking as such belongs whatever is universal. *The forms merely lying upon our representations are the very content of thinking. Thinking is their activation.* Thinking has to do merely with the forms as such" (my emphasis).

<sup>56</sup>See *Insight*, chap. 10, on grasp of the virtually unconditioned and judgment.

<sup>57</sup>See the archival document 10500DTE050, [www.bernardlonergan.com](http://www.bernardlonergan.com): "Idealism: denial of confrontationist thing-in-itself; failure to reach unrestricted, unconditioned, absolute, transcendent in reflection and judgment. But 'being' is attained in judgment; therefore 'being' merely means 'being known.'"

<sup>58</sup>See the archival document 28150DTE070, [www.bernardlonergan.com](http://www.bernardlonergan.com), where Lonergan

that it underpins, penetrates, and goes beyond all conceptual contents.<sup>59</sup> Noteworthy here is Lonergan's deliberate and rather glaring omission from his description of Hegel's intention of being of the phrase, "goes beyond."

Fifth, while Hegel rightly rejects the notion of the unity of substance as a hidden phenomenon standing under and supporting other phenomena, he also denies that external phenomena can be brought together into the intelligible unity of a substantial object and that internal phenomena can be brought together into the intelligible unity of a substantial subject. As a consequence, in Hegel's philosophy there is no thing that appears and no one who understands or judges.<sup>60</sup> There is only the self-unfolding *Begriff* that is the emergent identity of being and thought.<sup>61</sup>

Sixth, Hegel rightly affirms the diversity of phenomena and the understanding of phenomena as such. He also rightly affirms a cosmic reality that is infinitely truer and more real than all other substances. But, by throwing out the baby of intelligible substantial unity with the bathwater of substance as a hidden phenomenon supporting other phenomena, Hegel abolishes all major distinction. As a consequence, there is only an absolute process whose unity is a dialectical law of development.<sup>62</sup>

Finally, we have Lonergan's summary account of the deficiencies of Hegel's dialectical method. It is conceptualist, closed, necessitarian, and immanent. Because it deals, not with the heuristically defined anticipations

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describes Hegel's notion of being as "so poor that nothing really is, and so being flops over into nothing."

<sup>59</sup>*Insight*, 384.

<sup>60</sup>*Quaestione metaphysicae. Quaestio prima: de cognition et cognito*. Archival document 5A000DTL040, www.bernardlonergan.com.

<sup>61</sup>*Quaestione metaphysicae. Quaestio prima: de cognition et cognito*. Archival document 5A000DTL040, www.bernardlonergan.com.

<sup>62</sup>*Quaestione metaphysicae. Quaestio prima: de cognition et cognito*. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, preface, § 2, Hegel provides the following image: "The bud disappears in the bursting-forth of the blossom, and one might say that the former is refuted by the latter; similarly, when the fruit appears, the blossom is shown up in its turn as a false manifestation of the plant, and the fruit now emerges as the truth of it instead. These forms are not just distinguished from one another, they also supplant one another as mutually incompatible. Yet at the same time their fluid nature makes them moments of an organic unity in which they not only do not conflict, but in which each is as necessary as the other; and this mutual necessity alone constitutes the life of the whole." Compare the image Lonergan provides in "The Subject" in *A Second Collection*, 71: "The fruit of truth must grow and mature on the tree of the subject, before it can be plucked and placed in its absolute realm." Note the Hegelian echo in Lonergan's image; but, notice as well that what is "the plant" in Hegel's image is "the subject" in Lonergan's, and that in Hegel's image the fruit is not plucked.

that inform and guide cognitional operations, but with determinate conceptual contents produced by those operations, it is not intellectualist but conceptualist. Because it fixes or determines the concepts that will meet the anticipations, the triadic sets of concepts are complete. Consequently, the dialectical movement is not open but closed. Because the fixed, conceptual solutions are bound by necessary relations inhering in a single self-unfolding *Begriff*, the dialectic follows a unique or single, necessary, and uniformly progressive path toward ever more comprehensive coherence. Consequently, the dialectic is not factual but necessitarian. Further, inasmuch as the entire dialectical field is defined by the concepts and their necessary relations, it does not include preconceptual acts of understanding that rise upon experience and are controlled by critical reflection. Consequently, the dialectic is restricted to the conceptual field and is not normative and capable of discriminating between advance and aberration but immanent; it is only capable of discriminating between one-sided moments or half-truths to be incorporated in the self-unfolding of a single comprehensive and coherent, and therefore closed, system of systems.<sup>63</sup>

While Hegel has made the transition into the realm of interiority, Lonergan's criticisms suggest that Hegel has not yet succeeded at making himself fully and comfortably at home there. So it is that Lonergan describes his own treatment of Hegel, not as the reversal of yet another

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<sup>63</sup>*Insight*, 446-47. It is this restriction to the conceptual field, I think, rather than Hegel's hubris, gnosticism, or hermeticism which gives rise to his startling remark in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, preface, § 5: "To help bring philosophy closer to the form of Science, to the goal where it can lay aside the title 'love of knowing' and be actual knowing – that is what I have set myself to do." On Hegel's supposed hermeticism, see Glenn Magee, *Hegel and the Hermetic Tradition* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001). Consider Hegel's comments on arrogance in his *Lectures on Logic: Berlin, 1831*, 14: "Arrogance lies in holding on to something peculiar to oneself. Modesty consists in receiving for oneself the matter itself which lies before oneself. True modesty consists in not insisting on what is one's own, in not insisting on one's peculiarity, in not remaining stuck in one's own idiosyncratic ideas, but instead in willing only the matter itself. As we look only at the matter itself, nothing peculiar is present. Feeble-minded modesty holds itself clear of the matter itself, and such modesty directly passes into arrogance again. Conscious of its own merit, modesty then forgets to forget itself, while when we hold ourselves within the matter itself we forget our peculiarity. In knowing [*Wissen*] we are free, we remain firmly lodged in thinking. In philosophy we have to do with the matter itself, and with the surrender of self-conceit. Aristotle held that we ought to make ourselves worthy of knowing the matter at hand. This matter, this substance, God, truth, has being in and for itself. We must make ourselves worthy of raising ourselves up to the level of that matter. We make ourselves worthy when we leave our peculiarities behind. We enjoy dignity by taking up residence in the content of knowledge, in what is substantial, and such dignity is quite the contrary of arrogance."

counterposition, but as an eversion – a turning inside out – of a basically positional but still incomplete or unfinished philosophy. Hegel's philosophy stands to Lonergan's philosophy as progressive conceptual change stands to developing understanding. Hegel, Lonergan remarks, "endeavors to pour everything into the concept,"<sup>64</sup> including the operational dynamism that generates it. Accordingly, Hegel's *Begriff* is the source of its own dynamic movement and development.<sup>65</sup> The conceptual side, as it were, of the intimate relationship of unfolding understanding to conceptual expansion is totalized, and the interior priority of operations to concepts is reversed without eliminating the dynamism attributable to operations. Accordingly, Hegel's Dialectical Method is fundamentally a conceptual expansion that is identical with a self-active, self-unfolding *Begriff*.

Lonergan, on the other hand, subordinates conceptual formulation to the operation of understanding that not only generates concepts but also finds them inadequately determinate and then revises them.<sup>66</sup> Accordingly, his method is fundamentally the structured operational dynamism and only secondarily the structured process of conceptual expansion. In Hegel, it seems, the self-active flowing intention is compacted into and absorbed by conceptual formulation and expansion.<sup>67</sup> In Lonergan, the flowing intention that generates ideas to be formulated and brings about their revision is distinguished from conceptual formulation and expansion.<sup>68</sup> Hegel

<sup>64</sup>*Insight*, 447.

<sup>65</sup>See *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, 248. "The successive sublations of which I speak are, not at all the mysterious surmounting of contradictions in a Hegelian dialectic, but the inner dynamic structure of our conscious living."

<sup>66</sup>Lonergan's determination of the actual relationship of the operation of understanding to conceptual formulation is the fundamental and somewhat under-appreciated achievement of his transposition of Aquinas's rational psychology in *Verbum*, 2.

<sup>67</sup>This difference may be related to different interpretations by Lonergan and Hegel of Aristotle's use of *energeia* in the *De anima*. See the discussion of Hegel's use of *energeia* by Alfredo Ferrarin, *Hegel and Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 7ff. "Hegel interprets *energeia* as the self-referential activity that he finds at work in its several manifestations: from the self-grounding of essence to the Concept, from the teleological process to natural life, from the essence of man to the forms of knowing and acting down to its most obviously free and self-determining dimension, absolute thinking that has itself as its object." See Lonergan's discussion of *energeia* and *poiesis*, in *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. Michael Shields and ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 535ff. See also, *Verbum*, 119ff., on the meaning of *actus perfecti* in Aquinas and Aristotle's use of *energeia* in the *De anima*.

<sup>68</sup>See *The Triune God: Systematics*, 607: "There is, however, another difficulty, one that is metaphysical rather than psychological, in fact, more semantic than metaphysical. For understanding is an act or operation in one sense, whereas defining or uttering an inner word

describes the determined and immanent life of a single, dynamic Concept, but Lonergan describes the indeterminately directed and self-transcending life that is the preconceptual dynamism.

At the root of this difference is Hegel's philosophical absorption, as it were, of the operational by the conceptual field, a move which in fact mimics the absorption and carrying forward of grasped intelligibility that occurs every time the content of an act of understanding is conceived and formulated. Inasmuch as there are no interior operations without their interior contents, there are no acts of understanding without ideas to be formulated in concepts. But the ideas and concepts move, when they do move, on the noematic side of subjectivity or interior life, whereas the acts of understanding are the source, on the noetic side of subjectivity or interior life, of their movement. Hegel's appropriation of the realm of interiority, then, attends to the dynamic, operational side of subjectivity, but the purely dynamic object of that attention is obscured by conceptual determination on the noematic side of subjectivity.<sup>69</sup> Lonergan's appropriation of the realm of interiority affords him an understanding of the dynamic, operational side of subjectivity unobscured by Hegel's preoccupation with the conceptual field. From this difference of emphasis and its consequences arises the requirement to turn Hegel inside out.<sup>70</sup>

#### THE ROOT OF HEGEL'S HALFWAYNESS: OVERDETERMINED NEGATION

Let us turn now to a closer consideration of Hegel's relatively immature interiority and its relationship to his halfwayness. That immaturity is most tellingly displayed, I think, by Hegel's determinate negation of the

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is an act or operation in another sense. Understanding is an act, second act, an act of what is complete (*actus perfecti*), *energeia*, like seeing and hearing and willing. But defining is a kind of making; when we utter interiorly we form and produce an inner word, either a simple inner word, such as a definition, or a compound inner word, a proposition."

<sup>69</sup>So it is that Hegel thinks in terms of the relations of universals to particulars, whereas Lonergan thinks in terms of the relations of insights to the concrete and particular.

<sup>70</sup>So, for example, in his article "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" Lonergan means by "post-Hegelian" the following: (1) a rejection of Hegel's a priorism, (2) a retention of Hegel's ideal of comprehensiveness as revealed in his concern with method, (3) a shift from dialectical to generalized empirical method, and (4) a conception of "philosophy of . . ." as the objectification of "the methodological component present in the consciousness" that the practitioner of the science reflected upon "has of his own performance." See *A Third Collection*, 202 ff. See the article by Elizabeth Murray, "Post-Hegelian Elements in Lonergan's Philosophy of Religion," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994): 215-38.

logically controlled metaphysics of the Understanding. It is this determinate negation that sets the stage for his own more comprehensive and coherent metaphysics controlled by what he names "the *method*." That moment of determinate negation may be conceived as a moment of abstraction from the abstract formalism that characterizes philosophy prior to its retroactive mediation by foundational achievement in the realm of interiority.

Hegel's objection to the standpoint of the Understanding, which is approximately what Lonergan means by the order of logic, is that its categories are merely formal and, therefore, both empty of content and static or fixed and isolated from one another, as illustrated, for example, by the empty and fixed categories of the mind that Kant critiqued.<sup>71</sup> Not only does this formalism conflict with the concrete historical experience of a series of different and conflicting philosophical conceptualities, but also it renders the metaphysics of the Understanding incapable of overcoming the problem of philosophic difference and multiplicity that naturally afflicts philosophy governed by the order of logic.

As a first step toward meeting the problem of philosophic difference, then, Hegel undertakes to go beyond the order of logic by abstracting from the abstract formalism of the standpoint of the Understanding, thereby not only infusing the categories with life and filling them with content but also making them their own content.<sup>72</sup> In this way, he sets the stage

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<sup>71</sup>Hegel, *Encyclopaedia Logic*, § 28, 67: The thinking of the old metaphysical system was finite. Its whole mode of action was regulated by categories, the limits of which it believed to be permanently fixed and not subject to any further negation." § 34: "It is wrong therefore to take the mind for a processless *ens*, as did the old metaphysic which divided the processless inward life of the mind from its outward life. The mind, of all things, must be looked at in its concrete actuality, in its energy; and in such a way that its manifestations are seen to be determined by its inward force."

<sup>72</sup>See Hegel's *Science of Logic*, introduction, 48: "The truth is rather that the unsubstantial nature of logical forms originates solely in the way in which they are considered and dealt with. When they are taken as fixed determinations and consequently in their separation from each other and not as held together in an organic unity, then they are dead forms and the spirit which is their living, concrete unity does not dwell in them. As thus taken, they lack a substantial content – a matter which would be substantial in itself. The content which is missing in the logical forms is nothing else than a solid foundation and a concretion of these abstract determinations; and such a substantial being for them is usually sought outside them. But logical reason itself is the substantial or real being which holds together within itself every abstract determination and is their substantial, absolutely concrete unity. One need not therefore look far for what is commonly called a matter; if logic is supposed to lack substantial content, then the fault does not lie with its subject matter but solely with the way in which this subject matter is grasped. This reflection leads up to the statement of the point of view from which logic is to be considered, how it differs from previous modes of treatment of this science

for the sublation of a multiplicity of metaphysical conceptualities in a comprehensive and coherent metaphysical conceptuality that is dynamic and takes the changing field of conceptualities as its content.<sup>73</sup> But it must be noted that, by his single moment of abstraction from the formalism of the standpoint of the Understanding, Hegel does not escape the conceptual field itself but only the emptiness, fixity, and isolation from one another of categories and thought-forms or conceptualities. In one stroke, therefore, Hegel animates the conceptual field and renders its dynamism conceptual. Accordingly, not only must the explanation for conceptual change and expansion reside in the conceptual field itself, but the conceptual field must also itself conceive that explanation. It is for this reason, it seems, that his synthetic result is a dynamic metaphysics that is identical with a logic of a self-moving and self-grounding field of conceptual contents, instead of a dynamic metaphysics that rests upon a dynamic epistemology, both of which are grounded in a cognitional theoretic account of the dynamic structure of preconceptual operations.<sup>74</sup>

Hegel's transition into the realm of interiority from the realm of theory is inspired by the historical experience of a series of conflicting philosophies, and it is thought to be accomplished by a negation of abstract formalism or a deliberate abstraction from formalism's abstraction from both dynamism and content. Lonergan shares Hegel's inspiration, but it is augmented by the experience of Hegel's reflective, meta-philosophical attempt to overcome philosophic difference. Accordingly, while Hegel is inspired to carry out a single abstraction, Lonergan is inspired to carry out a double abstraction.

Hegel abstracts from formalism's abstraction and, thereby, enriches categories with content, infuses them with life, and with a now heightened

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which in future must always be based on this, the only true standpoint." See also Hegel's, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, preface, § 33: "Thoughts become fluid when pure thinking, this inner immediacy, recognizes itself as a moment, or when the pure certainty of self abstracts from itself – not by leaving itself out, or setting itself aside, but by giving up the fixity of its self-positing, by giving up not only the fixity of the pure concrete, which the 'I' itself is, in contrast with its differentiated content, but also the fixity of the differentiated moments which, posited in the element of pure thinking, share the unconditioned nature of the 'I'."

<sup>73</sup>The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a narration of the unfolding of thought-forms, that is, of the categories filled with content, whereas the *Science of Logic* is the more abstract narration of the unfolding categories themselves, taken as their own content.

<sup>74</sup>The differences between Lonergan's and Hegel's solutions to the problem of integration are discussed in an unpublished paper by Matthew Peters, "Lonergan, Hegel, and the Point About Viewpoints," presented at WCMI 2011, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, April, 2011.

reflexivity, turns them on themselves as their own object. Lonergan follows Hegel by (1) abstracting from formalism's abstraction from dynamism and content,<sup>75</sup> but he goes beyond Hegel by (2) abstracting from the entire dynamic field of categories.<sup>76</sup> The first moment of abstraction is a shift of philosophical attention to the dynamic and expanding field of conceptual content that results in the greater concreteness of Hegel's narration of unfolding thought-forms in his *Phenomenology of Spirit* and his thinking of thought in his dynamic *Logic*. But it is only the first moment of abstraction. If that initial shift is regarded as terminal, the dynamic principle must be located in the only place available, and that place is the expanding conceptual field itself.<sup>77</sup> But Lonergan regards that first moment of abstraction as transitional and, in a second moment of abstraction, he turns from the field of dynamic and expanding conceptual content to the field of operations and makes the operating subject its own object. He makes a move to still greater concreteness. Accordingly, he is able to locate the dynamic principle of the conceptual field, not in the conceptual field itself, but in the field

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<sup>75</sup>See Lonergan's description of logic's abstraction from both content and dynamism and applied logic's abstraction from dynamism in *Insight*, 599-600: "However, while logic as a science is quite well established, it owes its universality and its rigor to the simple fact that it deals with unspecified concepts and problems. Hence it differs in an essential fashion from logic as an applied technique for, as an applied technique, logic deals not with indeterminate acts and contents of conceiving and judging but with the more or less accurately determined contents of some department of human knowledge at some stage of its development. On the supposition that the knowledge of that department at that stage is both fully determinate and completely coherent, logic as a technique can be applied successfully. But in fact human knowledge commonly is in process of development, and to a notable extent the objects of human knowledge are also in process of development. As long as they are developing, they are heading for the determinacy and coherence that will legitimate the application of logic as a technique; but until that legitimacy becomes a fact, the utility of the technique consists simply in its capacity to demonstrate the commonly admitted view that progress remains to be made." See also, *Insight*, 613-14: "Now from the viewpoint of the electronic computer, which coincides with the viewpoint of logic as a technique . . . [s]ystem has to be static system. System on the move has to be outlawed. The dynamism of life and of intelligence may be facts but the facts are not to be recognized."

<sup>76</sup>It is this second moment of abstraction that Lonergan promotes when he recommends "applying the operations as intentional to the operations as conscious" in *Method in Theology*, 14, and "self-appropriation" or "experiencing, understanding, and judging experiencing, understanding, and judging" in *Understanding and Being*, vol. 5 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Elizabeth Morelli and Mark D. Morelli (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), chap. 1 and in *Insight*, chap. 11. See also, *Method in Theology*, 11, on the difference between the categorial and transcendental modes of intending.

<sup>77</sup>In a question session, Lonergan remarks: "As for Hegel's *Phenomenology*, well, as someone said, 'Hegel is fine if you omit the system!'" See *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, 137.

of preconceptual operations that generate and move it. From Lonergan's standpoint, Hegel's negation of the order of logic, inasmuch as it is thought to be accomplished by a single moment of abstraction from formalism, is excessively determinate.

Again, Hegel is careful to distinguish his dialectical negation from indeterminate negation, the latter being equivalent to a blanket skepticism. His insistence on the determinacy of negation is motivated by his discernment of the workings of a normative dynamism in conceptual expansion that skepticism rejects.<sup>78</sup> But he negates the fixity of the conceptual field without negating the conceptual field itself, and this leaves the conceptual field as the only possible locus of the normative dynamism. Thus, Hegel's conceptual field is animated by its own normative principle, every one of its movements must be normative, and its dialectical process leaves no unsublated conceptual residue. But to negate the emptiness and fixity of categories without negating as well their very conceptuality is to leave unsublated a positive residue of preconceptual operations upon which both the normative generation of a series of ever-truer conceptualities and the aberrant generation of just plain false conceptualities depend.<sup>79</sup>

The difference between Hegel's procedure and Lonergan's may be described differently and in more purely Hegelian terms. The first moment of abstraction is the moment of determinate negation in the dialectical process. Lonergan's second moment of abstraction corresponds to the third moment, the negation of that determinate negation. The original position is that of the formalism of the Understanding; it is the conceptual field of fixed, isolated, and empty categories. The negation of that original position is the conceptual field of dynamic, interrelated, and filled categories. The negation of that determinate negation is the operational field. But Hegel doesn't make this third move and negate that determinate negation. Accordingly, what I've referred to as the excessive determinacy of Hegel's determinate negation of formalism can also be described as a determinate negation that still awaits

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<sup>78</sup>*Lectures on Logic: Berlin, 1831*, 231: "The method is not the form as it comes to be explicated upon any particular empirically given material. The method rather is the universal inner life of every self-concept [*Begriff*], it is the dialectical process of development as subjectively re-enacted."

<sup>79</sup>In Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, vol. 10 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 64-65, Lonergan writes: "Hegel spoke of the series of ascending syntheses, but one can design without any great difficulty a series of descending syntheses as well."

dialectical sublation and completion in a negation of that determinate negation. We should not be surprised to find, therefore, that Hegel's synthetic system does not successfully supersede the determinate negation of the formalism of the Understanding but is rather the thorough and unrelenting working-out and implementation of that determinate negation in all its un-negated determinateness. Hegel's negation of the order of logic, then, turns out to be a thorough concretization of the standpoint of the Understanding's ideal of comprehensive and coherent understanding of all phenomena, rather than the thorough supersession of the order of logic.<sup>80</sup>

The consequences of Hegel's excessively determinate negation – of his failure to negate his determinate negation of formalism – are manifested, I believe, in his system as a whole and in every part. I shall provide just four strategically important examples here.

First, Hegel's vaunted transition from substance to subject takes him just halfway to Lonergan's subject-as-subject. His negation of the externality of theoretic metaphysics' conception of the subject-as-an-object among other objects terminates in the affirmation, not of the *subject-as-subject*, but of *substance-as-subject* or substance as the conscious *Begriff*.<sup>81</sup> Hegel's subject, to the extent there can be said to be a subject in Hegel, is

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<sup>80</sup>I have put the issue in more purely Hegelian fashion, in terms of the distinction of three moments of dialectical process. But, it remains that Hegel's dialectic is a conceptual dialectic. The relationship of the second moment to the third here, inasmuch as the third is a negation of the conceptual field and a transition to the operational field, does not conform to Hegel's dialectical procedure which is restricted to the conceptual field. Lonergan's negation of the negation is not a conceptual transition but an operational transition from the field of conceptual transitions to the field of operational transitions. Hegel's system is a conceptual synthesis of the consequences of his determinate negation of formalism. But conceptual integration – even a conceptual integration that is said to integrate itself – is not the supersession of the standpoint afforded by Hegel's determinate negation. It is a completion and systematic integration of the standpoint of determinate negation and is dependent upon and still afflicted by formalism as its determinate object. Precisely because of its conceptual completeness, Hegel's system evokes a sweeping negation of the entire conceptual field and the supersession of the most enriched and enlivened and integrated form of conceptualism.

<sup>81</sup>*Lectures on Logic: Berlin, 1831*, 7: "I am the thinking subject. The I illustrates the self-concept [*Begriff*] by existing through itself alone, merely on its own account. Thinking is the universal taken as active. The universal is first what is abstract. By a 'concept' we usually understand a determinate representation of the imagination. But in the science of logic the concept is something completely different, of which the I provides an example. This singular subject is immediately united with the I." Note also Hegel's tendency to identify the "subject" more with "life" than with consciousness in *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature*, 275: "... [L]ife, as Idea, is the movement of itself whereby it first constitutes itself subject, it converts itself into its other, into its own obverse; it gives itself the form of object in order to return into itself and to be the accomplished return-into-self."

not the one who operates to produce conceptual results, but is rather itself a self-producing result.

Second, Hegel's negation of the merely formal logic of abstract identity takes him just halfway to method. His negation of the staticity of formal logic terminates in the affirmation, not of a dynamic structure of prelogical operations,<sup>82</sup> but of a logic-in-motion.<sup>83</sup>

Third, Hegel's negation of a multiplicity of incommensurable closed metaphysical systems takes him just halfway to Lonergan's "system on the move."<sup>84</sup> It terminates, not in an open operational system isomorphic with a circle of linked, composed, and complementary operations,<sup>85</sup> but in a dynamic closed system of systems identical with the Absolute Idea. Hegel's "System of Science" is a self-moving circle of self-moving circles<sup>86</sup> of self-

<sup>82</sup>See Lonergan on method as general dynamics in "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion," in *A Third Collection*, 204-15.

<sup>83</sup>See *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, 394. "Hegel rightly felt that logic was too static to deal with a universe in movement. But the solution to that problem, we feel, does not consist in the invention of a logic of movement. Rather we would leave logic to its traditional tasks, which are essential to working out the coherence of any system and thereby bringing to light its shortcomings. But we would confine the relevance of logic to single stages in the process of developing thought, and we would assign to method the guidance of thought from each less satisfactory stage to each successive more satisfactory stage. In brief, the relevance of logic is at the instant, when things are still. The guide of philosophy and science over time is method."

<sup>84</sup>*Insight*, 613, for example. The phrase is used throughout *Insight*.

<sup>85</sup>See Lonergan's discussion of three "manners in which systematic thinking has been carried out," in *Philosophy of God and Theology*, 5-8. He distinguishes (1) the Aristotelian type based on a metaphysics, (2) a second type found in modern science, and (3) a third type whose basic terms and relations are cognitional, whose terms and relations are not given to sense but to consciousness, and whose basic truths are not necessities but verified possibilities. The third is what Lonergan refers to elsewhere as "operational system" which is a system of works isomorphic with a circle of operations. See his discussion in the archival document A488, www.bernardlonergan.com, "The Circle of Operations," trans. Robert Doran, SJ, where Lonergan introduces the notion of an "operatory habit," distinguishes it from the faculty psychological notion of an "operative habit," and distinguishes and relates operatory habits, operational circles, and operational systems.

<sup>86</sup>Hegel's image of circles occurs throughout his works. For example, in *Encyclopaedia Logic*, § 15: "Each of the parts of philosophy is a philosophical whole, a circle rounded and complete in itself. In each of these parts, however, the philosophical Idea is found in a particular specificity or medium. The single circle, because it is a real totality, bursts through the limits imposed by its special medium, and gives rise to a wider circle. The whole of philosophy in this way resembles a circle of circles. The Idea appears in each single circle, but, at the same time, the whole Idea is constituted by the system of these peculiar phases, and each is a necessary member of the organization." Again: "Every such form in which the Idea is expressed is at the same time a passing or fleeting stage; and hence each of these subdivisions has not only to know its contents as an object which has being for the time, but also in the same act to expound

moving conceptual results.<sup>87</sup>

Finally, Hegel's negation of the controlling deductivism of the metaphysics of the Understanding takes him just halfway to transcendental method. It terminates, not in an invariant, fundamental circle<sup>88</sup> of preconceptual opera-

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how these contents pass into their higher circle." Also, *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature, Zusatz, 2*: "The science of philosophy is a circle in which each member has an antecedent and a successor, but in the philosophical encyclopaedia, the Philosophy of Nature appears as only one circle in the whole. . . ." Also, *Lectures on Logic: Berlin, 1831, 231*: "The self-activation of the absolute idea occurs within all of its moments, in the logic of being as within that of essence. Each of these two circles is within itself a circle of circles, each such circle contains the whole larger circle imprinted upon itself."

<sup>87</sup>See the archival document 20600D0EG50, "The Circle of Operations," where Lonergan asks, "Do the operations of Hegelian dialectic form a circle?" and answers, "There is no doubt that his dialectic tends towards circles of circles. See the diagram in H. Leisegang, *Denkformen*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1951), 164-66. *These circles of circles, however, regard the works more than the operations themselves*. But that these operations form a circle is quite clear both from the result, since it supposes the circulation of operations of the circle produced, and from the operations considered in themselves, since counterpositing is thought to emerge necessarily from the operation of positing, and from these two with equal necessity *Erheben* results, which is equivalent to a new position and so gives rise to another counterposition, and so on, until logic, nature, and spirit are constituted" (my emphasis). He then asks, "Are there other circles of operation beside those of Hegel?" and answers, "Clearly, there are many other circles of operations that neither were devised nor are reducible to Hegel's. Take for example . . . *the circle of operations of experiencing, understanding, and judging and its development* as outlined in the book *Insight*" (my emphasis).] See also *Phenomenology and Logic*, vol. 18 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Philip McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 300-301, where Lonergan writes: "Hegel, in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, is constantly using such a technique. He starts off from a very simple notion and raises the obvious difficulties that involve a deepening of the notion. Then he goes further, and finally by the time we are around the circle he has given us a fully nuanced notion. That is an excellent device in teaching as well as in writing." *Method in Theology*, 6: ". . . [M]odern science derives its distinctive character from this grouping together of logical and non-logical operations. The logical tend to consolidate what has been achieved. The non-logical keep all achievement open to further advance. The conjunction of the two results in an open, ongoing, progressive and cumulative process. This process contrasts sharply not only with the static fixity that resulted from Aristotle's concentration on the necessary and immutable but also with Hegel's dialectic which is a movement enclosed within a complete system."

<sup>88</sup>See the archival document 49700DTE50, [www.bernardlonergan.com](http://www.bernardlonergan.com): "(3) the fundamental circle (a) is a natural habit of principles that does not have to be discovered, understood, judged; it is had from the very dynamic structure of the mind; thus it operates naturally in every human being and is inevitably employed by them; (b) nonetheless, it is not an explicit habit . . . (c) nor is the habit explicitly acknowledged as fundamental unless there has occurred a philosophic conversion; . . . Philosophic conversion is the transference of the foundation from the circle of sensory-motor operations to a circle of experience, understanding, and judging. (d) also given the explicit knowledge and rational acknowledgement of the fundamental circle, there is further required a scientific development so that the properties and differentiations can be clearly illumined; . . . (f) therefore we must say that (a) the fundamental circle as a natural habit always is operative and is somehow naturally acknowledged; (b) with the development of the human spirit it is ever more clearly and fully known and acknowledged;



to the field itself but resides in the operations that generate it, his “dialectical deduction” moves with the halting gait and shuffling inexorability of Dr. Frankenstein’s galvanized monster. It is the determined punctuated movement of a series of fixed conceptualities, each of which, externally vivified, remains intrinsically alienated from the life within it.<sup>90</sup> It is by thinking at the level of and with this substance-as-subject, this *Begriff*, that the finite subject is at home with itself [*bei sich*]. It is in this movement that Hegel invites us to be at home. But in virtue of the excessive determinateness of Hegel’s second moment of negation, in this movement we are, in fact, only halfway home.

In this section I have been carrying out, in an extremely abbreviated form, an exercise in Lonerganian dialectic. Let’s take a moment to note its difference from Hegelian dialectic, because the difference is reducible to the difference between Hegel’s single abstraction and Lonergan’s double abstraction and so to Hegel’s excessively determinate negation or to his incomplete mediation of the order of method. Hegel’s dialectic undertakes to exploit and reconcile *oppositions in the conceptual field*. The source of his dialectical movement is a tension between concepts or conceptualities in the single field defined by the self-unfolding *Begriff*. But Lonergan’s dialectic exploits and reconciles *oppositions between the conceptual field and the field of preconceptual operations*. The source of his dialectical movement is a tension between concepts or conceptualities, on the one hand, and the performance that generates and maintains those concepts or conceptualities, and even attempts to enclose them in the unique conceptual field of a single unfolding *Begriff*, on the other. So it is that Hegel’s dialectical argumentation is a sublative supersession of conceptual opposition without conceptual residue, whereas Lonergan’s dialectical argumentation is correction by the elimination of disparity between concept or conceptuality, on the one hand, and the preconceptual performance upon which it depends, on the other.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup>See the archival document, 49600DTE050, [bernardlonergan.com](http://bernardlonergan.com): “We do not say speculative intellect. In the simplified Greek sense, this is abstract, eternal, necessary. In the Hegelian sense (and almost always in non-Catholic writings), it is the restoration of deductivism through another logical technique, namely, dialectic.”

<sup>91</sup>Lonergan’s exercise of dialectic is fundamentally the exhibition of performative self-contradiction. See the archival document 61800DTEG60/A618, [www.bernardlonergan.com](http://www.bernardlonergan.com): “And there you have a fundamental opposition between what I call positions and counter-positions. Positions express the dynamic structure of the subject qua intelligent and qua reasonable. Counter-positions contradict that structure. Whenever a person is explicitly affirming – presenting or affirming – a counter-position, he is involved in a queer type of

The performance upon which it depends is, in every case, what Lonergan calls, perhaps inaptly,<sup>92</sup> "transcendental method."

#### A CONSOLIDATING IMAGE

In this essay I have attempted to explain why Lonergan invites those who wish to reach his standpoint of critical realism to get to know Hegel and come to terms with him. The explanation lies in Hegel's inside-out interiority or what I have referred to as Hegel's halfwayness. Let us return now to the archival image in which Lonergan assigns Hegel to the realm of interiority, but elaborated now to reflect the intimate complexity of his relationship with Hegel. Despite the augmentations, however, this image (see Figure 5), like the more schematic images with which we began, remains heuristically anticipatory rather than representative of determinate and firmly established results.

Response to the systematic exigence mediates a movement out of the realm of common sense, organized around *experiential operations* (Lonergan) or around *being as the object of "intuition"* (Hegel), into a realm of theoretic meaning, organized around *intellectual operations* (Lonergan) or around *essence as the object of "representation"* (Hegel), and the development of a

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contradiction. The contradiction is not between statements that he makes; the contradiction is between the statements that he makes and the subject that he is. He is intelligent and reasonable and purports to be intelligent and reasonable, and he would not admit any fall from intelligence or reasonableness. Yet, the implications of the one, the real consequences, so to speak, of the one, and the implications of the other, which are in a conceptual field, or a judicial field of conceptions or judgments, are in conflict. Such a conflict tends to work its way out one way or another. It sets up a tension and it is a principle of movement; and that, to my mind, is a fundamental instance of what is meant by dialectic. It is in the concrete, it involves tension and opposition, and it is a principle of change; and the change is not so much or not merely in the statements; it will also be in the subject who comes to a fuller realization, a fuller appropriation of what he himself really is. The effect of the dialectic is not merely a matter of straightening out the sentences and affirming the ones that are true and denying the ones that are false. A person can be affirming propositions that are true but misinterpreting them; and you cannot correct what is wrong with him by telling the right ones, because he is always going to bring in the misinterpretation. There is a more fundamental step: the development in the subject himself through the dialectic."

<sup>92</sup>See *Method in Theology*, 13n2, where Lonergan acknowledges misunderstandings and distinguishes his meaning of "transcendental" from the Scholastic and Kantian meanings. It appears that the border culture extends well into the interior. Insofar as Hegel has made the transition from the realm of theory to the realm of interiority, he has added his voice to the border culture. Accordingly, Lonergan's use of "dialectic" is also an appropriation of the language of the border culture.

multiplicity of systems of scientific and philosophic thought. The historical experience of the multiplicity and of systems supplanting and replacing one another gives rise to the critical exigence and the movement into the realm of interiority, organized around *rational operations* (Lonergan) or around *the Concept as the object of "thought"* (Hegel). The Lonerganian transition into the realm of interiority, mediated by a thoroughgoing double abstraction, is *from subject-as-object to subject-as-subject*; the Hegelian transition, mediated by excessively determinate negation by a single abstraction, is *from subject-as-substance to substance-as-subject*. Lonergan establishes his interior foundation, *a fundamental circle of operations (Experience – Understanding – Judgment)*, by means of *self-appropriation and cognitional theoretic understanding of understanding in Insight*; Hegel establishes his interior foundation, *a fundamental circle of results (Being – Essence – Concept)*, by means of his *narration of the experience of consciousness in his Phenomenology of Spirit* and his *logical thought thinking thought in his Science of Logic*. From their respective and parallel interior foundations, each responds to the methodical exigence and addresses the problem of integration set by philosophic multiplicity and difference: Lonergan, by implementing his *Transcendental Method*; Hegel, by implementing his *Dialectical Method*. Their different and parallel responses to the methodical exigence mediate different systematic integrations in the realm of theory, grounded in their different critical achievements in the realm of interiority. Lonergan's integration is *Explicit Metaphysics and the doctrine of the isomorphism of knowing and known*; Hegel's integration is his *System, or Absolute Knowledge and the doctrine of the identity of thought and being*. The former is Lonergan's *Critical Realism*; the latter, Hegel's *Absolute Idealism*. Their parallel responses to the methodical exigence and their different solutions to the problem of integration mediate, in turn, different post-critical systematic theologies.

#### HEGEL'S HALFWAYNESS AND THE PERDURING HEGEL CONTROVERSIES

The halfwayness of Hegel revealed by Lonergan's reading might help to explain the seeming intractability of the polarizing and enduring controversies in Hegel interpretation, the existence and persistence of the so-called myths and legends about Hegel debunked by Jon Stewart in *The Hegel Myths and Legends*,<sup>93</sup> and both the hermeneutic exasperation that motivates

<sup>93</sup>Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1996.

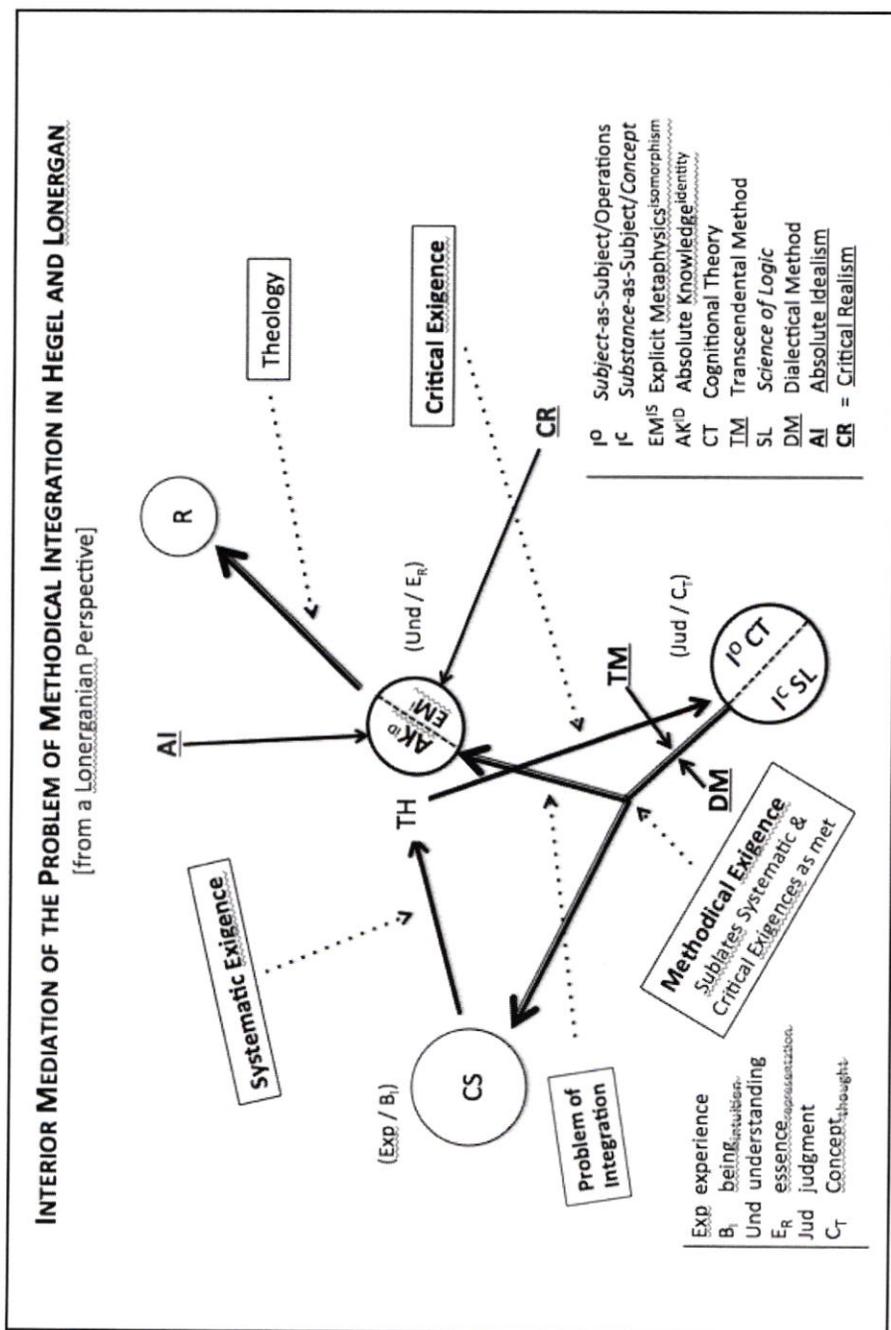


Figure 5

the search by some readers of Hegel for "the Hegelian middle"<sup>94</sup> and their disappointment at the outcome of their efforts. My own suspicion is that in the absence of a Lonerganian-type eversion of Hegel's philosophy, these controversies cannot be resolved, the legends cannot be put to rest, and the elusiveness of the "Hegelian middle" cannot be explained.

In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan provides an example of the implications of Hegel's halfway-ness: "The absolute idealist, Hegel, brilliantly explores whole realms of meaning; he gives poor marks to naïve realists; but he fails to advance to a critical realism, so that Kierkegaard can complain that what is logical also is static, that movement cannot be inserted into a logic, that Hegel's system has room not for existence (self-determining freedom) but only for the idea of existence."<sup>95</sup> Elsewhere, Lonergan alludes to the "toppling" of Hegelianism into the left-wing factualness of Marx and the right-wing factualness of Kierkegaard.<sup>96</sup>

For every dispute about Hegel, it seems, if one can find textual evidence for one reading, one can also find textual evidence for its opposite. Some say he's really this, and others say he's really that. But it seems that he's always really both. This is a function, I believe, of Hegel's halfway-ness, rooted in excessively determinate negation of the order of logic. He negates the staticity, emptiness, and isolation of the categories by Understanding's logic of abstract identity, but he doesn't negate the conceptual field itself. He doesn't peel the obscuring dynamic field of conceptual content off of the field of operations and set it aside. Accordingly, he has no choice but to locate the source of dynamism in the conceptual field through which the operational field is indeed discerned, but only darkly. From this move, I believe, the intractable controversies naturally follow. Lonergan, on the other hand, performs a thoroughgoing "conceptual negation." He negates the staticity, emptiness, and isolation of categories, and then peels off the conceptual field with its punctuated, stuttering dynamics, sets it aside, and locates the source of dynamism in the fluid dynamics of the operational field. With this move, I believe, the tension of Hegel's speculative propositions can be relieved and the interpretative opposition superseded.

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<sup>94</sup>See Emil Fackenheim, *The Religious Dimension of Hegel's Thought* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), chap. 4.

<sup>95</sup>264.

<sup>96</sup>*Insight*, 398.

## THE VIABILITY OF THE CATEGORY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN BERNARD LONERGAN'S THEOLOGY

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IN THIS ESSAY I would like to discuss Bernard Lonergan's understanding of religious experience and ask whether this category is viable in systematic theology. This is far from being self-evident, given the firm rejection of that category as typical of "modernism" by the Roman Catholic Church during the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, in the wake of Karl Barth, several Protestant thinkers have been opposed to that category, especially the "postliberal" theologians of the so-called Yale School.<sup>2</sup> Thus, both among many Catholics and Protestants, religious experience, construed as an instance of the turn to the human subject in modern philosophy, has been deemed to lead inevitably to subjectivism.

My exposition will evolve in five steps. First, after a few introductory remarks on Schleiermacher's and Lonergan's accounts of religious experience, I will show why Lonergan's methodology is not subjectivist. Second, I will describe two realms of human meaning that are interlocked, namely, interiority and transcendence. Third, I will report three senses of the word "experience" according to Lonergan. Fourth, I will focus on the *religious* sense of "experience" and spell out a first criterion for its viability

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<sup>1</sup>See Pius X's encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (1907).

<sup>2</sup>See George A. Lindbeck, "Protestant Problems with Lonergan on Development of Dogma," in *Foundations of Theology: Papers from the International Lonergan Congress 1970*, ed. Philip McShane (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972), 115-23, and *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), 16-17 and 31-32. On Lindbeck, see Charles C. Hefling, "Turning Liberalism Inside-out," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 3 (1985): 51-69, at 68.

in theology, that is, its groundedness in tradition. And fifth, I will expound a second criterion, that is, its foundational-systematic character.

#### INTRODUCTION

Although the *reality* of religious experience is overwhelmingly present in the Bible and in the subsequent Christian traditions, it is only in the nineteenth century that the *concept* of religious experience, as systematically related with other concepts, became preponderant in theology, namely, with Friedrich Schleiermacher. His longest work, *Der christliche Glaube* ("The Christian Faith") is composed from the epistemological perspective of an experiential component, that is, the "inward experience" (*innere Erfahrung*).<sup>3</sup> In this magnum opus, religion is divided into an outward and an inward side. He writes: "the organization of the communicative expressions of piety in a community is usually called *Outward Religion*, while the total content of the religious emotions, as they actually occur in individuals, is called *Inward Religion*."<sup>4</sup>

Schleiermacher and Lonergan have at least two highly significant points in common: first the difference between inward consciousness and its outward objectification, and second the crucial role of inward consciousness for the apprehension of church doctrines. Like Schleiermacher and many other Christian thinkers, Lonergan situates religious experience at the core of theology.<sup>5</sup>

To help readers grasp what will be said here and in the rest of my essay, I propose the following diagram:

<sup>3</sup>Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, English translation of the Second German Edition, ed. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), §14.1. The Torchbook edition (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1963, 2 vols.), with an introduction by Richard R. Niebuhr, has the same translation and pagination as the T. & T. Clark edition. See also Louis Roy, *Mystical Consciousness: Western Perspectives and Dialogue with Japanese Thinkers* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2003), chap. 6, entitled "Schleiermacher: Consciousness as Feeling."

<sup>4</sup>Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, § 6, postscript.

<sup>5</sup>On differences between Schleiermacher and Lonergan, see Charles C. Hefling, Jr., "The Meaning of God Incarnate According to Friedrich Schleiermacher; or, Whether Lonergan Is Appropriately Regarded as 'A Schleiermacher for Our Time,' and Why Not," in vol. 7 of the *Lonergan Workshop*, ed. Fred Lawrence (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 105-77, at 126-52. See also Louis Roy, *Le sentiment de transcendance, expérience de Dieu?* (Paris: Cerf, 2000), in which Lonergan's concept of religious experience is differentiated into four main types and an effort is made to show the pastoral implications of a theology that takes transcendent experiences seriously. For a more philosophical discussion, see Louis Roy, *Transcendent Experience: Phenomenology and Critique* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 132-41 and 177-79.

Levels of Conscious Intentionality <sup>6</sup>	Transcendental Precepts
4.2 Religious Experience → Infinite Love	“Be in love”
4.1 Decision → Finite Values	“Be responsible”
3. Judgment → Truths	“Be reasonable”
2. Understanding → Meanings	“Be intelligent”
1. Experience → Sense data	“Be attentive”

One of Lonergan’s central tenets, which helps to interpret religious experience correctly, is the thesis that “objectivity is simply the consequence of authentic subjectivity, of genuine attention, genuine intelligence, genuine reasonableness, genuine responsibility” (*Method in Theology*, 265; see 292).<sup>7</sup> This position entails that there is no entire objectivity on the first and on the second level of intentionality: only on the third level, the level of truth, is there complete *cognitional* objectivity, which must be completed by the full, *existential* objectivity of the fourth level. On the first two levels, we find merely inchoative objectivity. One becomes objective by obeying, not two, but four transcendental precepts: “Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible” (20). Later in *Method in Theology*, the author adds a fifth precept, “be in love” (268), which implies listening to God’s personal address to us. Lonergan’s insistence on objectivity is thus founded on those five transcendental precepts.

For him, then, far from being subjectivistic, *authentic* subjectivity reaches objectivity. In the world of human relationships, subjectivity becomes objective by increasing one’s interest in others and by sharing with them so profoundly as to experience what Lonergan calls a “mutual self-mediation.” It consists in reciprocal influence among relatives or friends in trust and confidence.<sup>8</sup> Given divine grace, a person is capable of interpersonal self-transcendence, and this attitude implies that one is open to what is said by other people and, indeed, by the Other. As a result, Lonergan sees the

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<sup>6</sup>This shorthand does not incorporate all the complexities of Lonergan’s analysis. The subdividing of the fourth level into 4.1 and 4.2 is mine. 4.2 is sometimes called «fifth level,» but I agree with those who maintain that strictly speaking there is no fifth level, especially Michael Vertin, “Lonergan on Consciousness: Is There a Fifth Level?” *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994): 1-36.

<sup>7</sup>References, given in brackets, are from Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, reprint 2003).

<sup>8</sup>See “The Mediation of Christ in Prayer,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 160-82, at 174-76.

authentic subject not only as endowed with a receptivity to the wisdom of a religious tradition – a receptivity obviously qualified by what the individual or the group happens to understand –, but as willing to embrace the doctrinal corpus of that tradition. This doctrinal corpus, which is the natural development of the outer word, confirms and helps us deepen the inner word that has been experienced. Further on, more will be said about the inner and the outer word.

Regrettably, Lonergan has been reproached for a subjectivistic stance because his cognitional theory begins with the human subject and consequently would jeopardize Revelation's objectivity.<sup>9</sup> This criticism is undeserved in Lonergan's case, and his keenness about objectivity not solely in general, but also in accounts of *religious* experience, becomes clear as soon as we situate this category among his other categories. In order to do so, we shall begin by taking into account his presentation of realms of meaning.

#### REALMS OF MEANING

Let us turn to Lonergan's unique position on realms of meaning. He explains: "Any 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" (272). He differentiates several realms of meaning, which are the principal manners in which the basic pattern of human operations is deployed. These ways of combining and exercising human activities are: common sense, theory, interiority, and transcendence, also called "religion" (see 81-85 and 271-76). Later in the book, he adds two other domains of meaning: historical scholarship (see 233-34, 272-74, and 305) and art (see 61-64, 72-73, 112, and 273).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Hence, according to this mistaken representation, Lonergan's stance would presumably be akin to Schleiermacher's stance. Although I would not characterize Schleiermacher as a radical subjectivist, I nonetheless think his epistemology has serious shortcomings. See my piece, "Schleiermacher's Epistemology," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 16 (1998): 25-46; see also my book, *Engaging the Thought of Bernard Lonergan* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016), Study 5.

<sup>10</sup>Lonergan considers art as an irreplaceable mode of approaching and expressing reality, including religious reality. Moreover, from what he says about symbolic apprehension and expression, we may note that symbolism has much to do with art; see *Method in Theology*, 64-69 and 305-307.

In each of those domains, human beings handle meaning in a specific manner. Moreover, they can shift from one domain to another. For instance, Joseph Flanagan illustrates why, at some point, an individual or a group of people discover they must transit from common sense to theory. He writes:

One can distinguish in an author what he meant "principally" and the "instruments" that he chose to express this principal meaning. The reason, then, for developing new word meanings or even a whole new technical language is that what you intend to mean "principally" demands it. Your meaning cannot be adequately formulated in the present modes of expression: they will not carry your meaning.<sup>11</sup>

Common sense is confined within the descriptive perspective of an observer for whom things are related to himself or herself. Theory goes farther by relating things scientifically, that is, among themselves; this constitutes the achievement of Aristotle, which served rather well the static medieval system. Interiority requires the exploration of one's operations and states, namely, of oneself as subject, and results in a self-knowledge upon which a dynamic "generalized empirical method" is put in practice. The realm of transcendence asserts its importance inasmuch as a person withdraws from ordinary knowledge and enters into what an anonymous English mystic called "the cloud of unknowing" (see 29, 266, 278, and 342).

Regarding interiority, Lonergan opines that Catholic theologians should accept the modern turn to the subject – anticipated by St. Paul, St. Augustine, and others – try to fathom its potential, and adapt it to the design and aims of theology. Solely the appropriation of one's dealings with the realms of meaning allows theologians to transpose, via theory and interiority, the commonsense idioms of the Bible into today's various sorts of common sense. Only a theology that is subject-centered and yet respectful of the revelatory character of Christianity can mediate between enormously diverse modes of representation – ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary – in which the divine message has been, is, and will be couched. As a consequence, it is incumbent on theologians to become skillful at transiting from any realm of meaning to another. This necessitates being at home in all

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<sup>11</sup>Joseph Flanagan, "Knowing and Language in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan," in *Language, Truth, and Meaning*, ed. Philip McShane (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972), 49-78, at 72.

of the four basic realms, thanks to the acquaintance with one's operations and states in each of those spheres.

If we follow Lonergan's lead, religious phenomena will no longer be interpreted common-sensically or theoretically, that is, from the standpoint of the first or of the second realm of meaning, but interiorly, that is, from the standpoint of the third realm of meaning. To this effect, he gives the example of grace:

The gift [of God's love] we have been describing really is sanctifying grace but notionally differs from it. The notional difference arises from different stages of meaning. To speak of sanctifying grace pertains to the stage of meaning when the world of theory and the world of common sense are distinct but, as yet, have not been explicitly distinguished from and grounded in the world of interiority. To speak of the dynamic state of being in love with God pertains to the stage of meaning when the world of interiority has been made the explicit ground of the worlds of theory and of common sense. It follows that in this stage of meaning the gift of God's love first is described as an experience and only consequently is objectified in theoretical categories. (107; see 288-89)

In reference to the realm of transcendence, our author states: "Its foundation, its basic terms and relationships, its method are derived from the realm of interiority" (114). Theological practice done from this standpoint will be more and more helpful in a worldwide mentality that is being vastly influenced by modern psychology. Still, the third realm of meaning, which employs psychological tools, must accord itself to the discoveries made in the fourth realm, namely, transcendence.

### THREE SENSES FOR THE TERM "EXPERIENCE"

In *Method in Theology* as well as in Lonergan's subsequent writings, the concept of religious experience plays a key role. This section will trace his specific understanding of religious experience vis-à-vis his two other, non religious, acceptations of the word 'experience'.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Elsewhere Lonergan briefly mentions another sense, as when "we speak of a man of experience," which is negligible for my purposes in this essay. See "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our time," in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard*

When Lonergan speaks of "experience," he uses a term that has meant a good number of things throughout Western history.<sup>13</sup> In his own usage, the term "experience" designates what happens on the first level of intentionality, where the data of sense are perceived and recorded. It also designates the religious component of the fourth level, namely, the awareness of an otherworldly love, felt in oneself as a mysterious gift. And half-way between these two meanings, we have a fourfold experience – the data of consciousness – as four degrees of self-presence, each of which corresponds to a particular level of conscious intentionality.<sup>14</sup>

In all three cases, there is a certain presence – physical or spiritual, that is, of the data of sense and the data of consciousness – which has yet to be understood (on the second level), while this understanding still has to be pronounced true (on the third level) and to be deemed valuable (on the fourth level). However, on the one hand, intentionality's fourfold intending (beginning with the first level, called "experience," and continuing on the other three levels) is *outward*, that is, aiming at reaching reality as perceptible, intelligible, reasonable, and responsible.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, as conscious, the other two forms of experience are *inward*, that is, becoming aware *either* as being oneself consciously operating (on all levels), *or* as enjoying (on the fourth level) a unique, non-worldly, namely, transcendent, state of love, not mediated by sense data or by ordinary knowledge.

For Lonergan, the intentionality that transcends itself can be fulfilled when one lives in an unrestricted state of love, called "religious experience." Let us note that since religious experience usually implies a person's radical transformation, in his usage "religious experience" is a synonym for "religious conversion," a term that is introduced at the end of chapter 4 (123) and

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J. F. Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 55-73, at 57. Actually, although Lonergan announces three senses, the entire passage has four senses for "experience," if we divide up his third sense into two; see 57-58 and 70-71.

<sup>13</sup>On the concept of experience, see Louis Roy, *Transcendent Experiences*, chap. 9, section entitled "Experience."

<sup>14</sup>These three senses are fundamental in my book *Mystical Consciousness*.

<sup>15</sup>Not in the sense of the "already out there now real," repudiated in *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 276-77. See also the distinction inner word/outer word of *Method in Theology*, 119, and the distinction inner core/outer manifestation of 284.

is fully elucidated only in chapter 10, on "Dialectic" (242-43).<sup>16</sup> Let us try to lay out the several elements contained in this concept.

He positions religious experience on the fourth level. Here one is attracted not only to limited values but, rather, one apprehends ultimate value. He observes that, on the fourth level, self-transcendence reaches a maximum when one lives in a state of love, either with one's husband or wife, or with parents or children, or with fellow citizens, or with God.<sup>17</sup> Insofar as the last of those states – love with God – is concerned, this experience amounts to the religious aspect of the fourth level, namely, the aspect concerned not with finite values, but with infinite value. A unique affective state establishes itself: a being-in-love in an unrestricted fashion.

In the section of *Method in Theology* entitled "Religious Experience," Lonergan avers that this affective state consists not in knowledge, but in consciousness:

To say that this dynamic state is conscious is not to say that it is known. For consciousness is just experience, but knowledge is a compound of experience, understanding, and judging. Because the dynamic state is conscious without being known, it is an experience of mystery. (106)

The consciousness he is talking about is "experience" not on the first but on the fourth level of intentionality:

It is this consciousness as brought to a fulfilment, as having undergone a conversion, as possessing a basis that may be broadened and deepened and heightened and enriched but not superseded . . . . So the gift of

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<sup>16</sup>To my knowledge, nowhere in his writings does Lonergan distinguish "religious experience" and "religious conversion." On the usefulness of this distinction, see Louis Roy, *Transcendent Experiences*, 8-9 and 139-40. In *Method in Theology*, the term "conversion" occurs before chapter 10, albeit in the singular, without yet being differentiated into the three basic kinds of conversion (see 48, 52, 107, 118, 130-32, 142, 144, 155, 168, 224); however, at 150, 161, and 217 the three conversions are mentioned, although not characterized.

<sup>17</sup>In the third section, entitled "Lonergan and Love," of his remarkable article "Desire, Bias, and Love: Revisiting Lonergan's Philosophical Anthropology," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 77 (2012): 244-64, John D. Dadosky expands Lonergan's treatment of the various forms of love. I approve his submission that "Lonergan did not reflect sufficiently on the idea of love in his later thought so as to distinguish explicitly the so-called natural loving, that is, love that is proportionate to human living (romantic, family, neighbor, society) and the love which is not proportionate (transcendence). Lonergan would not only agree with this distinction, he probably presumed it . . ." (254).

God's love occupies the ground and root of the fourth and highest level, of man's intentional consciousness. It takes over the peak of the soul, the *apex animae*. (107)

However, when one adverts to this consciousness, there begins the knowledge of it, which Lonergan calls "faith." Faith is "the eye of religious love, an eye that can discern God's self-disclosures" (119).

Chapter 4 of *Method in Theology* adumbrates a series of steps from unrestricted love to more and more definite knowledge. Unfortunately this succession remains partly implicit in the author's account. Perhaps the sequence could be clarified as follows: a basic state of being in love unrestrictedly (prior word, also labeled "inner word") → faith (the knowledge born of religious love) → the word as expressed ("outer word") → belief (judgments of fact and of value to which one adheres) → action in the world (thanks to a self-transcendence that undoes decline and promotes progress in society). In this sequence, one can observe a succession of mutual influences between the cognitive and the affective in the human person.

#### A FIRST CRITERION FOR THE VIABILITY OF THE CATEGORY

The viability of religious experience as a theological category depends on two criteria: one I would call "factual" and one that I will call "foundational-systematic." The first can be established in Lonergan's functional specialties termed "history," "dialectic," and "doctrines," thanks to an examination of a particular religious tradition. The second criterion is explicated in the specialties termed "foundations," when religious conversion is objectified, and "systematics," when the results of both "foundations" and "doctrines" lead to "an earnest, pious and sober" inquiry and to "a certain understanding of the mysteries, which is most fruitful," as the First Vatican Council recommended (DS 3016, referred to in *Method in Theology*, 309, 321, and 336; see DS 3020, referred to in *Method in Theology*, 347).

Principally focused on fact, which is the goal of the third level of intentionality, the functional specialty called "history" determines whether a specific doctrine under consideration is present in a particular religious tradition. As I will try to demonstrate that it is, I will stay in my Catholic

tradition, as Lonergan himself did, without tackling non-Catholic traditions.<sup>18</sup> So the question becomes: is religious experience, in fact, well-grounded in the Catholic tradition? After all, if theologians operating in the functional faculty “history” come to the conclusion that in the various Christian traditions, religious experience – in the sense of a reality – is missing, how could it be employed as a category in the functional specialty “systematics”? Of course, religious experience first emerges as a category in the functional specialty “foundations.” Nevertheless, before entering into any Christian “systematics,” it must pass the test of its presence in “history” and later being exposed in its ambiguous character in “dialectic” and recognized as true in “doctrines.”

Given the limitations in the length of this article, my illustration of the first criterion will unavoidable be sketchy. A full implementation of the specialties, history, dialectic, and doctrines on this subject matter would require dozens of volumes. I am nevertheless confident that this mere adumbration of what we find in the Catholic tradition on that topic will be convincing.

In biblical concordances, we learn that the few Hebrew and Greek words for “experience” are not used to designate *religious* experience; instead, those words refer to *non-religious* experience. Nonetheless, *the reality* of religious experience is present throughout the Bible, particularly, in the New Testament, as regards the free decision to believe in Jesus and be baptized. Moreover, equivalent words are employed that clearly point to a religious experience, for instance, to mention but a couple of them, “with the eyes of your heart enlightened” (Ephesians 1:18), or “what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life” (1 John 1:1).

When we examine the patristic tradition, we discover that the word “religious experience” is rarely used. However, as in the New Testament, *the reality* of religious experience is there, beginning with Origen of Alexandria in his theme of the five spiritual senses.<sup>19</sup> One finds that rich experiential

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<sup>18</sup>In his introduction to *Method in Theology* Lonergan wrote: “The method I indicate is, I think, relevant to more than Roman Catholic theologians. But I must leave it to members of other communions to decide upon the extent to which they may employ the present method” (xii).

<sup>19</sup>See Karl Rahner, “The ‘Spiritual Senses’ according to Origen” and “The Doctrine of the ‘Spiritual Senses’ in the Middle Ages,” in *Theological Investigations*, vol. XVI, trans. David Morland (New York: Crossroad, 1979), 81-103 and 104-34. See also *The Spiritual Senses: Perceiving God in Western Christianity*, ed. Paul L. Gavrilyuk and Sarah Coakley (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), along with my review of the latter in *The Thomist* 77 (2013): 482-87.

substratum in several other doctors of the church, such as Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, and Pope Gregory the Great. As evidence, Gregory of Nyssa praises "the experience (*peira*) of those who have been judged worthy of enjoying what is beyond conception."<sup>20</sup>

It is only in the twelfth century, when all the works of Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite had been translated into Latin, that the vocabulary of *experientia* became widespread.<sup>21</sup> This frequent usage is also typical of the thirteenth century. For example, Dionysius's expression *pathōn ta theia* ("experiencing the divine realities") is often quoted by Thomas Aquinas as *pati divina*.<sup>22</sup> Undoubtedly Dionysius and Thomas teach that there is an experience of the divine realities. Thomas states that besides "speculative knowledge" (*cognitio speculativa*), there is another one, which is "an affective or experiential knowledge (*cognitio affectiva seu experimentalis*), whereby a person experiences (*experitur*) in oneself the taste (*gustum*) of divine sweetness and the delight (*complacentiam*) in divine will."<sup>23</sup> However, while using the patristic and medieval vocabulary of the "spiritual senses," Thomas stresses their analogical character by adding – often but not always – qualifying clauses, as in the phrases *quasi experimentalis* ("as it were experiential") and *quodammodo experimentalis* ("in a certain way experiential").<sup>24</sup>

Lastly, we must take into consideration the Catholic Church's reservations concerning the danger of extolling religious experience at the expense of dogma and concerning the pitfall of desiring or prolonging the enjoyment of religious experience for its own sake at the expense of spiritual detachment. This kind of warning has regularly been voiced, since the patristic era, by bishops, mystics, and spiritual directors. Nonetheless, since the late-medieval nominalism, the Catholic magisterium, along with most theologians, has deprecated a significant aspect of religious

<sup>20</sup>Gregory of Nyssa, *Ad Thalassium*, prologue, § 9, translated from the bilingual edition of *Questions à Thalassios* (Paris: Cerf, 2010), Series "Sources Chrétiennes," no. 529.

<sup>21</sup>See Pierre Miquel, *Le vocabulaire latin de l'expérience spirituelle dans la tradition monastique et canoniale de 1050 à 1250* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1989), *Le vocabulaire de l'expérience spirituelle dans la tradition patristique grecque du IV<sup>e</sup> au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Miquel, 1989), and *L'expérience spirituelle dans la tradition chrétienne* (Miquel, 1999).

<sup>22</sup>See Dionysius, *The Divine Names*, 2.9, 648B, and 3.2-3, 681A-684D; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 1, a. 6, ad 3; II-II, q. 45, a. 1, ad 2, and a. 2.

<sup>23</sup>*Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 97, a. 2, ad 2.

<sup>24</sup>See A. Patfoort, "Cognitio ista est quasi experimentalis (*I Sent*, d. 14, q. 2, a. 2, ad 3m)," *Angelicum* 63 (1986): 3-13, and "Missions divines et expérience des Personnes divines selon S. Thomas," Patfoort, 545-59.

experience, alleging that a *natural* awareness of grace is impossible, given the *supernatural* character of grace. So we must admit that since Lonergan has entrusted the functional specialty termed "dialectic" with the task of sorting out the conflicts between positions and counterpositions in any philosophical or religious tradition (see 235-65), such a task is to be exercised also in regard to the nominalist-inspired Catholic tradition, which unfortunately lasted for centuries.<sup>25</sup>

#### A SECOND CRITERION FOR THE VIABILITY OF THE CATEGORY

In addition to the first criterion, namely, the presence of religious experience in the Christian tradition, a second criterion is required. Whereas the first criterion was *descriptive*, that is, presystematic, since it consisted in the historical recurrence of a holistic, mostly symbolic, apprehension of the reality of religious experience, the second criterion is *explanatory*, since it consists in a foundational-systematic understanding that differentiates the interconnected aspects of that reality. Accordingly, the condition that has to be fulfilled is the centrality of religious experience as a category that is relatable to other important philosophical and theological categories. I will proceed in seven steps.

In the first place, in a section of *Method in Theology* entitled "Realms of Meaning" (81-84), Lonergan presents a general link between religious experience and the rest of human life. As we saw before, he differentiates several realms of meaning, which are basic kinds of human activity: common sense, theory, interiority, and transcendence (also termed "religion"). Thus, after "the world of interiority has been made the explicit ground of the worlds of theory and of common sense" (107), the domain of transcendence can be recognized as underlying, that is, as being the ground of the domain of interiority, hence as a further realm. As a matter of fact, the author distinguishes the domain of transcendence from the "other interiority" (266, twice), which I understand as amounting to what he describes throughout his book as "interiority." Moreover, at another place he speaks of "religious interiority" (290). Therefore, it might be helpful to speak of a first interiority (philosophical self-knowledge) and of a second interiority (religious experience).

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<sup>25</sup>See Henri de Lubac, *Surnaturel* (Paris: Aubier, 1946) and *A Brief Catechesis on Nature and Grace* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1984).

In the second place, the chapter entitled "Religion" begins with a section on the question of God (101-103). A second link is presented, this time between religious experience and reason, when Lonergan reminds his readers that human intentionality naturally stretches forth towards the intelligible (on the second level), towards the unconditioned (on the third level) and towards the good of value (on the fourth level). He thus introduces a threefold, rational proof for the existence of an infinite Intelligible, an entirely Unconditioned, or an unlimited Value, which many people call "God."

In the third place, *Method in Theology*, sketches out a fourfold process of self-transcendence, in order to characterize the highest kind, the "being-in-love," as fulfilling the fourth level (see 104-105). This basic state then initiates a descending movement along from the top to the bottom of human intentionality. Thus it interacts with the whole ascending movement, which operates on the various levels of intentionality. As a result, we have here a further link, since what happens on the fourth level, far from being isolated from what happens on the first three levels, heads in the same direction, namely, towards the full reality, which is the objective of self-transcendence. This is why, later in his book, he declares:

As intellectual and moral conversion, so also religious conversion is a modality of self-transcendence. . . . Religions conversion is to a total being-in-love as the efficacious ground of all self-transcendence, whether in the pursuit of truth, or in the realization of human values, or in the orientation man adopts to the universe, its ground, and its goal. (241)

In the fourth place, in chapter 11, on "Foundations," he reminds his readers of the importance of the transcendental notions, which he has explained earlier (11-12 and 34-35) and which he defines here as "our capacity for seeking and, when found, for recognizing instances of the intelligible, the true, the real, the good" (282). He immediately proceeds to distinguish the notions from the categories: "While the transcendental notions make questions and answers possible, categories make them determinate" (282; he provides examples of categories at 11).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Compare with his earlier, less formal, presentation of the categories (1968), in "Horizons and Categories," in *Early Works on Theological Method 1*, vol. 22 of the *Collected Works of*

In the fifth place, let us pay attention to his most important distinction, the one between general and special categories: "General categories regard objects that come within the purview of other disciplines as well as theology. Special categories regard the objects proper to theology" (282). Elsewhere he mentions that these "other disciplines" are philosophy, the sciences, hermeneutics, and history." And he states:

Theology, insofar as it acquires a method, becomes a reflection on the significance and value of a religion within a culture; because it treats of a religion, it has its own special terms; because it is concerned with the significance and value of the religion within a given culture, it has to have recourse to the general terms that refer to significance, value, and culture in their many aspects.<sup>27</sup>

Robert Doran reports and represents a helpful clarification made by Daniel Monsour about the relation of the general to the special categories.<sup>28</sup> To do so, Monsour focuses on the two bases that generate the derivation of the categories. Doran formulates each of those bases as follows:

The general categories are categories that theology shares with others disciplines. The base for deriving them or for appropriating them from other disciplines or for transposing them from those other disciplines is the normative pattern of recurrent and related operations employed in every cognitional enterprise expressly intended to yield cumulative and progressive results. . . .

The special categories are the categories that are peculiar to theology. The base for deriving special theological categories or for appropriating them from the religious tradition or for transposing

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Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert M. Doran and Robert C. Croken (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 473-93, esp. 477-87.

<sup>27</sup>"Philosophy of God, and Theology," Lecture 3, in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, vol. 17 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 209.

<sup>28</sup>Doran refers to an unpublished paper by H. Daniel Monsour, entitled "Harmonious Continuation of the Actual Order of This Universe in God's Self-communication," delivered at the Lonergan Research Institute Seminar, Toronto, November 13, 2003.

them from the tradition is the conscious, dynamic state of being in love in an unrestricted manner. . . .<sup>29</sup>

The derivations are successive expansions and enrichments, always triggered by the bases. The latter having been identified, what has to be tackled is the question of their interrelations. Doran rephrases Monsour's answer:

The relation of the base for the general categories to the base for the special categories is a relation of that remote essential passive potency that is capable of being moved to receive a form by the omnipotent power of God alone, and so of obediencial potency. . . . Because the potency is a real orientation or order, being-in-love in an unrestricted manner is a real, intrinsic, proper, supernatural fulfilment of our natural capacity for self-transcendence.<sup>30</sup>

Both Monsour and Doran point out that rationalism's tendency amounts to privileging the general categories while neglecting the special categories, whereas fideism's tendency amounts to privileging the special categories while neglecting the general categories.<sup>31</sup> Theology will be balanced inasmuch as their interplay is kept in motion, without leaning towards a lopsided stance.

In the sixth place, let us return to Lonergan's own explanations respecting the way categories ought to be derived. He submits that there are three tasks for theological methodologists. The first task consists in indicating the qualities of adequate categories, namely, their transcendental dimension. Insofar as the *general* categories are concerned, they are transcendental, and obviously transcultural, in their capacity to refer to "realities [that] are not the product of any culture but, on the contrary, the principles that produce cultures, preserve them, develop them" (282). Insofar as the *special* categories are concerned, they too are transcendental and transcultural, since a divine gift of unrestricted love is offered to all human beings (see 109) and consequently "is not restricted to any stage or section of human culture but

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<sup>29</sup>Robert M. Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 48.

<sup>30</sup>Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?*, 50.

<sup>31</sup>See Doran's *What Is Systematic Theology?*, 50.

rather is the principle that introduces a dimension of other-worldliness into any culture" (283).<sup>32</sup>

The second task for theological methodologists consists in distinguishing between, on the one hand, the inner core that comprises both the transcendental method and the divine gift, and, on the other hand, its outer manifestations, which are subject to variation. So "theological categories will be transcultural only in so far as they refer to that inner core. In their actual formulation they will be historically conditioned and so subject to correction, modification, complementation" (284). Models, or ideal-types will be employed, which will be preceded and guided by the theological categories inasmuch as "these models will be built up from basic terms and relations that refer to transcultural components in human living and operation and, accordingly, at their roots they will possess quite exceptional validity" (285; see 287).<sup>33</sup> Their usefulness consists in mediating an initial move from a mere hypothesis to an adequate description of a known reality.

The third task for theological methodologists concerns the way the categories can be derived. As regards the general categories, everything begins with intentionality, the objectification of which uncovers a "basic nest of terms and relations," constituted by the dynamic human subject, its structured operations, and the objects that the operations reveal. Thereafter, "the basic nest of terms and relations can then be differentiated in a number of manners" (nine of them; see 286-87). Lastly, our author situates religious experience within the expanding series of categories, as he writes: "From such a broadened basis one can go on to a developed account of the human good, values, beliefs, to the carriers, elements, functions, realms, and stages of meaning, to the question of God, of religious experience, its expressions, its dialectical development" (287).

He points out that the contemporary theologians' task is to pass from theoretical to methodical categories. Inspired though theologians must be by the Thomist account of grace, they now have to commence, not from a

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<sup>32</sup>In "The Method of Theology Fall and Winter 1963-64," in *Early Works on Theological Method* 3, vol. 24 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. Michael G. Shields and ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 101, Lonergan explains: "'Principle' here is used not in the logical sense of first propositions. Rather, it means some reality that is the source of all propositions."

<sup>33</sup>In *The Early Christians: Their World Mission and Self-Discovery* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1986), chap. 2, Ben F. Meyer, based on Lonergan's epistemology and on Alfred Schutz's and Gibson Winter's social theory, sketched out a model, with its heuristic tools, in order to understand the changes in early Christianity's self-definition.

metaphysical psychology, but from intentionality analysis.<sup>34</sup> In fact, his vision is a transposition of Aquinas's theoretical thought into a conceptuality that is governed, no longer by theory, but by an intentionality analysis that has thematized human interiority (see 288-89). The starting point, then, is the dynamic state of an other-worldly love, with its stages and struggles (see 289-90). Lonergan gives an illustration:

The older theology conceived sanctifying grace as an entitative habit, absolutely supernatural, infused into the essence of the soul. On the other hand, because we acknowledge interiority as a distinct realm of meaning, we can begin with a description of religious experience, acknowledge a dynamic state of being in love without restrictions, and later identify this state with the state of sanctifying grace.<sup>35</sup> (120)

In the seventh place, Lonergan now lists five sets of special categories. The first set is derived from religious experience. Because religious experience is exceedingly rich and enriching, "there are needed studies of religious interiority: historical, phenomenological, psychological, sociological" (290). The second set is constituted by "subjects, their togetherness in community, service, and witness, the history of salvation that is rooted in a being-in-love, and the function of this history in promoting the kingdom of God" (291). The third set "moves from our loving to the loving source of our love" (291); in a subsequent chapter (on "Systematics"), alluding to the experience of otherworldly love, our author makes bold to write: "religious conversion is the event that gives the name, God, its primary and fundamental meaning" (350). The fourth set results from differentiation between authenticity, inauthenticity, or some blend of the two, among Christians, and thus "is the transcendental base for the fourth functional specialty, dialectic" (291). Lastly,

<sup>34</sup>Obviously Lonergan has been greatly inspired by his medieval mentor, Thomas Aquinas. To assess the latter's influence on Lonergan, see *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, vol. 2 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997) and "The Future of Thomism," in *A Second Collection*, vol. 13 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadoosky (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 39-47.

<sup>35</sup>The question of which other theoretical categories could be transposed into the categories of interiority is discussed by Robert M. Doran, "The Starting Point of Systematic Theology," *Theological Studies* 67 (2006): 750-76, esp. at 760-63; by Charles Hefling, "On the (Economic) Trinity: An Argument in Conversation with Robert Doran," *Theological Studies* 68 (2007): 642-60, at 650-54; and by Jeremy D. Wilkins, "Grace and Growth: Aquinas, Lonergan, and the Problematic of Habitual Grace," *Theological Studies* 72 (2011): 723-49.

since authenticity promotes progress and inauthenticity generates decline, the fifth set has to do with the issues of progress, decline, and redemption, and it addresses in particular the redoubtable challenge of undoing decline.

Lonergan ends his treatment of the categories with a remark of the utmost importance:

It is to be stressed that this use of the special categories occurs in interaction with data. They receive further specifications from the data. At the same time, the data set up an exigence for further clarification of the categories and for their correction and development.

In this fashion there is set up a scissors movement with an upper blade in the categories and a lower blade in the data. Just as the principles and laws of physics are neither mathematics nor data but the fruit of an interaction between mathematics and data, so too a theology can be neither purely *a priori* nor purely *a posteriori* but only the fruit of an ongoing process that has one foot in a transcultural base and the other on increasingly organized data (293).

#### CONCLUSION

Lonergan knew full-well that adopting the category of religious experience had its risks. Since the nineteenth century, the Catholic Church's authorities have been wary of theologies that begin from that idea.<sup>36</sup> Notwithstanding this official reserve, his contribution is remarkably sound both philosophically and theologically. Philosophically, it is based in a detailed epistemology, articulated in *Insight* and summed up in the first chapter of *Method in Theology*; theologically, it is grounded in the gifts of love and light granted by the Holy Spirit.<sup>37</sup>

Consequently, we would err if we were to single out religious experience as the sole and sufficient source of theological objectivity. The age-old

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<sup>36</sup>On the Protestant side, Karl Barth and other Neo-orthodox theologians have vigorously opposed Schleiermacher and his liberal epigones. Like the Catholic authorities, they have been concerned about the subjectivism of the proponents of religious experience. However, in contradistinction to Catholics, who have defended the normativity of a tradition safeguarded by the Holy Spirit, those Protestants have defended the paramount significance of a Revelation imparted by the Word of God.

<sup>37</sup>For a contrast between Lonergan's and Rahner's epistemology, see Louis Roy, *Engaging the Thought of Bernard Lonergan*, Study 8.

temptation of what has been called "illumination," that is, of relying only on one's own inner illumination, precisely consists in segregating one's own religious experience from the other levels of intentionality and setting it aside so as to consider its felt immediacy as an incontrovertible proof of its veracity.

Furthermore, Lonergan situates religious experience within the overall dynamism of human intentionality. The domain of transcendence is definitely not isolated from the rest of human life. It is reached on the top floor of intentionality, namely, on the fourth level, which for him is the level of affectivity par excellence, even though feelings are present at all levels. We can easily observe that, in his view, religious affectivity is not divorced from religious intellectuality. In fact, the "questioning" vector and the state of "being in love" are parallel: "Just as unrestricted questioning is our capacity for self-transcendence, so being in love in an unrestricted fashion is the proper fulfilment of that capacity" (106).

To sum up, let us reiterate why exactly the category of religious experience is viable in Christian theology. The first reason boils down to these three facts: *the reality* of religious experience has been present all along for two thousand years in the Catholic world, that is, since the New Testament; *the word* itself has been frequently expressed since the twelfth century; and with Schleiermacher in the nineteenth century, *the category* emerged as a technical tool in systematic theology, to be employed time and again since that time.

The second reason is that, in Lonergan's systematic rendering, religious experience is integrated as a species within the broader genus of human intentionality. So his vast array of terms, which are interlocking in their relations, are transcendently and cross-culturally justified because they are derived from a consciousness of our acts and states that has a universal validity.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>A first version of this essay was discussed on October 30, 2014 at the Lonergan Research Institute of Regis College, University of Toronto. I thank those who took part in that exchange.

## BOOK REVIEW

### *Self-Possession: Being at Home in Conscious Performance*

Mark D. Morelli, Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2015

WHAT A GREAT book this is: well-written, insightful, fun to read, hard to put down. It can be read as an introduction, but is more than that. It can be read and taught in graduate classes, but it is more than that. It can be read as an original journey of philosophical self-discovery, worthy of the highest and deepest reflection, but it is more than that, in the sense that it is difficult to categorize. What it is not, to its credit, is a work of scholarship, replete with footnotes and other academic paraphernalia.

While the book is Morelli's own expression of his own taking possession of himself, it is dependent on and influenced by Lonergan, whose guidance is that of a teacher, not a tyrant. Morelli reveals in his performance that paradoxical dependence and independence that all of us Lonerganians have experienced. In inviting us to become our own men and women as human beings and philosophers, Lonergan invites us to become our own authentic selves in such a way as not only to appropriate and make our own his insights but even to go beyond him and to disagree with him. Morelli does all of these things in this book.

Morelli's service to the Lonergan community is to render this approach much more accessible and reader-friendly than it is in *Insight*. His service to the human and philosophical community is to invite us and challenge us to become the first and best editions of ourselves. Not only those conversant with the latest science, art, and philosophy but all of us may apply.

One way that Morelli does this is through a very engaging philosophical style that is confident, direct, funny; and that takes no prisoners, especially in its treatment of logical, argumentative, analytic approaches to philosophy. Consider, for example, this comment: "If we're good at the game of chess, we might conclude, we're equipped with all we need to be fine philosophers" (313).

The movement of the book is from spontaneous to reflective, conscious experience of myself to explicit thematization of myself, implicit presence to myself to full, explicit knowledge of myself. The reasons for the latter is that such knowledge is valuable in itself and that it provides the guidance in the light of which we can live more successfully and happily in our professional and personal lives. Part of this happiness lies in a consistency between implicit self-presence and explicit self-knowledge. We experience the authenticity that should be the mark of a successful, happy life, in contrast to the inauthenticity that gnaws away at us from within as we live more or less at odds with our deepest selves. In a very real way, Morelli shows us that the unexamined life is not worth living, but he pursues this end in a very modernist, reflective manner. Such modernism is the most authentic path open to us. We can no longer simply repeat the dicta of Socrates or Plato, valuable as those are.

Thus, reflecting on our lived presence to ourselves, we discover a spontaneous orientation to six notions, meaning, objectivity, knowledge, truth, reality, and value. There is a basic, lived, prethematic commitment to these notions that we cannot help living out even as we employ them or do not employ them in our specific knowledge claims and choices. We can, of course, try to avoid or go against these notions, but only at the price of a lived, performative contradiction between implicit orientation and explicit result. Thus I can say meaningfully that the search for meaning is absurd, or say consistently that there is nothing wrong with contradicting myself. The better, more fruitful course, therefore, is to live and think with integrity in the light of these basic norms. To do so, and to choose habitually to do so in the light of conscious performance analysis, is, as Morelli shows in his last chapter, to be self-possessed.

The book is highly original both in what it says and how it says it, in content and form, in insight and formulation. In reflecting on ourselves, we discover four basic moods of self-performance, the self-feeling of conscious performance. I can be attentive or inattentive, intelligent or unintelligent, reasonable or unreasonable, responsible or irresponsible. These moods are informed by four modes of operation, experiential and question-free, intelligent, reasonable, and evaluative. The four moods and modes occur in a spontaneous, orderly sequence that we violate at our peril. I can, for example, ignore too much what I am experiencing when I judge, or move too quickly to critical judgment before sufficiently under-

standing, or try to make a decision about what to do before adequately considering alternatives.

In addition to moods and modes, there are also motifs of conscious performance determined by our basic interests, and they number five: practical, aesthetic, intellectual, dramatic, and mystical. Our moods and modes, we could say, are always with us and operate with all motifs, but they operate differently and are governed by different interests and criteria. If I am interested at the time in just getting things done, then I will not be interested in pursuing long-range, speculative questions for their own sake. Conscious performance can be based on one of the basic interests or on a blend of interests. One of Morelli's advances over Lonergan lies in his making the biological orientation an aspect of the practical approach to experience. Interest in food or shelter or warm clothes is generally pursued in practical projects to acquire these things, not in some realm apart from practicality.

Interests can be pursued in ways that are sometimes fruitful and sometimes not. In general, performance can be attentive or inattentive, intelligent or unintelligent, critical or uncritical, responsible or irresponsible. If my projects are pursued authentically, then I can get the job done, the math problem solved, or make a responsible moral decision. If projects are pursued inauthentically, then impatience can lead me to perform a practical task too hurriedly or fail to be attentive to a Matisse or Stella, or fail to be receptive to a possible philosophical insight. Because of the open-ended character of the basic commitment and the fixed and restricted demand of a basic interest, I can experience basic tension in conscious performance, and I can try to resolve that tension by one-sided focus either on the infinity of the basic notions or the finitude of a basic interest. Thus I can neglect necessary practical tasks because of aesthetic, intellectual, or mystical demands. Better it is to read *Insight* than to do the laundry, pay bills, or replace a worn-out pair of shoes.

There are many actual or possible insights in this book, too many to go into or even mention. One is the claim that practical, aesthetic, intellectual, and mystical motifs serve dramatic living, which is the interest to incarnate in our sensible presence to others and to manifest in our presence to ourselves our own intrinsic value and essential worth as constituted by our basic commitment to meaning, objectivity, knowledge, truth, reality, and value, and to exhibit worthiness as attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible participants in the ongoing movement of that basic commitment. Dramatic

living at its best is authenticity rendered public and socially displayed. My performance is not merely private but is relative to and has an impact on the larger social, historical world.

I see this claim as in keeping with Morelli's earlier point about the necessity to broaden the project of self-possession beyond the level of high culture, the focus of *Insight*, and to bring it to the concrete level of our everyday living in the practical and social world. Self-possession is certainly important on the level of artistic, scientific, philosophical, and theological high culture, but it also can make a huge difference in our everyday lives. Self-possession on the level of high culture, if it not to be merely the purview of an elite, needs to interact fruitfully with self-possession on the level of everyday life if there is to be any hope for our planet.

Approaching the end of my review, I wish to raise two critical questions. The first concerns what role imagination plays in relation to thought. On page 156, Morelli says that imagining, defined in the preceding paragraph as a form of experiential, question-free performance, functions as a form of wondering, intellectual performance, along with questioning, understanding, and formulating. I wonder why he wishes to say this. True it is that all insight is insight into phantasm, but the phantasm arises on a sensible level, even if it is used as an aspect of a process of trying to understand. I worry about possible phenomenological confusion here. To me, this claim of Morelli makes as much sense as it would be to say that, because the scientist uses sensible data to verify a hypothesis, that sensing as employed in the process of verification is a form of reflective understanding.

Another question arises for me concerning Morelli's claim on page 165 that the content of understanding is an idea. "Idea" in my way of thinking is at least roughly synonymous with "definition" or "concept" or "formulation." I worry that Morelli's usage does not do full justice to Lonergan's distinction between preconceptual insight and its formulation in an inner or outer word. I wonder whether or not the more appropriate language is "inchoate idea" or "glimmerings of an idea." Such language preserves Lonergan's very important idea that insight into phantasm is an imperfect, not fully worked out and not yet completely formulated understanding.

To be fair to Morelli, Lonergan himself contributes to this confusion. On page 667 of *Insight* in the *Collected Works*, Lonergan says the following: "An idea is the content of an act of understanding . . . as a concept is the content of conceiving, defining, supposing, considering . . . so an idea

is the content of an act of understanding." Lonergan here distinguishes between "idea" as the content of an act of understanding and definition. My question for both Lonergan and Morelli is this: Would it not be less confusing and more clear to say that "idea," at least on an explanatory level, means a formulated inner word?

Whatever one thinks of these objections, they indicate at worst only slight blemishes in an otherwise well-wrought book. In his final chapter, Morelli reflects on the relationship between conscious performance analysis and full self-possession. Although valuable for the self-knowledge it provides, such self-knowledge is not full self-possession. For that to happen, I must choose to live according to what such self-knowledge reveals. To this end, there are four choices that I must make: to choose objectivity, knowledge, reality, and value.

With the implementation of the four transformative decisions, my attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible pursuits of Practical, Intellectual, Aesthetic, Dramatic, and Mystical meaning and value become integral episodes in the encompassing high drama that is the ongoing reflective and deliberate pursuit of direction in the flow of my life. Now I'm no longer drifting. I am at home in my conscious performance. (308-309)

Jim Marsh  
Professor Emeritus  
Fordham University

To our subscribers,

To our embarrassment, we discovered that the footnotes were omitted from the publication of Dr. Thomas McPartland's essay, "Epistemology and the Person," in *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* (n.s., 5, no. 1, 2014, 57-71). That essay is reprinted in its entirety here, now complete with the footnotes.

We apologize both to you, our readers, and to Dr. McPartland for this error.

Sincerely,

Patrick H. Byrne

Co-editor

*METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*

## EPISTEMOLOGY AND THE PERSON

Thomas J. McPartland

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THE TITLE “EPISTEMOLOGY and the Person” may seem for many seem for many philosophical readers to be an oxymoron. And, certainly, if this essay is a review of Christian Smith’s *What Is a Person?*, then such a description may seem warranted since Smith, in a powerful critique, shows how the “epistemological turn” in modern thought has had a devastating effect on the ability of social science to treat in a serious manner the reality of the person.<sup>1</sup> What is needed, Smith argues, is a “metaphysical turn” to replace the “epistemological turn,” a frank acknowledgment, though in a critical manner, of the existence of a real world beyond the epistemological subject, a real world that includes the reality of persons. What is needed, then, is a “critical realist” perspective.

The term “critical realism” (which Smith takes from the philosophy of Roy Bhaskar) immediately raises the prospects for those familiar with Lonergan of a genuine encounter that can perhaps be more a dialogue than a display of dialectics.<sup>2</sup> It is the thesis of this paper that precisely such an encounter between Smith and Lonergan is an instance of the kind of “further collaboration” to which Lonergan famously offers an invitation at the beginning of *Insight*.<sup>3</sup> For Smith employs his critical realist tools massively in the field of sociology. Lonergan, on the other hand, can provide an epistemology as an alternative to the “epistemological turn” that grounds the kind of metaphysics Smith finds necessary to correct the erroneous

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<sup>1</sup>Christian Smith, *What Is a Person? Rethinking Humanity, Social Life, and the Moral Good from the Person Up* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

<sup>2</sup>Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 182.

<sup>3</sup>Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 5th ed., vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 7.

assumptions operative in sociological practice – Lonergan can, uniquely, make the “critical” in critical realism more critical.

#### WHAT SMITH OFFERS LONERGAN

Smith is an accomplished sociologist who has discerned the presence of philosophical assumptions at work explicitly, or, more often, implicitly, in various fields and approaches in sociology. These assumptions have, for the most part, led sociological analysis astray and need to be corrected, Smith maintains, by the perspective of critical realism. Philosophical assumptions therefore are not extrinsic to sociological practice; they are embedded in the very enterprise of sociology. The point – against all positivist prejudices – is to get the philosophical assumptions right to do sociology well. Smith mentions Lonergan in a long footnote listing critical realist thinkers, but there is no discussion of Lonergan.<sup>4</sup> It should be obvious to a scholar of Lonergan studies that in his five-hundred page book, Smith is an expert practitioner familiar with the major thinkers, major books, and major articles in the relevant fields. His erudition is matched by analytic precision in framing the philosophical issues and in developing a consistent philosophical theme. The student of Lonergan can, then, find in Smith’s book an excellent resource of contemporary thinking in sociology and an acute dialectical analysis of the main philosophical controversies.

#### *Two Counterpositions: Reductionism and (Strong) Constructionism*

Smith locates two prominent counterpositions.<sup>5</sup>

The first set of assumptions is the positivist reductionist model, still arguably the most pervasive one, rooted in the nineteenth century, and, ultimately Enlightenment, origins of sociology from Comte to Durkheim. This model would have sociologists reduce variables to the “simplest” and

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<sup>4</sup>Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 92n.

<sup>5</sup>A counterposition is a claim that “contradicts one or more of the basic positions”: namely, the positions that (1) the real is the concrete universe of being and not a subdivision of the “already out there now”; (2) the subject is known by intelligent grasp and rational affirmation and not known in some prior “existential” state; and (3) objectivity is a consequence of rational inquiry and critical reflection and not a “property of vital anticipation, extroversion, and satisfaction” (*Insight*, 413). “Counter-positions are statements incompatible with intellectual, or moral, or religious conversion” (Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* [New York: Herder and Herder, 1972], 249).

“most basic” ones, thereby denying the complex stratified nature of society and of the person; seek “covering laws” to explain all phenomena much as Newton’s Universal Law of Gravitation explains all motions of bodies; and find the “covering laws” in empirical regularities – that is, correlations of observations – or, in a concession to the complexity of social phenomena, in statistical correlations. The emphasis here, then, is on empirical observations or quantification to guarantee scientific validity to the “laws of society.”

Smith’s analysis is much more nuanced than these points suggest. He shows in a wide variety of cases how these ideas inform, often behind the scenes, the researches and the theories of sociologists and how these ideas can insinuate themselves into often competing and even contradictory theories. Smith demonstrates the inevitable consequence of this model: social reality is truncated to fit into the methodological dictates of positivist empiricism, collapsing the complex strata of social reality to the kinds of variables susceptible to the rigors of this kind of method. Most particularly obliterated is the causal agency of persons and the socially constitutive nature and ontological integrity of acts of intelligence, moral will, and loving commitment. The positivist approach can, on one extreme, reduce persons to “social atoms” following deterministic laws of self-interest, or, in a reaction to the former “classic” analysis, reduce persons to the mechanism of social relations that subsume and define the individuals within the network. Smith mentions a sociologist of the latter school, Bruce Mayhew, who sees humans as nothing but “biological machines” and boldly proclaims the positivist credo that “takes human society – human social organization – to be studied in exactly the same fashion as any natural science studies any natural phenomena.”<sup>6</sup>

While positivism, in its various guises, has been given robust, and even devastating, criticism since the nineteenth century culminating in the revolt against “modernity” by existentialists and postmodernists, Smith’s critique is particularly helpful to Lonergan scholars since he provides abundant and specific evidence of the persistence and pervasive influence of this counterposition in sociology. Perhaps its sway is most disturbing in the demands of research to establish empirical regularities. This almost becomes a fetish in the drive for statistical correlations as the measure of genuine scientific legitimacy. Smith assembles an array of impressive arguments, for

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<sup>6</sup>Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 242-43.

example, that expose the problems when this methodology usurps variables sociology (problems with establishing any substantive causal link to statistical association of variables, problems with inductive generalizations that must come to grips with the inevitable influence of contextual factors, problems with a conflict between the data actually available and the variables actually under scrutiny, problems with confusing the strength of association of the variables with the size of the database, and problems of isolating the variables for "control")."<sup>7</sup>

The second model, often spearheaded by postmodernism, proclaims a "strong" social constructivism.

This view goes beyond the pioneering work of Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (which Smith applauds for its phenomenological insight, although he cautions that it has nihilist moments from the sprinkled influence of Sartrean existentialism).<sup>8</sup> As Smith points out, the subtitle of Berger and Luckmann's book, *A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, indicates that the text makes no claims in epistemology or metaphysics; rather it explores the social influences on human beliefs and subjective perceptions of reality – not on actual "knowledge" of "reality" itself. Unfortunately many sociologists go beyond the self-imposed limits of Berger and Luckmann and use the idea of social construction as a springboard for bold epistemological and metaphysical counterpositions.<sup>9</sup>

Social constructionism in its pronounced, strong form would maintain that much of human social life is not a product of nature, not a fixed order, but rather a "variable artifact," the result of human *cultural* creation through social definition, interaction, and institutionalization. Moreover, not only is human social reality so constituted, but also *reality itself is a social construction*. Human mental categories, linguistic practices (if not the structure of language itself), and symbolic exchanges take on the definition of reality through ongoing social interaction. Postmodernists can add the spice that these interactions are "shaped" decisively by interests and perspectives usually reflecting an imbalance of power. Thus there are radical limits to human knowledge: we can never surpass our socially constructed limits to

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<sup>7</sup>Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 279-84.

<sup>8</sup>For Smith's precautionary note, see *What Is a Person?*, 174n103; Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1966).

<sup>9</sup>Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 126-27.

look at some reality-in-itself.<sup>10</sup> Smith correctly sees the influence of Kantian transcendental idealism here, in which there is added a sociological a priori to the constituting of "knowledge."<sup>11</sup> We can add that since the social factors can be subject to the vagaries of historical contingency, transcendental idealism can morph into radical subjective idealism and historicism. Or much like the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics, where "reality" has no meaning outside of the experimental situation, the strong social constructivist counterposition could adopt a completely relativistic view, in which "reality" has no meaning beyond the construction of a particular culture at a particular time.<sup>12</sup>

This brief summary cannot do justice to the extraordinarily detailed account Smith gives of the major thinkers and corresponding theoretical types involved in strong social constructionism and his impressive array of arguments against strong social constructivism, most often involving identifying some kind of performative contradiction.<sup>13</sup> While the performative contradiction in this extreme form of relativism has been well noted by many sociologists, not to mention philosophers from Plato to Habermas, Smith points out that these "fringe" views have, in fact, shaped the perspectives and thoughts and researches that operate within the orbit of strong social constructivism. These views, in turn, have radiated great influence on academic life in general and its rhetoric, operating behind the scenes as unacknowledged dogmas.

It should be clear that positivist empiricism and strong social constructionism have acted as dialectic twins, mutually supporting each other as they prey on the obvious weaknesses of the other party, all the while leading scientific culture to ever lesser viewpoints and more fragmented perspectives on the human person.

### *Three Theoretical Resources*

Smith can criticize these counterpositions because he operates with a triad of theoretical resources, defining his position.

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<sup>10</sup>Smith, *What Is a Person?*, chap. 3.

<sup>11</sup>Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 122n7.

<sup>12</sup>See Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 29n7.

<sup>13</sup>See, for example, his powerful critique of the "linguistic turn" of Saussure and its closed box rejection of the referential nature of language (Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 159-63, 171-73).

The first theoretical resource – and indeed the key one – is critical realism. This is the actual term for the philosophy of Roy Bhaskar.<sup>14</sup> This philosophy of critical realism offers a “third way” as an alternative to positivist reductionism and postmodernist hermeneutics, which have created the intellectual dead end that Smiths finds as the deadlock in the social sciences. The starting point of critical realism is that the “epistemological turn” of modernity has led to the deadlock. Thus critical realism does an end run on epistemology and starts out with ontology: the “real” is a meaningful term. It is not coterminous with the empirical. We not only experience, we inquire; we understand; we try to frame our best case; we revise. While we are fallible in our process of inquiry, we are oriented to what is real. So, as a kind of ontological deduction that adds the “critical” to critical realism, this philosophy proclaims that we can learn about the real in a fallible, revisable manner by commitment to the process of inquiry.<sup>15</sup> Another ontological deduction of critical realism is that reality is *stratified*: it exists on multiple layers, in which each layer, though connected to the others, operates with its own “characteristic dynamics and processes.”<sup>16</sup> In fact, there are higher layers that emerge out of the lower layers, are conditioned by them, but have their own laws. Hence critical realism, against any reductionist tendencies, is a philosophy of emerging reality, including the emergence of such a nonmaterial reality as that of the human mind with its hermeneutical tasks.<sup>17</sup>

Smith applies this notion of emergence through an incredibly nuanced analysis of the emergence of higher layers of organization from unconscious being, to primary experience capacities, to secondary experience capacities, to creative capacities, to moral and interpersonal capacities – in short, to the emergence of the person.<sup>18</sup> The second theoretical resource, therefore, is personalism, the twentieth-century movement associated with certain varieties of existential phenomenology and Catholic thought, reflecting

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<sup>14</sup>Roy Bhaskar, *A Realist Conception of Science* (London: Verso, 1997); Roy Bhaskar, *Critical Realism* (New York: Routledge, 1998); Roy Bhaskar, *The Possibility of Naturalism: A Philosophical Critique of Contemporary Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1979). This paper is restricted to Smith’s interpretation of Bhaskar’s critical realism. The dialogue, of course, at some point must expand beyond Smith and Lonergan to include Lonergan and Bhaskar.

<sup>15</sup>*What Is a Person?*, 93-94.

<sup>16</sup>*What Is a Person?*, 95.

<sup>17</sup>*What Is a Person?*, 95-97.

<sup>18</sup>*What Is a Person?*, chap. 1. See the diagram on page 74.

what Lonergan calls the "turn to the realm of interiority." The notion of emergence, then, in critical realism, with its nonreductionist, nonrelativistic approach to the person, joins personalism.<sup>19</sup>

The critical realist commitment to fallibilistic knowledge of the real and its consonance with personalism as a result of its notion of emergence leads it to embrace a third theoretical resource – "antiscientific phenomenology."<sup>20</sup> By this term Smith refers not so much to existential phenomenology as to Michael Polanyi and Charles Taylor.<sup>21</sup> The critical realist, that is, non-naïve realist, approach to knowledge emphasizing its fallibilism but, at the same time, its goal of understanding the real, is also emphasizing the role of personal commitment and fidelity in the process of inquiry – exactly the point Polanyi makes in his celebrated work on personal knowledge. This emphasis dovetails, too, with Charles Taylor's contention that we must reject scientific, reductionist claims that contradict our "Best Accounts" of our conscious activities as cognitive and moral agents – our "phenomenological" experience. Our Best Accounts, Smith says, are arrived at "by challenge, discussion, argumentation, reflection, criticism, vetting, that is, by testing against the clarity of experience, including through systematic observation and the discipline of reason."<sup>22</sup> Experience here is not restricted to the data of senses but focuses on the data of consciousness.

### *The Person*

Based on these theoretical resources, Smith argues for the validity of the notion of the person, so conceived, in sociology. What, then, is the person? Smith defines the person thusly:

[A] conscious, reflective embodied, self-transcending center of subjective experience, durable entity, moral commitment, and social communication who – as the efficient cause of his or her own responsible actions and interactions – exercises complex capacities for agency and intersubjectivity in order to sustain his or her own incommunicable

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<sup>19</sup>*What Is a Person?*, 98-104.

<sup>20</sup>*What Is a Person?*, 104-14.

<sup>21</sup>Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Toward a Post Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

<sup>22</sup>Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 112.

self in loving relationships with other personal selves and with the nonpersonal world.<sup>23</sup>

The person is not a social atom but a being inherently related to other persons; the person is not, on the other hand, a creation of society, a mere function of a mammoth social network. The person is a causal agent who constitutes social reality, even as social reality has its own stability and endurance, which conditions the life of the persons within it. Person and society are in a complicated dialectic relationship. Sociology, by giving a nuanced account of the person, who operates on multiple layers and in dialectical relation to society, can in giving such a nuanced account of the "facts" of the person, offer these "facts" to ethics as evidence for reflection on either human – and social – flourishing or human – and social – brokenness.<sup>24</sup> And in the context of such an ethics, sociology can make its contribution in exploring the question of human dignity. Hence Smith's critical realism can ground a critical moral theory along the lines of Habermas, and, as we shall see, of Lonergan.

#### WHAT LONERGAN OFFERS SMITH

Our brief account here by no means can do justice to the richness and erudition of Smith's remarkable work. We have focused on his methodological assumptions. But this is quite appropriate if we are to engage him in a dialogue with Lonergan.

What, then, can Lonergan's critical realism offer to Smith's critical realism?

#### *Parallel Claims*

It should be obvious to any student of Lonergan that there are huge areas of comparison between Lonergan and Smith.

First, Lonergan, of course, rejects out of hand the counterpositions that Smith sees as still holding sway over sociology – scientism, reductionism, positivism, empiricism, subjective idealism, hermeneutical relativism, and linguistic historicism. Lonergan, however, refutes these counterpositions

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<sup>23</sup>Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 74.

<sup>24</sup>Smith, *What Is a Person?*, chaps. 7-8.

neither primarily by metaphysical deductions nor by ad hoc arguments revealing their contradictions. He carries on a broad and comprehensive frontal assault. He does so by taking on in *Insight* the most formable thinker of the "epistemological turn" of modernity, namely, Kant. Lonergan's critique of Kant (and of related counterpositions) establishes his distinct alternative to the "epistemological turn." More on this later.

Second, Lonergan's notion of "emergent probability" is clearly consonant with the idea of emerging stratified realities.<sup>25</sup> "Higher integrations" can emerge, both conditioned by lower manifolds but organizing those manifolds according to its own laws. Lonergan's account of emergent probability is brilliant, metaphysically comprehensive, and supported by vast amounts of scientific data. It is a resource that could hold promise for fruitful dialogue. The universe, in Lonergan's view, is a directed but open dynamism in which the effectively probable realization of its own possibilities means the emergence of new forms and new, more complex realities. This involves a transformation of universal explanatory patterns immanent in the data, or "conjugate forms."<sup>26</sup> In Lonergan's universe, one set of conjugate forms can give place to another. The result: the emergence of new forms. Lonergan argues for a universe that is not only emergent but emergent according to probability schedules. The intelligible principles of natural processes are most often "schemes of recurrence," in which, in a given series of events, "the fulfilment of the conditions of each would be the occurrence of the others" – as, for example, the planetary system, the nitrogen cycle, and the routines of animal life.<sup>27</sup> Lonergan, however, can also find an intelligibility by abstracting from nonsystematic processes and discerning the ideal frequency from which actual, relative frequencies do not diverge systematically.<sup>28</sup> We can thus combine the intelligibility of statistical laws to the notion of a conditioned series of schemes of recurrence. When the emergence of an actual order at one level (for example, the organic) is the precondition, that is, potency, for the emergence of a higher level order (for example, the psychic), and when the latter is the precondition for a still higher order (for example, the intellectual), we have a conditioned series of

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<sup>25</sup>See *Insight*, 138-51, 533-43, chaps. 8, 15; Philip McShane, *Randomness, Statistics, and Emergence* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1970); Thomas J. McPartland, *Lonergan and the Philosophy of Historical Existence* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001), chap. 2.

<sup>26</sup>*Insight*, 112-13, 460-61.

<sup>27</sup>*Insight*, 141.

<sup>28</sup>*Insight*, 78-89, 121-23, 152.

schemes of recurrence. And, given sufficient numbers and time, the higher orders will be likely to emerge. What on one level is merely a random manifold of events can on another, higher level be an actually functioning formal pattern of events. In other words, an emergent higher integration systematizes what was merely coincidental on a lower order. Moreover, such a dynamic integration systematizes by adding and modifying until the old integration is eliminated and, by the principle of emergence, a new integration is introduced. The higher integrations always exist as "things," concrete "unity, identity, wholes," with their concrete intelligibilities.<sup>29</sup> Such a "thing" that is a "person" will be a complex of concrete higher integrations (such as depicted in Smith's diagram on page 74 of his text). Lonergan's notion of emergent probability is grounded in his metaphysical principle of the isomorphism of the structure of knowing and the structure of the known.<sup>30</sup> Here again we need to stress this relation to epistemology.

Third, Smith's complex analysis of the person can be met almost point by point in Lonergan's thinking. For Lonergan, the person is embodied, both intelligible and intelligent, both matter and spirit.<sup>31</sup> "Genuineness," in fact, demands negotiation between the higher order of intelligence and the lower manifold of the psyche and of the organic.<sup>32</sup> Lonergan's treatment of the psyche and of neural demand functions can indeed shed some light on Smith's contention that much of social norms operate on the level of the body as "scripted" bodily routines, rituals, and expressions.<sup>33</sup> Here, too, Lonergan's notions of elemental meanings, intersubjective spontaneity, symbols, and incarnate meaning would add explanatory power.<sup>34</sup> Lonergan, of course, has a precise, comprehensive, explanatory account of cognitive and moral operations – indeed moving through different and distinct levels of operation. Lonergan sees these operations (and their underpinning intentionality) as ultimately going beyond themselves into the state of loving, which embraces what Smith calls, as the highest level of emergence for the person, "inter-personal commitment and love."<sup>35</sup> The heart of Lonergan's

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<sup>29</sup>*Insight*, 271, 460-63.

<sup>30</sup>*Insight*, 47-75.

<sup>31</sup>*Insight*, 538-43.

<sup>32</sup>*Insight*, 499-503.

<sup>33</sup>*Insight*, 212-20, 480-82; Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 350-52.

<sup>34</sup>*Insight*, 237-38; *Method in Theology*, 57-73.

<sup>35</sup>*Method in Theology*, 241-42, 340-41; Smith, *What Is a Person?*, 72-73.

treatment of the person is found in his notion of “personal values,” ranking above vital values, social values, and cultural values on the preference scale of what is worthwhile – based on the criterion of self-transcendence.<sup>36</sup> Personal values cannot be sustained without the gift of spiritual values. As personal operations become social cooperations – in the kind of causal agency Smith identifies with the person – they set up the structure of the human good.<sup>37</sup>

Fourth, Lonergan sees a definitely dialectical relation between subject and society. Human cognitive and moral agents through common experience, common understanding, common judgments, and common commitments, constitute cultural communities that inform a way of life which becomes common social cooperations; these are objectified, embodied, and institutionalized only to carry on their own existence and, in turn, through acculturation, socialization, and education have massive influence on the growth and development of persons.<sup>38</sup> So persons constitute society, and society constitutes persons.<sup>39</sup>

Fifth, Lonergan sees inauthenticity as well as authenticity in human life and human society. He observes how inattentiveness, stupidity, irrationality, and irresponsibility joined with various biases (neurotic, egotistical, group, and general commonsensical) can lead not only to brokenness and breakdown but to a cumulative cycle of decline affecting all aspects of human existence including the culture.<sup>40</sup> Lonergan in one of his more passionate appeals urges social science not only to be descriptive and not only to be explanatory but also to be normative:

[S]o also human science has to be critical. It can afford to drop the nineteenth-century scientific outlook of mechanist determinism in favor of an emergent probability. It can profit by the distinction between the intelligible emergent probability of prehuman process and the intelligent emergent probability that arises in the measure

<sup>36</sup>*Method in Theology*, 31-32.

<sup>37</sup>*Method in Theology*, 47-52.

<sup>38</sup>*Method in Theology*, 48-49, 79

<sup>39</sup>Bernard J. F. 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), 209-210, 302-303.

<sup>40</sup>*Phenomenology and Logic*, 210-12, 302-310; *Insight*, 8-9, 214-27, 244-61; *Method in Theology*, 52-55.

that man succeeds in understanding himself and in implementing that understanding. Finally, it can be of inestimable value in aiding man to understand himself and guiding him in implementation of that understanding if, and only if, it can learn to distinguish between progress and decline. In other words, human science cannot be merely empirical; it has to be critical; to reach a critical standpoint, it has to be normative. This is a tall order for human science as hitherto it has existed. But people looking for easy tasks best renounce any ambition to be scientists; and if mathematicians and physicists can surmount their surds, the human scientist can learn to master his.<sup>41</sup>

This means that sociology, in principle, ought to contribute to the differentiation of practices, routines, and cycles of progress from the practices, routines, and cycles of decline.<sup>42</sup> The task is enormous, difficult, and complex. It requires a sophisticated grasp of the nature of human understanding and its various patterns as well as an equally sophisticated grasp of the nature and forms of the flight from understanding. This requires a sophisticated epistemology.

### *Epistemology and Method in Metaphysics*

To be sure, much more could be said on these topics. These parallels between Lonergan and Smith deserve extensive treatment. And we could anticipate that out of the dialogue would come new insights that would take us beyond just an affirmation of the parallels. As fruitful as that exercise may be, what Lonergan offers most to Smith and to his type of critical realism is something else – method.

Smith has legitimately sought to extricate himself from the epistemological morass of modernity. Cartesian rationalism was but another version of medieval conceptualism and essentialism, which falsely promised a kind of mental picture of reality; empiricism was ultimately but another version of the medieval *via moderna* tending toward nominalism. Kant's cancellation of rationalism and empiricism sought to limit human

<sup>41</sup>*Insight*, 261.

<sup>42</sup>For a parallel challenge in the field of historiography, see Thomas J. McPartland, *Lonergan and Historiography: The Epistemological Philosophy of History* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010), chap. 2.

knowledge to the phenomenal world through the imposition of a priori categories. The idealist attempt to ground a metaphysics in the dynamism of the categories led to the revolt against idealism, ushering in the twentieth century with its ever lesser viewpoints of positivism versus existentialism and later postmodernism. Amid all the complicated movements and counter movements Lonergan sees one dominant epistemological assumption shape all the debates, namely, knowing in order to be knowing of reality has to be something at least analogous to seeing.<sup>43</sup> So Lonergan, too, would reject the epistemological turn.

But in its place he would resort to an extensive and comprehensive phenomenology of the cognitive and moral operations that would provide the data for a cognitional theory, which would, in turn, be the basis for a precise explanatory account of the cognitive operations, each related to each other as part of the emergent self-transcending structure of inquiry with its unfolding levels of experiencing, understanding, and judging. Lonergan expands his enterprise in post-*Insight* writings to include a phenomenological account of moral inquiry, where questions go beyond those of fact to those of value and decision. A brief summary of his expanded cognitional and moral theory of operations, such as he provides in the opening chapter of *Method in Theology*, may seem clear and even commonplace. But that can be deceptive. The entire effort is, in his words, one of "self-appropriation," and several hundred pages of *Insight* are intended as exercises in such self-appropriation.<sup>44</sup> Lonergan not only details the operations of cognitive and moral inquiry and their structural relationship; he also locates the imperative driving the process. Fidelity to the immanent, self-transcending norms of inquiry would be the road to objectivity. Reality is not something "out there" extrinsic to the process of inquiry to somehow be "seen" (for example, by empiricist sensations or by conceptualist mental perceptions). Reality is a heuristic notion: we are "related" to reality by the directional tendency of our questioning. We know reality by fidelity to the norms of inquiry, issuing in judgments. Our knowing is an ongoing process. It is a process both personal and normative, fallibilistic and objective. Since what we know is through the process of inquiry what we know is isomorphic to the structure of inquiry. We have here a legitimate and critical link between

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<sup>43</sup>*Insight*, 22-23, 413-14; *Method in Theology*, 238-39; see Michael McCarthy, *The Crisis of Philosophy*, SUNY Series in Philosophy (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989).

<sup>44</sup>*Insight*, 11, 13.

epistemology and metaphysics. Lonergan has a nuanced version of virtue epistemology. Lonergan can show that any attempt to deny the constitutive role of the cognitive operations would be to use them, thus issuing in a performative contradiction (performing, for example, the operations of experiencing, understanding, and judging to deny the constitutive role of any of the operations). This epistemology would ground a metaphysics of critical realism (with the parallels to that of Smith mentioned above). Thus Lonergan in his phenomenology of consciousness and cognitional theory, as he conceives of it, provides a non-foundationalist foundation for an alternative epistemology, which, in turn, can provide a methodical basis for handling issues in metaphysics.

Some of the most sensitive contemporary philosophers have gravitated, hesitatingly, towards metaphysics. Jürgen Habermas, following some analytic philosophers, has had to come to the startling conclusion that there must be a reality that we are seeking to know. He infers – by way of “realist intuitions” – that there is a reality transcending us, that we know something of this reality by encountering it as cognitive agents, and that our linguistic assertions refer to language-independent objects. But he is still under the spell of Kant. We must reject “representational realism” and the correspondence theory of truth, substituting for it a version of the coherence theory of truth rooted in a Kantian pragmatism with the epistemic priority of the “linguistically articulated horizon of the lifeworld.”<sup>45</sup> At this point, so it is evident, the problem of bridging the gap between subject and object (“out there to be seen”) has made its ugly appearance. Charles Taylor seems to be under the sway of Heidegger in fearing that scientific inquiry leads to methodological control. He would replace it with our Best Account, our reasoned attempt to explicate those experiences that truly give meaning and value to our lives and hence point to some reality. But we cannot have recourse to metaphysics; we cannot completely reverse the change in worldview that came with the Cartesian “disengaged subject” confronting the world as an object through representations of the mind and with the now post-Cartesian “engaged subject” unable to disengage from its historically embedded horizon.<sup>46</sup> Indeed Taylor’s hermeneutical explication seems to approximate in many ways Lonergan’s notion of the norms of

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<sup>45</sup>Jürgen Habermas, *Truth and Justification*, trans. Barbara Fultner (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2007), 10, 30.

<sup>46</sup>Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pt. 1.

self-transcending inquiry.<sup>47</sup> Taylor nonetheless seems hesitant to pursue the further cognitional, epistemological, and metaphysical questions that might flow from his hermeneutical explication, for to enter the metaphysical terrain would be to encounter the gap between subject and object, for which there is no bridge.<sup>48</sup>

The argument here is that Lonergan leads us to a metaphysics that has critical grounds. We have already seen above how Lonergan's epistemology supports Smith's reversal of counterpositions and argues for a normative sociology that can engage ethical matters about the social good and human dignity as it discerns the difference between progress and decline. And we have seen how Lonergan's metaphysics can support the notion of emergence and stratified reality. Let us address here how Lonergan can handle in a methodical way two strategically important metaphysical issues, the nature of the person and the nature of society.

How can we meaningfully talk about the person, the person as agent, and the person as subject of human rights and dignity if we have no metaphysical view of the self? Lonergan would investigate the self metaphysically in terms of his notions of "central" potency, form, and act as they apply to a unity-identify-whole grasped in data as individual and as acting in particular spaces and times.<sup>49</sup> This "thing" is a person-thing because it has "conjugate" potency, form, and acts, and the conjugate form (the intelligibility) is that of a person-thing, which is precisely the explanatory relations and unity of organic, psychic, and intellectual levels of integration.<sup>50</sup> There is an operator immanent in the person-thing that propels development and makes for the emergence of higher integrations.<sup>51</sup> These metaphysical explanations of the

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<sup>47</sup>See Brian J. Braman, *Meaning and Authenticity: Bernard Lonergan and Charles Taylor on the Drama of Authentic Existence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

<sup>48</sup>For analysis of sources and both comparison and contrast with Lonergan, see Nicholas Plants, "Lonergan and Taylor: A Critical Integration," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 19, no. 1 (2001): 143-72. Taylor, according to Plants, accepts the representation model as the standard for a realist epistemology.

<sup>49</sup>*Insight*, 456-63. The "central" in central potency, form, and act is the unity of a single thing or existent. Potency, form, and act are metaphysical correlations, respectively, to the cognitional levels of experiencing, understanding, and judging. Since we know the real through the structure of knowing (on Lonergan's critical realist account), there will be aspects of the real proportionate to the structure of knowing.

<sup>50</sup>*Insight*, 271, 275-79, 538-44.

<sup>51</sup>*Insight*, 490-92, 494-504. The operator of the cognitive development is the pure desire to know (*Insight*, 555). Development is in accord with the metaphysic principle of "finality," which is the immanent intelligibility of emerging world process (*Insight*, 470-76). For Lonergan's debt

person are grounded in, and isomorphic with, the unity of consciousness as given and the experience of the dynamism of self-transcending inquiry. Lonergan, then, has precise metaphysical correlates to the dynamic structure of inquiry – explicated in cognitional theory and verified in the data of consciousness. We see here Lonergan's bold claim that his critical realist metaphysics is verifiable.<sup>52</sup>

Lonergan's metaphysics, too, sheds light on the ontological status of society. It is not a big thing in which little things (persons) function as cogs in a machine. Nor is it completely artificial. It is neither a thing nor an artifact. It is a reality that is the product of, and endures precisely as self-mediation.<sup>53</sup> As we have seen, cooperations and skills of members of society create a network of relations that function as schemes of recurrence: they mediate social order. The social order through the common experience, common interpretation, common judgments, and common decisions constitute the community that sustains society as an objective order and in that capacity is a framework of mutual self-mediation as it shapes individuals through socialization, acculturation, and education. The common good is neither

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to Bergson on the notion of finality, see William A. Matthews, *Lonergan's Quest: A Study of Desire in the Authoring of Insight* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 377. Lonergan, as does Bergson, rejects the "antecedent determinism" of reductionism as well as the "future determinism" of Aristotle's teleology of an eternal heaven; finality is an open but directed dynamism, where the direction is toward more complex being, given long periods of time. For Lonergan, the parallel in Aristotle is not in his *telos* but in his *physis* (Matthews, *Lonergan's Quest*, 476). *Physis* (nature) is an internal principle of change and rest, and for the human spirit the principle is the activity of raising and answering questions. But there is more: "And is not that deeper and more comprehensive principle itself a nature, at once a principle of movement and of rest, a tidal movement that begins before consciousness, unfolds through sensitivity, intelligence, rational reflection, responsible deliberation, only to find its rest beyond all of these?" The point beyond is being-in-love (Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe [New York: Paulist Press, 1985], 174-75). For a nuanced treatment linking Lonergan's notion of development to Kant's notion of the person, see Patrick H. Byrne, "Foundations of the 'Ethics of Embryonic Stem Cell Research,'" in *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, vol. 20, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2008), 17-69. Byrne, using Lonergan's metaphysics, argues, cautiously, that the human "thing" throughout the process of development is, in fact, a person.

<sup>52</sup>*Insight*, 5.

<sup>53</sup>Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, vol. 17 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), chap. 8; *A Third Collection*, 30; Andrew Beards, *Method in Metaphysics: Lonergan and the Future of Analytic Philosophy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 320-26.

reducible to the sum of individual goods nor does it subsume the goods of persons in a super metaphysical essence.<sup>54</sup>

Our brief foray into Lonergan's metaphysics illustrates its methodological grounding in his epistemology, which allows for verification of metaphysical claims in the data of consciousness, that is, in the conscious performance in the process of inquiry with its immanent norms.<sup>55</sup> The strength of Smith's critical realism is that it is a clear alternative to the weaknesses of its main opponents, empiricism and reductionism, on the one hand, and various forms of hermeneutical idealism, on the other. Reality is greater than the object-world of sense experience; and we can know it through acts of linguistic interpretation since language does have reference outside itself. Critical realism can be seen as the mean between the extremes of passive sensation and active hermeneutical reality construction. In this sense critical realism would be a half-way house between empiricism and idealism. Lonergan would have us reconfigure the relationship with his alternative, virtue epistemology. We indeed need to explain (interpret) the data and formulate our ideas. But the exigency of the desire to know raises a further question about each of our formulations and claims, Is it so? We seek insights into what constitutes sufficient evidence to support our claims and marshal and weigh the evidence to make a rational judgment. The self-transcending process of inquiry moves us from experiencing, to understanding, and then to judging. Empiricism focuses on experiencing; idealism focuses on understanding; critical realism focuses on the entire, compound process of experiencing, understanding, and judging as underpinned by the desire to know. Lonergan's critical realist epistemology, in turn, grounds his critical realist metaphysics. Idealism is the half-way house between empiricism and critical realism.<sup>56</sup> Thus the Lonergan enterprise can provide methodological precision to justify the main metaphysical claims of Smith in his extraordinary book about the person. Lonergan offers a distinct method of linking critical realism to phenomenology and to personalism.

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<sup>54</sup>Relevant here is Lonergan's metaphysical distinction between central and conjugate forms (which are intelligibilities that reside only in things, defined by central forms, in their relations to other things) and his "inadequate" real distinction among potency, form, and act (which means that form, or essence, is distinct from act, or existence, but not as one thing from another thing) (*Insight*, 460-63, 513-14).

<sup>55</sup>These norms Lonergan formulates as the transcendental precepts, be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, and be responsible (*Method in Theology*, 20).

<sup>56</sup>*Insight*, 22.