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# METHOD

## *Journal of Lonergan Studies*

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## THE NOTION OF SACRIFICE

### Translator's Introduction

*Michael Shields, S.J.*

*Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto*

IN 1972, BERNARD Lonergan handed over to Frederick Crowe, who was beginning to set up a Lonergan Centre at Regis College, a considerable collection of materials from the research and teaching he had done in earlier years. Included in this collection was a folder, now in the Lonergan Archives in Toronto, labeled simply *Eucharistia*, containing among other things a 16-page typewritten Latin monograph titled "De Notione Sacrificii," published here in translation.

In the same folder there are approximately forty pages of notes, almost all in Latin, on various aspects of the Mass as "a true and proper sacrifice." Included in those pages is a document of seven pages, "Sacrificium apud S. Augustinum," consisting of passages from the works of Augustine painstakingly transcribed by Lonergan. Next to it are five typewritten pages in English with the heading "The Idea of Sacrifice" on four of them, which seem to be repeated attempts at an essay on method with particular reference to the notion of sacrifice. We include them here as an example of Lonergan's abiding interest in theological method.

The contents of this folder clearly served as materials for teaching on the Eucharist. Lonergan taught such a course only once, at the Collège de l'Immaculée-Conception in Montreal in 1943-1944, and the following year gave a seminar there on "Selected Questions on the Eucharist" as well as a series of lectures on the theology of the Eucharist at the Thomas More Institute. It is highly probable, then, that all or most of the contents of this folder belong to those years.

The 16-page document is an autograph typescript, typed and annotated by hand in the margin by Lonergan himself to give to a typist

for mimeographing for the students. This translation has been made from the autograph, with one eye on the 1973 Regis College edition of "De Notione Sacrificii" edited by Frederick Crowe. That edition corrected a few minor errors in the autograph, and also introduced paragraph numbers in the margin to enable more precise references to be made to the text. Lonergan sprinkled his text with DB, references to the older Denzinger-Bannwart editions of the *Enchiridion Symbolorum Definitionum et Declarationum*, to which we have added the corresponding numbers in the more recent Denzinger-Schönmetzer editions.

The last section of this little treatise is titled, "The Value of This Inquiry." For students of Lonergan today, however, it has a value beyond that which he directly intended, namely, that we can watch the workings of that great mind more than a decade before the appearance of *Insight*. As Crowe remarked in his "General Introduction" to the 1973 edition of this *opusculum* and three others, "the apparent suddenness with which a book like *Insight* appeared make[s] it the more imperative to learn his starting-point and trace the genesis of his ideas from their remote beginnings, if we are to understand with all possible thoroughness the point of his arrival."

This treatise, along with several others, is scheduled to appear in translation in *Early Latin Theology*, volume 16 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan. But its publication there will be some years in the future, and so it is presented here to be available in the meantime for those who wish to explore the thought of the early Lonergan on the Eucharist as sacrifice.

## THE NOTION OF SACRIFICE<sup>1</sup>

*Bernard Lonergan, S.J.*

### THE DEFINITION OF SACRIFICE

1. Sacrifice is defined as: A PROPER SYMBOL OF A SACRIFICIAL ATTITUDE.  
Attitude: habits and acts of both intellect and will.  
Sacrificial: that which is latreutic, propitiatory, eucharistic, and impetratory. It is
  - latreutic: as worship which strictly speaking is owed to God alone as Creator, First Agent, Supreme Good, Ultimate End,
  - propitiatory: as owed to God because of sins,
  - eucharistic: as thanksgiving owed to God for benefits received from him,
  - impetratory: as a petition addressed to God for benefits to be received.
2. Note: 'Sacrificial attitude' designates the proper stance of one's mind and heart towards God (1) as God (hence it is latreutic), (2) as offended by sin (hence it is propitiatory), as the source of all good gifts both past and future (and hence it is eucharistic and impetratory). As such, 'sacrificial attitude' denotes a compendious synthesis of the virtue of religion which regulates the relationship of one's mind and heart towards God.
3. Symbol: an objective manifestation that is perceptible and is social in itself.
  - manifestation: that which moves from what is unknown, obscure, and vague to what is known, clear, and distinct.

<sup>1</sup>This translation was done by Michael Shields, S.J., at the Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto, August 1989, and subsequently revised.

- objective: that which is had through the manifestation itself. Its opposite is relative manifestation, which is frustrated if it does not increase knowledge in someone else.
  - perceptible: that which can be apprehended by the external senses.
  - social: that which pertains to a community in some respect.
  - in itself: we say that it is 'social in itself' because at a more primitive stage of human social development it could perhaps have been an individual symbol — the sacrifices of the patriarchs, for example.
4. Note: Symbols have a twofold foundation in human nature. One is their foundation in man's sentient and corporeal nature; hence the need to express outwardly in a perceptible and bodily way what one thinks and feels interiorly. The other is their foundation in man's social nature; hence the need that individuals have of gathering together to communicate to their community or group what they are thinking and feeling interiorly.
5. Proper: that which has the degree of perfection that it ought to have.  
Note: All agree that not any and every symbol of a sacrificial attitude is a true and proper sacrifice. But it is hotly debated just what degree of perfection is required and sufficient to constitute a true and proper sacrifice. We avoid this question methodologically by asserting that a certain indeterminate degree of perfection is required for a symbol of a sacrificial attitude to be a true sacrifice.

#### JUSTIFICATION OF THIS DEFINITION

6. A definition which preserves elements that are certain and covers in an indeterminate way elements that are in doubt is methodologically justified.
- But the definition we have given preserves what is certain and indeterminately covers what is in doubt.
- Therefore the above definition is methodologically justifiable.
- The major premise seems quite clear.
- The minor premise is proven as follows, part by part.

7. a) The definition given above preserves the certain elements of sacrifice, for it asserts that a sacrifice is a symbol of a sacrificial attitude. This assertion is undoubtedly correct: it was stated by Augustine and Aquinas and has entered into virtually all the treatises of theologians since.

Augustine: "A sacrifice ... is a visible sacrament, that is, a sacred sign, of an invisible sacrifice" (*De Civitate Dei* 10, v.).

Aquinas confirms this: "... a sacrifice is offered for the purpose of signifying something; the sacrifice that is offered outwardly is a sign of that inward spiritual sacrifice in which the soul offers herself to God" (*Summa Theologiae*, 2-2, q. 85, a. 2 c.).

See also *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 10, 1, col. 1279-1280.<sup>2</sup>

8. b) Our definition also covers doubtful elements in an indeterminate way.

The whole long-standing dispute about the essence of sacrifice properly so called comes down to this: What is required and is sufficient for a sacrificial attitude to be symbolized properly?

But this definition deals with this doubtful matter by stating that a sacrifice is a proper symbol of a sacrificial attitude; therefore this definition covers doubtful elements indeterminately.

#### THE PROPRIETY OF SYMBOLS

9. We have placed symbol in the category of objective manifestation. Now, an objective manifestation is made in order to reproduce or express a higher perfection in a lower order of being. Just as God manifests his infinite perfection in the finite order by creating, so humans represent spiritual perfection in the social order of sense perception by symbolizing. As the eminent sociologist Sorokin has remarked, when a culture is religious, its poetry, graphic arts, and so forth, are full of symbols.

A proper symbol, therefore, is a proper objective manifestation.

But a superior perfection is reproduced in a lower order only if there

<sup>2</sup>A. Michel, "Messe," in "La Messe chez les théologiens postérieurs au Concile de Trente" (Paris: Letouzey, 1928) cols. 795-1403.

exists an analogical proportion between what manifests in the lower order and the higher perfection that is manifested. Contrariwise, if instead of an analogical proportion there is only an equivocal similarity, that objective manifestation is improper.

10. We are now in a position to define a proper symbol.

A proper symbol is one which, not by way of an equivocal similarity but by a certain analogical proportion, represents a spiritual perfection in the lower order of sense perception.

Nevertheless, this definition, though it clarifies the concepts and puts them in order, is not so helpful in recognizing and measuring the propriety of a symbol. Accordingly, besides this abstract definition we add three more specific sources from which the propriety of a symbol can be derived.

11. (a) The propriety of a symbol derives above all from the natural aptitude of objects or actions to signify or represent something. For example, the ritual slaughter of an animal, the pouring of its blood on a particular spot and the burning of its body in the presence of the people naturally and in a way automatically represent symbolically a sacrificial attitude. For apart from all human convention or legitimate institution, what other purpose could such actions have if not to be a symbol of a religious attitude?

Let us say, then, that the propriety of a symbol will be in proportion to its natural aptitude for signifying.

12. (b) There is also another source of propriety in symbols. Whatever propriety a symbol may have from its natural aptitude, the signifying of a determinate spiritual perfection surely remains unclear and uncertain. A holocaust, for example, can be offered to worship either the true God or demons, and offered either "in spirit and in truth" or out of superstition. Just exactly what is being represented cannot be determined solely from its natural aptitude.

There is, therefore, a second source of propriety in symbols, namely convention, law, or institution. The more certain, clear, and distinct a symbol is in its signifying, the more proper it is; and this sort of certainty, clarity, and distinctness results from the legislation

of legitimate authority more than from some spontaneous agreement, and also from divine more than from human institution.

Moreover, just as form is more perfect than matter, so convention, law, and institution invest a symbol with greater propriety than does the natural aptitude of objects or actions.

13. (c) There is a third source of propriety in symbols, namely, the real connection between the symbol that manifests and the spiritual perfection to be manifested.

This real connection can be a moral connection, as in the bloody sacrifices of the Old Law in which an animal was morally estimated to be a substitute for a human being and was offered to God in place of that person.

But this real connection can also be physical, as in the case of the supreme sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ who in his own body expressed his sacrificial attitude upon the altar of the cross.

A real connection between the symbol and the symbolized, therefore, increases the propriety of the symbol.

#### FIRST APPLICATION OF THE DEFINITION

14. This definition is to be applied above all to that sacrifice that is absolutely perfect in every way, namely, the sacrifice of the cross.

In this sacrifice a sacrificial attitude is to be represented in the most perfect way.

In it this utterly unparalleled and most perfect sacrificial attitude is represented with the utmost propriety.

For the loss of a most precious life by a violent and bloody death has the greatest natural aptitude for signifying a sacrificial attitude.

Furthermore, the certainty, clarity, and distinctness of this signification is at its maximum when the Law and the prophets and the greatest of the lawgivers and prophets, the Lord Jesus, declare by divine authority what this natural symbol signifies.

Finally, the closest connection between the spiritual and the sensible order is that which exists between the soul and the body of one and the same person.

In the light of all these factors taken together, it must surely be said that it is not by an equivocal similarity but by an analogical proportion that the sacrifice of the cross represents or symbolizes Christ's sacrificial attitude.

In his death, therefore, the sacrifice of the cross is a proper symbol of Christ's sacrificial attitude.

#### A SECOND APPLICATION OF THE DEFINITION

15. Next, this definition is to be applied to the eucharistic sacrifice as a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of the Mystical Body of Christ.

(a) First, then, the eucharistic sacrifice is a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of Christ himself, the Head of the Mystical Body; for the eucharistic sacrifice is a proper symbol of the sacrifice of the cross.

But the sacrifice of the cross is a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of Christ the Head.

Mediately, therefore, but in a true sense, the eucharistic sacrifice is a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of Christ the Head.

The conclusion follows logically. Symbolization, or representation, or manifestation, is a transitive relation. If A is greater than B and B is greater than C, then A is greater than C. Similarly, that which represents a representation represents that which was first represented.<sup>3</sup> And that which properly represents a proper representation properly represents that which was first represented.

16. Again, the eucharistic sacrifice properly represents the sacrifice of the cross.

The fact of this representation is stated by the Council of Trent: "... by which the bloody [sacrifice] accomplished once for all on the cross might be represented" (DB 938, DS 1740). This was asserted by Augustine and Aquinas and echoed by subsequent theologians.

<sup>3</sup>The idea of transitive relation, applied here to the field of representation, may be illustrated also by the phrase, *causa causae est causa causati*, "the cause of a cause as such is a cause of that which is caused." For a brief treatment of transitive relation, see *De Deo Trino*, vol. 2 (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964) 315. (Tr.)

Next, the propriety of this representation we find to be that which is related by an analogical proportion to the sacrificial attitude of Christ as Head of the Mystical Body; for a mystical symbol consisting of external objects and words but with an underlying reality besides, is proportionate to the Mystical Body.

17. The natural aptitude these objects have is not for representing the sacrifice of the cross but rather for participating in this sacrifice by way of a sacrificial meal.

The meaning of the words, however, clearly and distinctly refers to the sacrifice of the cross. The bread is declared to be that body which was given up, and the wine is declared to be the blood of the new covenant shed for the remission of sins.

Hence these objects also in their distinctness from each other come to signify the sacrifice of the cross; for inasmuch as the bread stands for the body and the wine separately stands for the blood, the real separation of Christ's body and blood on the altar of the cross is signified. Hence also the words of Paul, "Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you will be proclaiming the death of the Lord until he comes" (1 Cor 11:26).

In addition to this representation in objects and words there is the institution by Christ himself. "Do this," he says, "in memory of me." In memory, in fact, of his sacrificial death, as he himself makes clear by his words, "the body given up for you" and "the blood of the new covenant shed for the remission of sins." Therefore by reason of its institution by Christ, and thus by divine sanction, the Eucharist is a proper symbol of the sacrifice of the cross.

18. Finally, because of the real connection and even a certain identity between them, the Eucharist is a proper symbol of the sacrifice of the cross. The victim is the same, since there is the same body and the same blood. Moreover, the principal priest is the same, for the force the words of consecration is the power of Christ, the minister *par excellence*. Just as when Peter or even Judas baptizes, it is really and truly Christ who baptizes, all the more is it true that when any priest consecrates it is Christ who consecrates. So complete is the identity between the sacrifice of the cross and the Eucharist that, as Trent

declares, only the manner of offering is different (DB 940, DS 1743). This difference certainly does not do away with the propriety of the symbol; for since the sacrifice of the cross is not simply the same as the eucharistic sacrifice, there has to be some difference between them.

19. Our conclusion therefore is that the Eucharist, by reason of the signification of its objects and words, its institution by Christ himself, and the marvelous identity between priest and victim, is a proper symbol of the sacrifice of the cross.

But we have shown above that the sacrifice of the cross is a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of Christ as Head, and moreover have shown that symbolization is a transitive relation. We must conclude, therefore, that the Eucharist is a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of Christ as Head of the Mystical Body.

20. (b) Next, the eucharistic sacrifice is not only a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of Christ the Head but is also a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of the members of the Mystical Body, that is, of the church. This second point we must now demonstrate.

The sacrificial attitude of the church can be considered in two ways, namely, in its origin and in its term.

Considered in its origin, the sacrificial attitude of the church is understood as proceeding from its source, that is, as flowing from Christ its Head through the sacrifice of the cross continued and extended by the eucharistic sacrifice.

Considered in its term, the sacrificial attitude of the church is understood as actually existing in the members of the church, that is, not insofar as it flows from its source to the members but insofar as it has already been received by the members.

21. Accordingly, whether considered in its origin or its term, the sacrificial attitude of the church must be said to be properly symbolized in the eucharistic sacrifice, but in different ways.

Considered in its origin, the sacrificial attitude of the church is properly and essentially symbolized in the eucharistic sacrifice;

whereas considered in its term it is symbolized properly but accidentally in the eucharistic sacrifice.

There are three points, therefore, to be dealt with here. First we must demonstrate that the sacrificial attitude of the church considered in its origin is properly symbolized in the eucharistic sacrifice by reason of analogical proportion. Second, the same must be demonstrated by reason of its outward appearances, its institution, and its real connection. Third, we shall have to show that considered in its term, the sacrificial attitude of the church is properly but accidentally symbolized in the eucharistic sacrifice.

22. (c) First, then: by reason of analogical proportion, the sacrificial attitude of the church, considered in its origin, is properly symbolized in the eucharistic sacrifice. We proceed as follows:

An originating symbol of the sacrificial attitude of the church is a proper symbol of that attitude.

But the eucharistic sacrifice is an originating symbol of the sacrificial attitude of the church.

Therefore the eucharistic sacrifice is a proper symbol of that attitude.

23. The major premise of this syllogism can be said to be self-evident, for it asserts that an originating symbol of any attitude considered in its origin is a proper symbol of that attitude considered in its origin.

However, the major premise can be shown more generally to include also the sacrificial attitude of the church considered in its term.

For a proper symbol is one that is analogically proportionate to the perfection to be symbolized (this being the definition of a proper symbol).

But an originating symbol of a perfection is analogically proportionate to the perfection that originates from it, for in every causal principle there is at least an analogical proportion to that which originates from it.

Therefore an originating symbol is also a proper symbol.

24. The minor premise remains to be proven: namely, that the eucharistic sacrifice is an originating symbol of the sacrificial attitude of the church (considered in its origin, of course).

That it is a symbol of the sacrificial attitude of the church seems self-evident, for any symbol of the sacrificial attitude of Christ is by that very fact a symbol of every true sacrificial attitude insofar as it is a sacrificial attitude.

It remains, then, for us to demonstrate that this symbol is a proper one. This we do in three ways: first, by reason of its being a memorial of the sacrifice of the cross; second, by reason of the application of this sacrifice; third, by reason of the participation in this sacrifice procured in the sacrificial meal.

25. i) By reason of its being a memorial:

That which reminds the members of the church of the sacrifice of the cross is an originating symbol of a sacrificial attitude in those members.

But the eucharistic sacrifice reminds the members of the church of the sacrifice of the cross.

Therefore by reason of its being a memorial the eucharistic sacrifice is an originating symbol of the sacrificial attitude of the church.

As to the major premise: this external commemoration arouses a sacrificial attitude; examples draw one, most of all that example of which Christ himself said, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all to myself" (Jn 12:32). As for the minor premise, recall Lk 22:19, "Do this in memory of me." See also DB 938, DS 1740.

26. ii) By reason of the application of the sacrifice of the cross.

Note: Be careful not to confuse the operation of the sacrifice with the operation of the sacrament. A sacrament effects what it signifies, but it would not be true to say that since a sacrifice signifies a sacrificial attitude it therefore effects such an attitude. The efficacy of the sacrifice is quite different: it operates at a deeper level, and is the source from which flow the power of the sacraments as well as both the willingness to receive them and the dispositions required for their fruitful reception.

We proceed now to our proof:

That which applies the sacrifice of the cross is an originating principle of the sacrificial attitude of the members of the church.

But the eucharistic sacrifice applies the sacrifice of the cross.

Therefore the eucharistic sacrifice is an originating principle of the sacrificial attitude of those members.

As to the major premise: that which applies the sacrifice of the cross is by its very nature suited to obtain from God, appeased by that sacrifice, the gift of holiness for the members of the church, including that basic holiness which consists in the right attitude towards God and hence a sacrificial attitude.

The minor premise is the solemn teaching of the Council of Trent (DB 938, DS 1740) as well as of theologians — for example, Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 3, q. 83, a. 1.

27. iii) By reason of the participation in the sacrifice of the cross procured through the eucharistic sacrifice:

That which procures a participation in the sacrifice of the cross procures an assimilation of the attitude of the members of the church to the sacrificial attitude of Christ.

But the eucharistic sacrifice procures a participation in the sacrifice of the cross.

Therefore it procures an assimilation of the attitude of the members to the sacrificial attitude of Christ and so is an originating principle of the sacrificial attitude of the church.

As to the major premise: participating in the sacrifice of the cross by spiritual communion and especially by sacramental communion effects an intimate union between the Head and the members. The attitudes of the members are assimilated to those of the Head, including above all Christ's sacrificial attitude.

As to the minor premise: the eucharistic sacrifice procures a participation in the sacrifice of the cross, for they are one and the same sacrifice with only the manner of offering being different (DB 940, DS 1743); moreover, in this sacrifice the members ought to communicate at least spiritually (DB 944, DS 1747).

28. (d) Next, just as we have shown that by reason of the analogical proportion between a principle and that which originates from it the

eucharistic sacrifice is a proper symbol of the members' sacrificial attitude considered in its origin, so now we must go on to demonstrate the same by reason of the outward appearances of that sacrifice, by reason of its institution, and by reason of its real connection.

29. i) By reason of the outward appearances, the church enters both into that which is offered and into the very offering of the eucharistic sacrifice.

It enters into that which is offered; for the water is mixed with the wine in order to represent the union of the church with its Head in this sacrifice (DB 945, DS 1748).

It enters also into the offering itself; for the eucharistic sacrifice is effected through the ministry of priests (DB 940, DS 1743) who are public ministers of the Church (DB 944, DS 1747), and so the church itself offers Christ (DB 938, DS 1740).

30. ii) By reason of its institution.

The church is that holy and spotless bride (Eph 5:27) who, however, recognizes no other proper symbol of her sacrificial attitude than the eucharistic sacrifice. This law and institution, since it is of divine right, demonstrates clearly and distinctly that the eucharistic sacrifice is a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of the Church.

31. iii) By reason of its real connection.

The principle of the sacrificial attitude of the church is the same as that of the union of its members with Christ and with one another.

This principle is Christ under the appearance of bread and of wine.

We have already shown that this is the principle of the sacrificial attitude of the church. That it is the principle of the unity of the Mystical Body is demonstrated elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Maurice de la Taille, *Mysterium Fidei. De augustissimo Corporis et Sanguinis Christi sacrificio atque sacramento elucubrationes L* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1931, 3rd edition) Eluc. 36-38 = pp. 474-498.

In this Body, therefore, whence the church herself is a body, is to be found the source and principle of the sacrificial attitude of the Church.

Hence in the eucharistic sacrifice there is a dynamic unity between the symbol and the symbolized, just as on the cross there was a physical unity and in the Old Law a moral unity.

32. Someone might object here that the above reasons apply equally to the sacrificial attitude of the members considered in its term as well as to this same attitude considered in its origin.

No, we reply, not equally. All the elements mentioned above enter into the very essence of the eucharistic sacrifice. On the contrary, it is clear that the actual sacrificial attitude of the members considered in its term (such as the attitude of the saints commemorated in the liturgy, the attitude of the celebrant, the stipend of the donor or of the congregation, and so on) enter only accidentally into this sacrifice.

33. (e) So far we have been considering the sacrificial attitude of the members as existing in its causes: first, in the mind and heart of Christ, next, in the sacrifice of the cross, and thirdly in the eucharistic sacrifice.

Now we must turn our attention to the sacrificial attitude of the church as it is in its effect, that is, as it exists in its term, in the minds and hearts of Christians.

34. Now this attitude considered in its term can be further looked at under two aspects: first, as originating from its source, that is, as entirely flowing from Christ's sacrificial attitude; but it can also be looked at as an attitude in this or that subject, in Peter or John or anyone else.

Accordingly, the sacrificial attitude of the members considered in its term, yet as entirely derived from Christ's attitude, is properly symbolized by a proper symbol of Christ's attitude.

On the other hand, the sacrificial attitude of the members as found in such and such a person is properly expressed by some action that manifests the attitude of that person.

35. Under both aspects the sacrificial attitude of the members has its proper symbol in the eucharistic service, that is, in obtaining and preparing and carrying out all that is needed for the worthy and proper celebration of this mystery, both externally and interiorly.

For just as this attitude as actually existing in the members is derived in its totality from Christ's attitude, there can be no other proper symbol for it than the proper symbol of Christ's attitude.

Insofar, then, as the members come together as ministers to produce this symbol, they manifest their own attitude and manifest it in its proper proximate principle — each person, however, according to his or her degree in the hierarchically organized Mystical Body.

36. Nevertheless, it is not essential but accidental for the eucharistic sacrifice to represent the sacrificial attitude of the members considered in its term.

For what is represented is always the same sacrificial attitude of the Head.

As to the manner in which this is represented, however, the actual sacrificial attitude of the members adds no essential element, nor does any lack of holiness take away any essential element: "... that clean oblation, which no unworthiness or sinfulness on the part of those who offer it can defile" (DB 939, DS 1742).

37. (f) Let us recapitulate the above conclusions.

The eucharistic sacrifice is a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of Christ as Head, first, as that attitude is represented in the sacrifice of the cross, second, as flowing to the members of the church through multiplication of the eucharistic sacrifice, and third, as now multiplied in the members themselves through their active participation.

The eucharistic sacrifice is therefore a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of the Mystical Body of Christ, of its Head as well as of its members. Essentially it is a symbol of that attitude which is in the Head and flows from the Head to the members; accidentally it is a symbol of this same attitude as actually received in the members.

## THE CAUSES OF SACRIFICE

38. So far we have been dealing only with the essence of sacrifice, namely, what makes a sacrifice a sacrifice. Now we broaden our consideration to determine its various causes.

39. (a) Exemplary cause.

The exemplary cause of a sacrifice is that which is represented, namely, the invisible sacrifice by which the soul offers herself to God, that is, her sacrificial attitude.

As to how this total submission of the soul to God is the very core of holiness and righteousness, see Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1, q. 95, a. 1; 1-2, q. 113, a. 1; and so forth.

This interior offering and immolation of the soul is generally referred to as a 'sacrifice improperly speaking' because it is not a symbol; it might perhaps be more appropriate to call it an 'invisible sacrifice,' 'exemplary sacrifice,' or 'sacrifice in an eminent sense,' since it is that from which a sacrifice originates and toward which it is directed.

40. (b) Final cause.

All agree that sacrifices take place to honor and worship God; but we must now try to understand how this is so.

All things exist for God as their final cause, and in three ways: absolutely, inasmuch as God is the ultimate end (*finis-qui*) of the created universe; horizontally, inasmuch as all beings tend by their very nature to constitute something that is a certain participation in the divine perfection; and vertically, inasmuch as concretely in the hierarchy of the universe, lower beings are ordered to the higher ones in such a way that the whole exists to attain God.

Now a sacrifice can be considered in two ways: first, materially, as consisting of a certain thing and action, and in this sense it exists for God according to the three ways mentioned above like any other thing or action; second, formally, as a proper symbol of a sacrificial attitude, and in this sense a sacrifice is an objective symbolic recognition and approval of this threefold finality of all things towards God.

Hence the finality of a formal sacrifice is to be a compendious symbol of the finality of the universe towards God.

41. (c) Efficient cause.

The efficient cause of a sacrifice is that cause which makes it to be a proper symbol of a sacrificial attitude.

Not every efficient cause of a sacrifice is also an offerer of that sacrifice: God as first agent effects all sacrifices but does not offer sacrifices to himself.

Those who offer a sacrifice are of two kinds: principal and ministerial.

The principal offerer is a cause per se, efficient, proximate, and proportionate to its own power. Hence the Jews in putting Christ to death did not offer the sacrifice of the cross, for they were not its cause per se since they had no intention to offer sacrifice.

The ministerial offerer is a cause per se, efficient, and proximate, but proportionate to the power of another.

There are two kinds of ministerial causes, one who ministers in his own name, and it is in this way that the church as the Mystical Body ministers and offers; and one who ministers in the name of another, and in this way the celebrant ministers in the name of the church.

42. (d) The cause of the worthiness of a sacrifice.

Broadly speaking, everything that contributes to the worthiness of a sacrifice is such a cause: the one who offers, that which is offered, the intention, the circumstances.

Strictly speaking, the worthiness of a sacrifice results from the worthiness of those who offer it, the principal offerer or even the ministerial offerer acting in his own name.

It is for this reason that the eucharistic sacrifice is incapable of defilement: not from the principal offerer, Christ who is without sin, nor from the ministry of the church, that holy and spotless bride referred to in Eph 5:27. The ministry of the celebrants and others is carried out in the name of another and affects the sacrifice itself only accidentally by way of an extrinsic complement.

43. (e) The cause of the acceptance of a sacrifice.

Sacrifice is offered to worship, propitiate, thank, and petition God. But its acceptance rests upon God's good pleasure.

This, however, is not to be understood as if God capriciously accepts one sacrifice and rejects another. The meaning is rather that as God provides for sacrifices to be offered, so also does he see to it that what is offered is acceptable to him, and these offerings are accepted in accordance with his wisdom and providence.

44. (f) Material cause.

The material cause is that which is offered, that which is immolated, the victim, the gift, that which is sacrificed (understood materially).

It is that subject which is the proper symbol of a sacrificial attitude; it is that which signifies, represents, symbolizes, prescinding from any objective signification, representation, or symbolization.

Because the mystical eucharistic sacrifice consists of a visible element and a hidden one, we distinguish between its substantial material cause and its modal material cause.

The substantial material cause is the substantial subject in which there is effected a proper signification, representation, symbolization of any sacrificial attitude; for example, as the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The modal material cause is the external appearance under which the substantial material cause is found, whether that be its own proper appearance or the appearance of something else.

45. (g) Formal cause.

The formal cause is a proper representation, signification, symbolization of any sacrificial attitude.

It is the victim, offering, gift, that which is immolated or sacrificed, understood in a formal sense — that is, not as this or that thing but precisely as victim, offering, and so on. In other words, it is this or that thing not as a thing but precisely as a proper symbol of a sacrificial attitude.

Again, because there is in the mystical eucharistic sacrifice a hidden element and a visible element and both have the property of

symbolizing or signifying, we distinguish between its substantial formal cause and its modal formal cause.

The modal formal cause is found in the various elements that appear outwardly, such as the bloody or unbloody manner of the sacrifice, through ministers or without ministers, and the like.

The substantial formal cause is found in those elements of a proper representation which do not appear externally, such as the signification, the institution, the real connection, and so forth, which are apprehended intellectually.

46. (h) A note on the meaning of certain words.

The words 'oblation,' 'immolation,' 'donation,' and the like can be taken in four different ways:

Eminently, as referring to the interior offering of that invisible sacrifice by which the soul offers herself to God. The term 'eminent' is fitting, for from this interior and invisible sacrifice everything else follows.

Formally, as referring to the proper representation or symbolization of a sacrificial attitude.

This usage can be further divided into modally formal and substantially formal by reason of this unique eucharistic sacrifice which is the fulfillment and consummation of all the sacrifices of the Old Law (DB 939, DS 1742).

47. Substantially formal is the act of offering, immolating, giving, and so on, inasmuch as it is objectively true that Christ offers, immolates, and gives his body and blood.

Modally formal is the act of offering, immolating, giving, and so forth, inasmuch as it is true that whether in a bloody or unbloody manner, whether under his own appearance or under that of something else, whether with or without the ministry of priests, Christ offers, immolates, and gives his body and blood.

Finally, offering, immolating, giving, and so on, are taken materially when the formal mode is present but prescinding from the essential idea of sacrifice; for example, what people, led by their senses and imagination, look upon as the essence of a sacrifice: the actual shedding of blood, the killing or consuming of a body, an

altar, a chalice, bread, the uttering of sacred words, vestments, candles, and the rest.

48. (i) A note on the basis for the above distinction.

First, since the visible sacrifice is a sacrament of an invisible sacrifice, it is quite inappropriate to proceed from a material mode (from the shedding of blood, for example) to the essential notion of oblation, donation, immolation. One should start rather from the invisible sacrifice and its interior offering to that offering as represented and so finally to arrive at the material manner of representation.

49. Second, as regards the distinction between substantially formal and modally formal offering or immolation, the basis for this is found in the Council of Trent.

For this holy synod refers indifferently to the sacrifice of the cross and the eucharistic sacrifice as both offering and immolation:

"... who was once and for all to offer himself ... on the altar of the Cross ..."; "... he offered his body and blood under the appearances of bread and wine ..."; "... he himself was ... to be immolated by the Church through her priests ..." (DB 938, DS 1740-1741); "... in the Mass there is the same Christ immolated in an unbloody manner who in a bloody manner 'offered himself once on the altar of the cross' ..." (DB 940, DS 1743).

50. Next, the Council affirms a certain identity between the cross and the Mass: "It is one and the same victim who then offered himself on the cross and now makes his offering through the ministry of priests ..." (DB 940, DS 1743). But it goes on to state the difference in the manner of the offering, which difference, as expressed by the Council, consists in the fact that one is a bloody sacrifice, the other unbloody, one is in Christ's proper appearance, the other under the appearances of bread and wine, one is carried out without priests, the other through their ministry (DB 938, 940, DS 1740-1741, 1743).

All of these points taken together provide us with a solid basis for distinguishing between the substantially formal aspect and the modally formal aspect. As to substance, the formal aspect is the fact

that Christ offered, or immolated, his body; as to mode, the formal aspect is the fact that he did so in a bloody or in an unbloody manner, under his own proper appearance or under the appearance of something else, with or without the ministry of priests.

51. (j) The effects, or fruits, of a sacrifice.

The proper effect of a sacrifice is the same as its intrinsic end or form, namely, the production of a proper symbol of a sacrificial attitude.

If the symbol so produced is accepted by God, there follow what are called the fruits of the sacrifice.

The primary fruits are worship and honor given to God, the propitiating of God, thanks given to God, and petitions presented to God in an acceptable way, and accepted.

The secondary fruits are those benefits which the divine largesse grants to us: the forgiveness of sins, satisfaction for liability to punishment, the granting of graces, and answering prayers of petition.

#### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SACRIFICE OF THE CROSS AND THE MASS

52. "We assert, and it must be held, that it is the one and the same sacrifice that takes place in the Mass and that was offered on the cross; for the victim is one and the same, namely Christ our Lord, who offered himself only once in a bloody manner upon the altar of the cross. Nor does the fact that the victim, being bloody and also unbloody, mean that there are two victims; there is but one victim, whose sacrifice, following the Lord's command, 'Do this in memory of me,' is renewed daily in the Eucharist.

"But there is also the same priest, Christ the Lord. For the ministers who perform this sacrifice act not in their own person but in the person of Christ when they bring forth upon the altar his body and blood. This is evident from the very words of consecration: the priest does not say, 'This is the body of Christ,' but 'This is my body'; acting, that is, in the person of Christ the Lord, he changes the substance of bread and wine into the true substance of Christ's body and blood.

"This being the case, what the holy synod explained must be taught without demur, that the holy sacrifice of the Mass is not only an act of praise and thanksgiving, nor a mere memorial of the sacrifice of the cross; it is truly a propitiatory sacrifice which placates God and renders him propitious towards us. If, therefore, in purity of heart, ..."<sup>5</sup>

53. From this we conclude that there is a certain unity and identity between the sacrifice of the cross and the sacrifice of the Mass, so that the latter is not a mere memorial but a truly propitiatory sacrifice. This finds its confirmation in the ordinary manner of speaking: we do not speak of the sacrifices of the New Law but of the sacrifice of the New Law.

How this unity is had, however, is a vexed question but, in our opinion, quite fundamental. For if this is solved, all other questions would, it seems, be easily solved as well.

54. Let us therefore state the question: are the sacrifice of the cross and the sacrifice of the Mass numerically one and the same?<sup>6</sup>  
Assertion I: There is not in every respect numerical unity and identity.

Proof: 'Bloody' and 'unbloody,' 'under his own proper appearance' and 'under the appearance of something else,' and 'without ministers' and 'through the ministry of priests' are mutually contradictory; hence at least the manner of offering is different (DB 938, 940; DS 1740-1741, 1743).

55. Assertion II: Not all numerical unity and identity can be denied.  
Heb 9:25: "... he does not have to offer himself again and again ..."  
Heb 9:28: "... Christ... offered himself only once ..."  
Heb 10:12: "But when Christ had offered" (*prosenenkas*, aorist participle) ...; the whole statement is in contrast to [the priests of the Old Law] "... offering [*prospheerôn*, present participle] again and again the same sacrifices ..." (v. 11).

<sup>5</sup>*Roman Catechism: Catechismus ex decreto Concilii Tridentini ...* (Rome: Press of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, 1871) 232-233.

<sup>6</sup>See *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, X, 1, cols. 1086-1089, and note 1, above.

Heb 10:14: "By virtue of that one single offering he has achieved the eternal perfection of all whom he is sanctifying."

Council of Trent: "... this sacrifice is truly propitiatory. ... For it is one and the same victim, now offering ... only the manner of offering being different."

Roman Catechism: "one and the same sacrifice ... there is but one victim ... hence a truly propitiatory sacrifice ... and not a mere commemoration."

56. Here one might suggest that some distinctions be made: Christ does not repeatedly offer in a bloody manner; he was offered once in a bloody manner; there is one victim from a material point of view, namely, the same body which is offered and sacrificed over and over again; one and the same sacrifice by reason of the victim considered materially and of the offerer considered materially; not two victims materially but two formally.

To this we reply that such distinctions can be made with more or less reason; but a better and more probable opinion would seem to be that of one who has no need of distinctions that St. Paul and the Council of Trent and the Roman Catechism did not need.

To this we add a theological reason. If another sacrifice is added to the sacrifice of the cross, then the latter might seem to be considered insufficient. On the other hand, if they are the same sacrifice, then it surely follows both that the sacrifice of the cross is sufficient and that the sacrifice of the Mass is not a mere memorial but truly propitiatory. This seems to be the line of argument of the Council of Trent and the Roman Catechism.

57. The solution to the problem.

First, we are not speaking here of Christ's invisible sacrifice, the eminent interior sacrifice in his mind and heart.

Besides, the sacrifice as presupposed does not create any special difficulty: for if the sacrifice of the cross and of the Mass are in some way numerically one and the same, then the acts of the intellect and will by which this numerically one sacrifice is made can likewise be one and the same human act. For if a multiplicity of things are inter-related, they are understood and willed as one.

Furthermore, even if there were many such invisible and eminent sacrifices (which we do not grant), nevertheless no conclusion follows concerning the unity or multiplicity of the formal sacrifice.

Second, generically all sacrifices are the same, since all are symbols.

58. Third, specifically by reason of the sacrificial attitude that is represented, the sacrifice of the cross and of the Mass are the same. For it is the same sacrificial attitude of Christ at his death that is always symbolized.

Here one might object that the sacrificial attitude of the church is also symbolized.

To this we reply that it is not symbolized directly, but only as a consequence. When Christ's sacrificial attitude is symbolized, every similar attitude is symbolized as a consequence.

But, the objector goes on, therefore both on the cross and in the Eucharist the sacrificial attitude of the church is likewise symbolized, that is, as a consequence.

Here we reply that, inasmuch as there is a representation, we agree; but that inasmuch as this representation is proper, we deny; for the propriety of a representation depends not only on that which is represented but also on the manner in which it is represented.

59. Fourth, the substantial material cause in both the sacrifice of the cross and in the Eucharist is numerically the same. It is the numerically same body and blood of the Lord which is offered, immolated, the sacrificial victim.

Fifth, in a sacrifice the formal cause is that by which the subject, or material cause, becomes a proper symbol of a sacrificial attitude. And under this aspect there is some identity and also some difference between the cross and the Eucharist.

The numerically same sacrificial attitude of Christ at his death is represented immediately on the cross and mediately in the Eucharist. For the Eucharist is a proper symbol of the sacrificial attitude of Christ at his death by the very fact that it is a proper symbol of the sacrifice of the cross.

The numerically same intentionality [*esse intentionale*] which on the cross manifests Christ's sacrificial attitude is manifested in the Eucharist. To put it another way, the intentionality which on the cross is the very objective representation, symbolization, manifestation itself, is objectively represented, symbolized, manifested in the Eucharist.

The numerically same intentionality which by its presence on the cross renders the body of Christ formally a victim, immolated, offered, a proper symbol of his sacrificial attitude, is present in the Eucharist by way of representation and renders the body of Christ formally a victim, immolated, offered, a proper symbol of his sacrificial attitude; for the Eucharist, by the very fact that it represents the sacrifice of the cross, is itself a sacrifice.

Hence the numerically same intentionality does two things:

(a) as manifesting, it is what makes the sacrifice of the cross to be a sacrifice;

(b) as manifested, it is what makes the Eucharist to be a sacrifice.

60. Still, there are as many intentionalities, or formal causes, as there are sacrifices.

There is one principal intentionality present in the sacrifice of the cross and carried out in a bloody manner through the real change, not only accidental but also substantial, of the body, which dies, and the blood, which is poured out, by the sole High Priest who offers it, Christ our Lord.

There are other secondary intentionalities that are formal causes of a sacrifice by representing the principal intentionality, which are carried out in an unbloody manner, with no change whatsoever in Christ, existing now under a different appearance, by the same High Priest as offerer, but through the ministry of priests. And in these circumstances such sacrifices are proper symbols of the sacrificial attitude not only of the Head but also of the members.

## CONCLUSIONS

61. The sacrifice of the cross and the eucharistic sacrifice are numerically the same:
- a) since the sacrificial attitude represented is numerically the same;
  - b) since the representation is effected by the numerically same principal offerer;
  - c) since the representation is effected in the numerically same body and blood;
  - d) since numerically the same intentionality through its presence is the formal cause or proper representation on the cross, it is also through its representation in the Eucharist the formal element of the formal <cause> there,<sup>7</sup> making another intentionality to be a proper representation.
62. The eucharistic sacrifice is both absolute and relative:
- (a) absolute, as a proper symbol of a sacrificial attitude;
  - (b) relative, because it is such a symbol through the mediation of another sacrifice.

The eucharistic sacrifice is to the sacrifice of the cross as the sacrifice of the cross is to the sacrificial attitude of Christ at his death.

Just as Christ's sacrificial attitude was not superadded as something different from the sacrifice of the cross, since it is the invisible sacrifice of that visible sacrifice, so also the eucharistic sacrifice is not superadded as something different from the sacrifice of the cross; for it is the perpetual sacrifice of that unique and unrepeatable sacrifice.

<sup>7</sup>The Latin here is very condensed. The words *formale formalis* are reminiscent of the phrase *formale formalis peccati*, "the formal element of formal sin." The meaning here apparently is that as the *esse intentionale* of the sacrifice of the cross is the formal cause or proper representation there, so also the same *esse intentionale* through its representation in the Eucharist is the formal causal element of the formal cause which is the *esse intentionale* or proper representation there. See the notion of transitive relation in §15 and footnote 3, above. (Tr.)

## THE VALUE OF THIS INQUIRY

63. This analysis of the eucharistic sacrifice is substantially the same as that of Fr Gabriel Vásquez, which has been followed more recently by Goetzmann, Souben, Schepens, Lesetre, Lebreton, Coglan, Rickaby, and Sanda.

Our analysis, however, avoids the logical defect in Vásquez' system in that it places all sacrifice in the category of symbol and distinguishes between symbols that are immediately representative and those that are mediately so.

64. This safeguards the idea of absolute sacrifice which is not clear in Vásquez' theory. Moreover, using the notion of a proper symbol we explain why the real presence is required for the eucharistic sacrifice to be a true and proper sacrifice. Vásquez also required this, but did not explain why. Also, we explain Augustine's teaching on the sacrifice of the Mystical Body, Trent's teaching on the representation, commemoration, application of, and participation in the sacrifice of the cross, and the teaching of theologians on its accidental value.

The value of this analysis lies in that it appears to safeguard in a systematic and coherent way all that need to be safeguarded. It proceeds from positive data, the data of revelation itself and of the teaching of the church and of theologians, and seeks to arrange these data in order, in accordance with St Thomas's dictum, "sapientis est ordinare."

65. To the trite objection against Vásquez' theory, namely that the representation of a sacrifice is not itself a sacrifice but the mere image of one, we make the following reply:

First, every visible sacrifice is in the category of image, for it is a symbol of a sacrificial attitude, a sacrifice that is invisible.

Second, not every image is a sacrifice, but only that image that is a proper representation of a sacrificial attitude.

Third, the eucharistic sacrifice is a proper symbol of a sacrificial attitude, and is therefore a true and proper sacrifice.

APPENDIX:  
THREE DRAFTS ON  
THE IDEA OF SACRIFICE

*Bernard Lonergan, S.J.*

THE IDEA OF SACRIFICE (1)

AFTER PLOUGHING THROUGH the somewhat rocky soil of multitudinous opinions on the nature of sacrifice, it was to me at once a relief and an inspiration to study what St Augustine had to say on the subject. Nor was I unimpressed by the fact that the notion of sacrifice as symbol, so little emphasized in many modern works, was central to his thought. Further reflection led me to believe that, with the aid of a few simple theorems, one might construct a satisfactory unification of Christian doctrine on sacrifice and sacrifices. And, as I happen also to hold that the goal of theology — *sapientis est ordinare* — is to be attained by genius, when we have it, and by collaboration, when we have to look back through centuries to see genius at work, I have in this paper set down the grounds of my opinion in a hope that others, in due course of time, may effect what I suspect to be possible.

*Sacrifice as Reality*

By 'sacrifice as reality' I would denote what St Augustine called *verum sacrificium* and what modern writers from controversial exigency had to name, and from the insidious influence of words have not always avoided conceiving as, *sacrificium improprie dictum*.

## THE IDEA OF SACRIFICE (2)

IT WOULD BE strange if the methodological criteria resulting from positivist philosophy did not at this or that point exert some influence on theological thought. For in scientific circles positivism is dominant and it reduces the human mind to a link, of no intrinsic worth, between, say, pointer readings that have been observed and pointer readings that may be predicted. Of course, however great this dominance, there is no tendency of Catholic theology as a whole to submit to positivist criteria. On the other hand, I do not think one can deny the existence of such a tendency with regard to the particular issues that go by the name of disputed questions. For in this field the theologian finds himself under circumstances quite analogous to those that lead scientific theorists to an acceptance of positivism. Where the scientist has quite indisputable pointer readings, the theologian has quite indisputable truths of revelation. Where the scientist is confused by a maze of abstract theoretical issues, the theologian is confronted with an array of irreconcilable and unsatisfactory theoretical opinions. Where the scientist sees in positivism a shortcut that eliminates all theoretical issues without damaging immediate practical interests, so the theologian can be tempted to disregard, to deprecate, even to rule out as hopeless, the whole range of conflicting opinions and so confine his attention to the solid and substantial certitudes of faith. Finally, just as positivism in science eliminates science as science, so positivism in theology eliminates theology as theology: for science becomes the humble handmaid of technology, and theology, in so far as it yields to positivism, doffs the robes of queen of the sciences to become somewhat too elaborate collection and collation of materials for catechetics and preaching.

In the extraordinarily erudite article "Messe" in the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, a long exposition of opinions is followed by a discussion of method (*DTC* 10 1246). The manifold diversity of opinions on the nature of the eucharistic sacrifice is asserted to have a single root, namely, mistaken method. What theologians have been doing is to lay down a definition of sacrifice in general and then attempt to verify this definition in the mass. That procedure is described as interpreting the certain in the

light of the doubtful. It is certain that some rites of the Old Law, the passion and death of our Savior, the Eucharist, are true and proper sacrifices. But what is a sacrifice? That is uncertain: theologians do not agree, the Church has made no official pronouncement, and neither Holy Scripture nor the Fathers attempted to work out a theory of sacrifice. Inevitably, doubtful opinions on the nature of sacrifice have led to nothing but doubtful opinions on the nature of the mass. On the other hand, correct procedure would begin from revealed data, and in particular from the affirmations and negations of the Council of Trent, to arrive at a definition not of sacrifice in general but of the sacrifice of the mass.

Now all this is unobjectionable inasmuch as it is advocated not as a permanent canon of method but simply as a temporary expedient. I do not suppose that anyone would desire a writer in a general dictionary to proceed otherwise. But perhaps it is not irrelevant to insist that the expedients which suit special circumstances need not coincide with the proper orientation of theological inquiry. To interpret the certain in the light of the doubtful — *éclairer le certain par l'incertain* — is not a vice but a virtue. All empirical science is interpretation of certain sense data through less certain theories. Are we, therefore, to drop empirical science as science and to become positivists? Again, it is possible for human reason, guided by faith, to arrive at some understanding, quite limited yet most fruitful, even of mysteries. But what is to be understood is certain with the certitude of faith. On the other hand, the understanding itself is had through the internal coherence of the mysteries and the analogy of nature; and that coherence, that analogy, are not revealed; often, indeed, they are not self-evident, not obvious, not easily demonstrable. And so there is needed a painstaking, loyal, and sober inquiry (DB 1796, DS 3016), an inquiry that extends not over mere years but over dozens of centuries, from a Clement of Alexandria to an Aquinas, from an Aquinas to the next great integration of the theological achievement.

In this perspective, the faltering opinions of theologians on the nature of the mass do not prove the need of any Copernican revolution of method. It may have been desirable that some theologians of the past possessed a fuller realization of what they were about and of the limitations of their achievement. But refinement of method is one thing and

revolution quite another. And it is revolutionary to object to the interpretation of the certain in the light of the doubtful, a revolution that pressed to its logical consequences eliminates speculative theology in its entirety. As was remarked of a certain professor's treatise on grace, "Had he lived before the Council of Trent, he would have had very little to say." That remark, if too piquant to be just, still was just enough to be piquant. For there is a modesty of speculative opinion and a devotion to truths that are absolutely certain which, in the concrete, may often be the only practical course and, at the same time, an unconscious yielding to positivist methodology.

*The Augustinian Concept of Sacrifice*

The article mentioned above was quite right in affirming that none of the Fathers worked out a complete theory of sacrifice. It remains that St Augustine's somewhat scattered reflections are a mine of inspiration and, with a few additional theorems, admit development into a theory which seems to me to meet the data, to be coherent, to be illuminating, and to carry a heavy weight of traditional thought in its train.

The key-piece of Augustinian thought here is a distinction between 'sacrifice as reality' and 'sacrifice as symbol.' Sacrifice as symbol is what today is meant by true and proper sacrifice, the sensible and normally social act of religious worship. On the other hand, sacrifice as reality is roughly what today is meant by sacrifice improperly so called. As the fundamental, though not the sole, relation between the two is that sacrifice as symbol symbolizes sacrifice as reality, necessarily one begins with an account of the latter.

THE IDEA OF SACRIFICE (3)

THERE IS A preliminary question of method, for it is erroneous method, according to A. Michel writing in the *DTC*, that accounts for the manifold diversity of theological opinion on the nature of the sacrifice of the mass (10:1246). One is interpreting the certain in the light of the doubtful, he urged, if one lays down a definition of sacrifice in general and then attempts to verify this definition on the mass; and theologians

have ended up with such contrary views precisely because they have been attempting to establish their systems by their *a priori* definitions. On the other hand, the Church has no official definition of sacrifice in general; neither Scripture nor the Fathers worked out a speculative system on the nature of sacrifice; and, in a word, correct procedure is to begin from the Council of Trent, and through a method of elimination arrive at a definition not of sacrifice in general but of the sacrifice of the mass.

I am not concerned to exculpate theologians from this charge of mistaken method. Indeed, I should be more ready to support than to oppose such a charge. But my present purpose is to advance that the method, proposed by the erudite author of the article in question, is at least as unsatisfactory as any other. For theology has a twofold concern: it aims at truth; it also aims at understanding. These two are distinct: one can know the truth without understanding it; one can understand mistakenly. In so far as theology aims at truth, it begins with the data of revelation to end with their coherent formulation and with their integration with a human culture, say, Thomist philosophy. But this aim cannot be attained without understanding. Granted that the understanding will be inevitably deficient, so long as we are pilgrims walking not by vision but by faith. Nonetheless there is an understanding to be attained, and, as the Vatican Council insisted, its attainment is most fruitful (DB 1796, DS 3016); for one thing, that understanding conditions the positive coherence of the theological formulation of revealed truth and the possibility of its intelligible integration with the rest of human thought and life.

The defect, then, I would find in the method proposed lies in a one-sided attention to truth that defeats itself by a neglect of understanding. It makes possible the formulation of a number of propositions, but it rules out interest in the explanatory unity of the propositions and so is tantamount to a reduction of content and meaning even in the terms. If one can define the sacrifice of the mass without being able to define sacrifice, then one deals with the specific difference between the mass and a generic unknown; moreover, this central blind-spot will reproduce itself in the content of every technical term, for if sacrifice is generically unknown,

then sacrificial oblation or immolation or the divine acceptance of sacrifice will contain blanks as parts of their meaning.

It should seem, then, that the objection raised against the methodology of theologians has to be met not with assent but with a distinction. It is mistaken to find fault with theologians who 'interpret the certain in the light of the uncertain.' That is inevitable, if they are theologians according to the mind of the Church. For revealed truths are certain. But it is part of the theologian's function to attain some understanding of them. Now such understanding cannot attain the certitude of revealed truth. It may not attain, over centuries, any certitude. For it is born of the analogy of nature and the internal coherence of the mysteries themselves; and what this analogy is, what this coherence is, that is not revealed nor self-evident nor obvious, nor, often, readily demonstrable. It demands sedulous, sober, and loyal inquiry. To object that in some field or other the inquiry has so far borne little fruit, and on that ground to suppress it, is a defeatist distortion of theological method. On the other hand, one must agree with M. Michel in his condemnation of any theologian who offers to justify a system by the system's definitions. This is a patent vicious circle. The justification of theological system lies in its success in systematizing, in taking revealed truths from the state of separate truths to the state of interconnected and luminous truths. *Sapientis est ordinare*. Systems are mistaken when they contain or imply any error. Systems are defective when they fail to take into account any relevant datum. Systems are fruitful, to use again the term of the Vatican Council, in the measure that they bring some limited human light upon the too bright secrets God has revealed to man.

INTELLIGENTIA FIDEI IN DE DEO TRINO,  
PARS SYSTEMATICA

A Commentary on the First Three Sections of Chapter One

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*Toronto, Ontario MAY 1P9*

IN THIS ARTICLE I am following up on a recent contribution to this journal, in which I suggested a hypothesis regarding the development of Bernard Lonergan's understanding of the functional specialty 'systematics.'<sup>1</sup> More specifically, the hypothesis has to do with the history of the text that presents Lonergan's most thorough treatment of the

<sup>1</sup>Robert M. Doran, "The First Chapter of *De Deo Trino, Pars Systematica*: The Issues," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 18 (2000) 27-48. One refinement and one correction should be made. The refinement has to do with Lonergan's objective for the chapter. Early in the article (p. 33), I speak of his objective as presenting some notes regarding the goal of systematic theology, the act by which that goal is achieved, and the movement toward that act. This is a correct rendition of what he says on p. 7 of *De Deo trino, Pars systematica*. Subsequently, the article tends to obscure the issue a bit (supported by Lonergan's text, I might add), by speaking of a movement, not to the act but to the goal itself. Lonergan's wording on p. 7 is "... de motu quo ad actum proceditur" (concerning the movement by which we proceed to the act). But the subtitle of section 4 in the earlier *Divinarum personarum* (see next note) is "De triplici motu quo ad finem procedatur" (The Threefold Movement to the Goal) and the subtitle of the corresponding section 5 in *De Deo trino* is "De duplici motu in finem" (The Twofold Movement to the Goal). If we rely on the wording at the very beginning of the chapter, then in *Divinarum personarum* there is a threefold movement to the act of systematic theological understanding, and those movements are called analytic, synthetic, and historical, whereas in *De Deo trino* there is a twofold movement to that same act, dogmatic and systematic. It helps, I think, to stress that the movements that Lonergan is discussing in each text are movements to the act of understanding by which we achieve some imperfect and analogical insight into the mysteries of faith. The difference in meaning may seem slight, since the goal is understanding, and the act by which the goal is achieved is a particular kind of act of understanding. But I think it does help us to read the chapter more carefully if we think of the movements quite precisely as movements toward an act.

methodological issues in systematics, namely, the first chapter of *De Deo trino, Pars systematica*. I begin here to present the hypothesis in greater detail, by way of a commentary on the first three sections of the chapter.

The issue throughout the present article, as in the sections on which it is commenting, is *intelligentia fidei*, understanding the mysteries of faith. This is the first of two major issues in the chapter under investigation. The other is the relationship of system and history. The present article touches on only part of the first issue. Two or three more articles will be required to comment in detail on the entire chapter and to present in full the hypothesis that I wish to contribute to the discussion.

My hypothesis has to do with the differences between two versions of this chapter.<sup>2</sup> The differences first emerge in the third section of the chapter, but I will begin with some remarks on the first two sections of the chapter, where there are only minor differences, and none that affect the meaning of what Lonergan is conveying. Section 1 of the chapter treats the goal of systematic theology, and section 2 the act by which that objective is attained.<sup>3</sup>

#### SECTION 1: THE GOAL OR OBJECTIVE OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY (*DE FINE*)

Lonergan clarifies the goal of systematics by speaking of the twofold operation of the knowing mind. And in order to establish the difference between the two operations, he analyzes the classical definition of science, according to which science is *certa rerum per causas cognitio*, a certain

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The correction is of one statement of fact. In note 3 on p. 29 I refer to "De scientia atque voluntate Dei" as a 1947 supplement. Its date is 1950.

<sup>2</sup>The later version, which is the basis of my comments, is in Bernard Lonergan, *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University, 1964). The earlier version, which contained important material that was not preserved in the later version, is in *Divinarum personarum conceptionem analogicam evolvit B. Lonergan* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1957, 1959).

<sup>3</sup>These articles were first written in the form of an extended commentary on the chapter under investigation, for the purposes of teaching this material in a graduate seminar on Lonergan's notion of systematics (conducted twice at Regis College, Toronto, and once at Marquette University). At times the points made will be obvious to seasoned Lonergan scholars, but I hope they will bear with me.

knowledge of things through their causes.<sup>4</sup> This Aristotelian definition indicates that genuine human inquiry (most clearly differentiable in scientific pursuits) intends *two interrelated goals or objectives*. In fact, Lonergan's principal reason for appealing to the definition in this context is to clarify the difference and relation between these two objectives and to specify the implications of this difference and of this relation for cognitional theory in general and for theology in particular.

The two objectives are truth or certitude (*certa cognitio*) and intelligibility (*per causas*). The two are inextricably joined in any genuine pursuit of human knowledge. If one has no concern at all for truth and certitude as one pursues knowledge (*cognitionem*) of causes or reasons or meaning or intelligibility or explanation, then, while one may display great ingenuity and cleverness, one will not learn anything about the *things* in the definition "a certain knowledge of things through their causes." One is playing with ideas. One can even develop a theory of

<sup>4</sup>It is interesting, if somewhat perplexing, that in the Latin treatises that he wrote in his years at the Gregorian University, Lonergan continues to appeal to this 'classicist' definition of science. He had explicitly moved away from this definition by this time, acknowledging the differences between modern science and the Aristotelian ideal, and even stating that the modern notion of science has more in common with theological exigencies than does Aristotle's; the latter point is particularly clear by the time of his lectures on theological method at Regis College in the summer of 1962. In fact he was already well beyond the Aristotelian notion of science in *Insight*. But we will note that he makes a qualification almost immediately in the text under consideration, and that further nuances are introduced later in the chapter.

Moreover, the issue is not simple, not a matter of a straightforward opposition between the Aristotelian and the modern notions. In a course offered in 1959, "De intellectu et methodo," he presented various notions of science without taking more than a very limited stand on precisely what science is. He gives the impression in that course that he is still working out his own notion, in fact that he is trying to develop a notion of science that will accommodate the changes that have taken place as the notion of science has developed over time. In 1961 he gave a series of lectures in Dublin on "Critical Realism and the Integration of the Sciences," and, while it seems there are no extant records of the first of these lectures, his comments in the other lectures indicate that in the first lecture he reviewed various notions of science and asked whether there might be formulated a particular methodological stance that could account for all of them and for the changes that have occurred in the notion of science. And in the Regis College institute of 1962 on "The Method of Theology," he goes perhaps a step further: "... we have to admit, make room for, science of the modern type, but we have to do so in a way in which it is a coherent prolongation of the ancient type" (from a transcript of the fourth lecture, revised February 2000). Tracing the development of Lonergan's explicit comments about science may well prove to be an important indicator of his development in the crucial years between *Insight* and the breakthrough to the notion of functional specialties.

truth to justify such diletantism: truth lies in the coherence of intelligibilities or ideas. In terms of Lonergan's general cognitional theory, we may say that one is being intelligent but not reasonable, a not infrequent (and often dangerous) occurrence.

On the other hand, one can be so fastened on certitude (not so much perhaps for the sake of truth as for the security that comes with being certain) that one is not willing to inquire about reasons and causes, about meaning and intelligibility. The latter may be doubtful, tentative, hypothetical.<sup>5</sup> But if one pays no attention to them, one will accumulate only a crude and undigested awareness (*notitiam*, not *cognitionem*) of things, however certain it may make one feel. This awareness is, in fact, simply a complex function at the level of presentations or 'experience.' It does not constitute human knowledge. Many Catholic theologians in the modern period were more concerned with reaffirming certainties than with understanding the doctrines they kept repeating.<sup>6</sup> Such an awareness does not qualify as 'science' or, for that matter, even as 'knowledge' (*cognitio*). It is little more than an accumulation of presentations at the merely empirical level of consciousness (*notitia*).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup>This is the immediate qualification ("quippe semper dubias") of the classicist definition of science to which I referred in the previous note.

<sup>6</sup>"... theologians of the end of the seventeenth century ... introduced 'dogmatic' theology. It is true that the word 'dogmatic' had been previously applied to theology. But then it was used to denote a distinction from moral, or ethical, or historical theology. Now it was employed in a new sense, in opposition to scholastic theology. It replaced the inquiry of the *quaestio* by the pedagogy of the thesis. It demoted the quest of faith for understanding to a desirable but secondary and indeed optional goal. It gave basic and central significance to the certitudes of faith, their presuppositions, and their consequences. It owed its mode of proof to Melchior Cano and, as that theologian was also a bishop and inquisitor, so the new dogmatic theology not only proved its theses, but also was supported by the teaching authority and the sanctions of the Church." Bernard Lonergan, "Theology in Its New Context," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F.J. Ryan, S.J., and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (latest printing, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 57. For a possible source of these historical comments, see Yves Congar, *A History of Theology*, trans. Hunter Guthrie (New York: Doubleday, 1968) 177-181. Congar's book is based on an article, "Théologie," in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* to which Lonergan frequently refers in other contexts (see below, note 73). It is likely that the comment just quoted also relies on Congar's work.

<sup>7</sup>See the use of the word *notitia* in Lonergan, *De constitutione Christi ontologica et psychologica*, where it often (though not always) refers to the empirical level of consciousness (for example, to *scientia-experientia*, consciousness correctly conceived as experience as opposed to consciousness conceived as perception). The point to Lonergan's using the word *notitia* in the present context in *De Deo trino* seems to be that the mere

Certitude is the objective of the question, *An sit?* Is it? Is it so? Knowledge through causes is the objective of such questions as *Quid sit?* *Cur ita sit?* What is it? Why is it so?<sup>8</sup> The two questions and their objectives are related to or, in *Insight's* terms, isomorphic with, the two metaphysical principles of essence (What is it?)<sup>9</sup> and existence (Is it?). Just as essence and the act of existence (*esse*) are always linked with one another, so that one cannot be found without the other, so the two operations of our mind that respond respectively to the questions, *Quid sit?* and *An sit?* are so intimately joined that it is useless to pursue the objective of one question while neglecting the objective of the other.

Still, just as there remains a real distinction between essence and the act of existence, so there remains a real distinction between these "two operations of the mind" (understanding and judgment) and between their respective objectives. And so there is a corresponding distinction of methods to be employed in advancing toward these respective objectives and toward the acts by which these objectives are achieved. And this is the point that Lonergan is making in this section: the distinction of objectives and acts, and the consequent distinction of methods and procedures. This point will, of course, later in his development be nuanced, expanded, and transformed, to become the distinction of functional specialties.

Moreover, the diversity of methods that he is describing here is more pronounced in theology than elsewhere. We can know supernatural truth only through divine revelation, and so theological certitude is born of

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repetition of certitudes yields nothing more than an undigested accumulation of verbal presentations.

<sup>8</sup>In *Understanding and Being* (and elsewhere), Lonergan discusses Aristotle's point that 'What is it?' and 'Why is it so?' are really the same question. See Lonergan, *Understanding and Being*, vol. 5 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) index, under "What?/Why?"

<sup>9</sup>The intricacies of Aristotelian and Thomist discussions of essence and form are presented in detail (more detail, perhaps, than can be found elsewhere), and in relation to the act of understanding, in chapter 1 of Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, vol. 2 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

faith and reliance on legitimate authority.<sup>10</sup> But understanding these truths requires the devout, careful, and sober inquiry that is the work of reason illumined by faith, the inquiry encouraged by the First Vatican Council. The two procedures and sets of operations are quite distinct, as are their objectives.<sup>11</sup>

A strictly systematic treatise in theology, then, presupposes an informed faith on the part of the reader. That is, it presupposes assent to the doctrines that it is the primary task of systematics to understand. More broadly, it presupposes certitude with regard to the mysteries of faith that now one is attempting to comprehend. The objective of systematics is the imperfect but most fruitful understanding of mysteries to which informed doctrinal assent has already been given. Its concern is not to remove doubts or to refute errors, and so its method does not involve much of an appeal to the authorities that may be accepted by one's readers. Even the most erudite faith, even a faith informed by knowledge of the authorities, by scriptural exegesis and historical information, can remain a faith with little or no *understanding* of the mysteries. Such understanding rests on *a further set of questions* that would penetrate to the root of revealed truth and help us know just *how* it can be true, that is, just *what it means*. This understanding is the goal or objective of systematics.

<sup>10</sup>Lonergan's thought on both faith and authority underwent considerable development, a development that has yet to be studied. On faith, there is badly needed, I think, a study interpreting the evolution from "Analysis fidei" (1950) to faith as "the knowledge born of religious love" in *Method in Theology*. What are the connections? Is there continuity between the later position on beliefs (as distinct from faith) and the earlier position on faith itself, or does Lonergan's later position represent something quite different from his earlier one, even as regards the genesis of what he came to call beliefs? Regarding authority, Lonergan's view at the time of *De Deo trino* is far less dialectical, far less critical, than it became in his later (in fact, post-*Method*) "Dialectic of Authority," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985) 5-12, where there occurs a naming, an unmasking, an explanation, and a demythologization of illegitimate authority, whether in a cultural tradition or in civil government or in the church, that is as radical and unrelenting as anything found in the literature of deconstruction. "Analysis fidei" is available in a Regis College edition, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, Conn O'Donovan, and Giovanni Sala. A translation by Michael G. Shields is available at the Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto, and at other Lonergan Centers.

<sup>11</sup>Lonergan emphasizes here and in many other places that Aquinas clearly recognized the distinction of these two objectives and of the respective acts and methods that each demands. The relevant text in Aquinas is *Quaestiones quodlibetales*, IV, q. 9, a. 3. See also the Prologue to the *Summa theologiae* for a related set of observations.

This position on the objective of systematics remains constant throughout Lonergan's development. In fact, while *Method in Theology* uses the expression "the *principal* function of systematics,"<sup>12</sup> the understanding of revealed mysteries remains the only function that *Method's* chapter on systematics discusses in any detail. Natural knowledge of God is also mentioned, but its relation to the understanding of mysteries is spelled out more fully elsewhere.<sup>13</sup> And other functions beyond these two are not mentioned at all.<sup>14</sup>

#### THE ACT BY WHICH THIS END IS ACHIEVED

##### *2.1 First and Second Operations*

If the distinct goal of systematics is understanding, not certitude, this does not mean that we are to prefer any old understanding to one that has cogency, or a false understanding to one that might be true. What, then, is the act of understanding proper to systematics? What are its properties? And, granted that its specific objective is not certainty or truth, but understanding and intelligibility, how is that understanding related to the true and the certain?

Lonergan begins to answer these questions by returning to the distinction between understanding and judgment, or more broadly between what Aristotle called the first and second operations of the mind. Each of the expressions 'first operation' and 'second operation' is used to cover several distinct operations.

Thus, in Aristotle's 'first operation,' we ask, *Quid sit? Cur ita sit?* What is it? Why is it so? and by insight into images we grasp a possible reason or cause, a meaning or intelligibility, and from this insight we utter in an inner word a hypothesis that would answer the question. This hypothesis

<sup>12</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (latest printing, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999) 336, emphasis added.

<sup>13</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophy of God, and Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1973).

<sup>14</sup>I addressed the question of other functions in the article, "Bernard Lonergan and the Functions of Systematic Theology," *Theological Studies* 59:4 (1998) 567-607, and with some further developments in "Reflections on Method in Systematic Theology," to appear in an upcoming issue of *Lonergan Workshop*.

is the 'first inner word.' It proceeds from direct insight in response to the question for intelligence, What is it? Because it does not yet entail affirmation or denial, that is, a *positing* of an intellectual synthesis, it is called a simple (*incomplexum*) inner word.

Again, in Aristotle's 'second operation,' we ask concerning our hypothesis, *An sit? Utrum ita sit?* Is it? Is it so? and in an effort to answer such a question, we weigh evidence in order to pronounce a true judgment through which, as through a medium, something of being would be known; and if we grasp the sufficiency of evidence for affirming or denying, for saying yes or no, then we utter yes or no on the basis of this reflective grasp, as a second inner word, one that *posits* what prior to the judgment had been merely a mental synthesis (or that denies that synthesis). Because an affirmative second inner word *posits* a synthesis, it is called a compound (*complexum*) inner word.<sup>15</sup> Elsewhere, and especially in *Insight*, the metaphor of 'weighing evidence' is explained by appealing to a reflective act of understanding that grasps that the conditions for a prospective judgment are or are not fulfilled. If they are fulfilled, the prospective judgment is 'virtually' or (better, I think) 'contingently' unconditioned.<sup>16</sup>

Now, while Aristotle speaks of 'first' and 'second' operations, Lonergan is quick to emphasize that the differential is not a function of time. This point is particularly crucial to the issue under investigation here, that is, to the relation of doctrines to systematic understanding. The distinction of first and second operations is not to be understood by positing the 'first

<sup>15</sup>For the basis in Aquinas of this doctrine on the two inner words proceeding respectively from two distinct acts of understanding, see Lonergan, *Verbum*, chapters 1 and 2. The first thirteen chapters of *Insight* establish these points in Lonergan's own terms, and in great detail. And it should be noted that Lonergan acknowledged that the distinction was not as clear in Aristotle and Aquinas as he wishes to make it be. See, for example, *Method in Theology* 335, where it is stated that the Kantian view that understanding is the faculty of judgment has antecedents not only in Plato and Scotus but also "to a less extent, in Aristotle and Aquinas."

<sup>16</sup>I discovered the expression 'contingently unconditioned' in an as yet unpublished paper on Lonergan and Derrida by Gordon Rixon of Regis College, Toronto. I think it expresses Lonergan's meaning to contemporary readers more clearly than does 'virtually unconditioned.' 'Virtually unconditioned' is a misleading term for many contemporary readers coming newly to Lonergan. The term suggests to many younger, computer-literate readers the notion of virtual reality.

operation' as occurring necessarily before the 'second,' and the 'second' as occurring necessarily after the 'first.' It is true, of course, that the 'first operation' does spontaneously give rise to the 'second': when we have conceived a hypothesis, we spontaneously inquire whether it is true. This usual temporal order is reflected in Lonergan's cognitional theory, where 'understanding' (Aristotle's 'first operation') presupposes data to be understood, and where 'judgment' (the 'second operation') presupposes understanding. But these relations are not the only ones, and in the present context Lonergan must emphasize that it also is true that the 'second operation' invites us to a further and more perfect exercise of the 'first.' That is, we desire to understand better what we already know is true. This is precisely the kind of act of understanding that is involved in systematic theology.

The differential between the set of operations that coalesce around understanding and the set of operations that coalesce around judgment is to be located, not in their temporal relations, but in the *objects* of the two operations or levels. Lonergan presents some general reflections from cognitional theory regarding this point, before proceeding to apply the reflections to systematics.

## *2.2 Objects and Operations*

Before discussing these reflections, though, I wish to emphasize that a central feature of Lonergan's development in the years that we are studying is the movement *from objects to operations* as the principal key to method. In *De Deo trino* (and more precisely, in *Divinarum personarum* where there is expressed a position that was not revised in *De Deo trino*), objects are the differential of operations, the key to distinguishing or differentiating operations and tasks. This is straightforward Aristotelian and Thomist doctrine. But there is evidence from these years of a reversal of priorities on Lonergan's part. In fact, the reversal occurred before the 1964 edition of the material that we are now studying, but it is not reflected in this edition. It is clear, for instance, in the 1962 Institute on 'The Method of Theology' that Lonergan conducted at Regis College, Toronto, in the summer of 1962, and in the course "De methodo theologiae" at the Gregorian University in the spring of 1962, on which the

Regis Institute is largely based.<sup>17</sup> The reversal of priorities, in fact, seems to have occurred earlier than this, and perhaps with Lonergan's re-reading of Piaget in immediate preparation for his summer institute in 1959 on the philosophy of education.<sup>18</sup> And beyond that reversal there is evidence of an integration of the two emphases (objects and operations). The integration may well be related to Lonergan's post-*Insight* reading of Husserl.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Consider the following from the beginning of the first lecture in the Regis Institute: "The consideration of method ... is the consideration not directly of objects. According to St Thomas in *Summa Theologiae*, 1, q. 1, a.7, ad 2m, *Theologia tractat de Deo et de aliis quae ad Deum ordinantur* [theology treats of God and of other things that are ordered to God]. That is the object of *theology*. But consideration of *method* is not directly concerned with the object, not with God, with scripture, with the councils, with the Fathers, with the liturgy, or with the Scholastics, but with me and with my operations. It is concerned with the theologian and what the theologian does. It does not imply a total neglect of the object. That is impossible. If you eliminate the object you eliminate the operation, and if you eliminate the operation the subject reverts to the state of sleep, where there are no operations at all. But it is not directly concerned with the objects, and insofar as it considers objects it considers them through the operations. Similarly, it considers the subject not purely as subject without any operations, but as operating. Accordingly, while it is necessary to begin from objects, still objects are considered simply as means to pin down the operations that are involved. It considers objects not for their own sakes, but as discriminants of operations." From a transcript of the first lecture of the 1962 Regis College Institute, "The Method of Theology," revised February 2000.

<sup>18</sup>See Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, vol. 10 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) 177: "*Those operations, as a group, determine an object.* There is an object proportionate to such operations. The object will be compounded of act, form, and potency, where act is the component in the reality corresponding to the *is* of judgment, form is the component in the reality corresponding to the intelligibility grasped by understanding, and potency is the component in the reality corresponding to what is abstracted from in all science, a purely empirical residue. Hence scientific knowledge, in the process and in the attainment of the ideal — an explanation of all phenomena — will be the set of theories (form) verified (act) in instances (potency)." All of this, of course, is pure *Insight*. But what is emergent in it is the centrality of the emphasis on operations, which will yield in the chapter on Piaget to an analysis of development in terms of the group of operations (and implicitly of philosophical development in terms of the basic group of operations). "When development moves to the level of the group of operations, the group orders all the objects." *Topics in Education* 202; see 180, note 17. The significance for theology is in retrospect clear, but it was to take another six years before it took the form of functional specialization.

<sup>19</sup>For one instance, see Lonergan, "Religious Knowledge," in *A Third Collection* 141: "Generalized empirical method operates on a combination of both the data of sense and the data of consciousness: it does not treat of objects without taking into account the corresponding operations of the subject; it does not treat of the subject's operations without taking into account the corresponding objects." The footnote at this point is instructive: "Distinguish three meanings of the term, transcendental: the most general and all-

### 2.3 Assent and Understanding

But let us return to the text that we are considering. The term 'object' can mean three things. The object can be that which moves us to an operation. It can be the term interiorly produced by an operation. It can be the end intended by the operation, its objective.<sup>20</sup> Lonergan draws on his cognitive theory to elucidate this threefold meaning of 'object.'

The object that moves us to act in the 'first operation,' that is, the object that moves us to direct insight in this life, is, in Thomas's terms, the nature existing in corporeal matter (*quidditas seu natura in materia corporali existens*). In Lonergan's terms, this is called the intelligibility immanent in the concrete presentations of sense and imagination. The object that is the term interiorly produced in this 'first operation' is the conceived definition, hypothesis, or supposition, the inner word that issues from the act of direct understanding grasping that intelligibility.

The object that moves us to act in the 'second operation' is sufficient evidence, and the object as immanently produced term is the true, proceeding as inner word in the judgment that issues from a grasp of the sufficiency of the evidence: yes or no.

The object that is the end intended by *both* operations is being, what is, the end or objective of the entire cognitive process, the objective of the desire to know.

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pervasive concepts, namely, *ens, unum, verum, bonum*, of the Scholastics; the Kantian conditions of the possibility of knowing an object *a priori*; Husserl's intentionality analysis in which *noësis* and *noëma*, act and object, are correlative." "Religious Knowledge," 145, note 8. The third meaning of 'transcendental' does not appear in Lonergan's discussion of the term in *Method in Theology*; see pp. 13-14, note 4, where the Scholastic and Kantian, but not the Husserlian, meanings of 'transcendental' are mentioned. Lonergan's few comments on Husserl in *Insight* are critical, but it is clear that shortly thereafter he was profoundly influenced by portions of *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, to which he refers constantly in lectures of the late 1950s and early 1960s (beginning, it seems, with the Boston College lectures on existentialism and phenomenology in 1957; see chapter 11 of the forthcoming *Phenomenology and Logic*, vol. 18 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Philip McShane).

<sup>20</sup>As Lonergan here begins his reflections by considerations of these objects, so at the end of the chapter he will return to the notion of object to unify all that he has said in the chapter. Moreover, a similar, in fact almost identical treatment of 'object' can be found in the second chapter of the *Pars systematica*, at 103-104, in a discussion of the distinction between the act of understanding and the consequent inner word.

Now the identity of the end intended by the two operations, the fact that each operation intends *being*, means that the other objects just listed are not distinct in any absolute fashion (*non simpliciter distincta*). That which we experience by the senses is the very same thing (1) whose intelligibility we seek when we ask, 'What is it?' (2) whose intelligibility we grasp in the sensible, (3) whose intelligibility we express conceptually, (4) concerning whose existence we inquire further, (5) about which we grasp evidence sufficient for affirmation, (6) which we affirm to be because of the grasped evidence, (7) whose reality we know through the truth of judgment, and finally, (8) which is better and better known because of the frequent repetition of this whole process until all aspects of the thing are understood perfectly and truly.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, just as it is one reality that we know through many acts, so also it is one act that confirms the validity of all the other acts: the act of judgment. The true, which is formally known only in judgment, regards the truth (correspondence) not only of judgment itself but also of all the other acts. If I truly judge, for instance, that 'this is a human being,' the truth of that judgment confirms the truth (correspondence) of (1) the individual known by the senses ('this'), (2) the intelligibility grasped by understanding ('human'), and (3) the existence posited in the judgment itself ('is').

It is clear from these cognitional-theoretic considerations that the act by which an *understanding of the faith* is reached is an instance of what Aristotle called the 'first operation.' It is not an instance of the 'second operation.' The theologian who seeks to understand the mysteries of faith does not doubt whether there are such mysteries or whether they are true. The relevant operation has to be some instance of the 'first operation,' where we ask, 'What is it?' about something we already believe with certainty, or 'Why is this so?' 'How can it be true?' about something that we have no doubt is truly so.

But in this particular case, the 'first operation' — questions for intelligence, the act of understanding, and the inner word of conceptualization — clearly is not first in a temporal sense. The assent of

<sup>21</sup>See *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* 10.

faith precedes the systematic understanding of the mysteries. I believe in the Trinity, and indeed in the divine processions, relations, persons, and missions (see the wording of the major creeds), before I have any technical understanding of what a divine procession might be, of the four divine relations, of the divine persons as subsistent relations, and of the missions of Word and Spirit as the divine processions joined with a created external term. And this assent of faith, since it is given to something true, is an instance of the 'second operation.'<sup>22</sup>

What, then, in the order of understanding, precedes the assent of faith? In *De Deo trino* (and the earlier *Divinarum personarum*), Lonergan speaks of a certain catechetical understanding by which we grasp the meaning of the articles of faith in a manner sufficient for the assent of faith. But in the light of *Method in Theology*, we can say that *in theology itself* such a merely catechetical understanding is not sufficient. What precedes the assent of faith *as the latter is articulated in the functional specialty 'doctrines'* are all the operations, including operations of understanding, involved in the first five functional specialties, as well as the extra-theological events that constitute the mediating subject. In some cases this entails a quite complex set of operations, since the *theological* doctrines to which one gives assent may themselves have been subjected to quite technical processes of transposition from their original formulations.<sup>23</sup> In that case, the judgment is a judgment that the transposition is faithful to the original meaning intended by the church or by the theologian who first formulated the doctrine.

This does not mean, of course, that every individual theologian has to perform all of these operations. The operations that Lonergan came to

<sup>22</sup>A *quaestiuncula* at the end of the second chapter of the 1959 version of *Divinarum personarum* addresses the question of the extent of knowledge of the divine processions among those who are not technically proficient in theology. Here Lonergan distinguishes (1) the quite separate conceptions of procession and of 'divine'; (2) the composition of these two in a faith affirmation; and (3) the understanding of this faith affirmation, giving rise to some kind of unified conception of divine procession. All the faithful can 'do' the first and second of these, but the third is the task of theologians, and they can perform this task only gradually, in fact, only as a community that collaborates over the course of centuries.

<sup>23</sup>On the relationship of theological doctrines to systematics, see Doran, "Bernard Lonergan and the Functions of Systematic Theology" 582-589, and "Reflections on Method in Systematic Theology."

differentiate into functional specializations occur within a *community* of theologians. The theological habit, if you want, is not only individual but also communal.<sup>24</sup> The community in which the habit resides is a function of a collaboration that extends over centuries. That collaboration has resulted in the availability of certain judgments of fact and judgments of value that are constitutive of the community of the church. In the case of dogmas and other mysteries of faith, these judgments are irreversible; however much their meaning may be reformulated for different ages and contexts, that meaning itself is permanent.<sup>25</sup>

So, while there is a 'catechetical understanding' of the mysteries of faith that is prior to the lived assent of faith itself (and a great deal more than catechetical understanding, as Balthasar, for instance, will insist), there is also a more technical hermeneutical and historical understanding (and sensibility) that belongs to the church and especially to the theological community. It precedes the *theological* affirmation of doctrines that marks the sixth functional specialty. Furthermore, necessarily contained in what precedes the assent of faith articulated in the functional specialty 'doctrines' are the religious, moral, *intellectual*, and (I maintain) psychic conversions that first make it possible that the truth affirmed in doctrines can come within the horizon of the *theological* subject. These are definite developments, it seems, in articulating the relation of systematics to doctrines, beyond Lonergan's formulation of the issue in *De Deo trino*.

Still, despite these developments, the main point remains constant: the particular understanding that we call *intelligentia fidei*, an understanding grounded in the same foundational horizon that grounds the assent to doctrines, follows rather than precedes that judgmental assent.

Next, while the understanding of mysteries intended in systematic theology is an instance of the 'first operation,' it is intimately connected with operations of the 'second' type, and this *in either direction*. The first set of connections is clear: we are speaking of an understanding of mysteries

<sup>24</sup>There is a fine treatment of the notion of habit as communal at several points in a book by Ivo Coelho that will be published by University of Toronto Press in 2001: *Hermeneutics and Method: The "Universal Viewpoint" in Bernard Lonergan*.

<sup>25</sup>Evidence will be provided in the Collected Works publication of Lonergan's "Doctrinal Pluralism" (in vol. 14) that indicate that while he was writing this lecture he changed his formulation from the 'immutability' of dogmatic meaning to its 'permanence.'

that have already been affirmed to be true. The second is that, as soon as one has acquired some such understanding of the mysteries, one begins to ask whether one's understanding is itself true. There are judgments that precede systematic understanding, and there are other judgments that follow upon it. The antecedent judgments regard revealed truth, and the consequent judgments regard theological truth.<sup>26</sup>

Despite its intimate connection with antecedent and consequent judgments, however, the understanding of mysteries is in itself a precisely determined act, and Lonergan goes on at this point to list ten properties of this quite determinate act called *intelligentia theologica*. Some of these statements will require qualification, and I will indicate the need as the issues arise. The ten points treat: (1) the object that moves to theological understanding; (2) the imperfect nature of such understanding; (3) its analogical character; (4) its obscurity; (5) its gradual development; (6) its synthetic character; (7) the imperfection, analogical character, obscurity, and gradual development not just of individual elements but also of the synthesis itself; (8) its fruitfulness; (9) the worthwhileness of pursuing such understanding even when one succeeds but

<sup>26</sup>On the position formulated later in terms of functional specialization, there will be the question also of *theological* truth in some of the antecedent judgments. For 'doctrines' as a functional specialty involves or regards not only the mysteries revealed by God (some of which are expressed in dogmatic statements) but also other doctrines that one holds to be true, including the *theological doctrines of other theologians or even of oneself*. With respect to theological doctrines, the issue of theological truth arises in or with regard to the functional specialty 'doctrines' itself. The truth accorded these theological doctrines is hardly the antecedent truth accorded what one regards as revealed mysteries. It is a *theological* truth, but one that is *antecedent* to the pursuit of further theological understanding. Its criteria are different from those that affect dogmatic truth. Among these criteria, I suggest the following: (1) Does a particular systematic understanding truly bring closure to a debate? A clear example is Aquinas's understanding of the relation of grace and freedom, as interpreted by Lonergan. Lonergan's presentation of Thomas's position simply ends the *De auxiliis* controversy, by pronouncing a plague on both houses. (2) Does it employ an analogy that, all things considered, does the job better than any other and links the particular doctrine under investigation with other doctrines? I continue to regard the psychological analogy for the Trinitarian processions as meeting this criterion. Is there any other analogy that enables a better understanding of how it can be true that there are *three* persons in *one* God? (3) Does it express an inescapable practical or paranetic conclusion of the Gospel of God in Christ Jesus? Despite official bureaucratic hesitations regarding liberation theology, the Catholic Church has come to regard the preferential option for the poor in this way.

These issues are addressed again in "Reflections on Method in Systematic Theology."

little; and (10) the support given by Vatican I to this notion of theological understanding. I will discuss each of these in turn.

#### *2.4 Characteristics of Theological Understanding*

(1) The first point has to do with the object that moves one to theological understanding of divinely revealed mysteries. That object, Lonergan says, is not an intelligibility existing in sensible corporeal matter, but the very intelligibility of God, in whom the mysteries themselves are hidden. But the intelligibility of God moves us, not immediately, as it will in the beatific vision, but mediately, that is, through something true that has been revealed by God and accepted in faith (*per verum divinitus revelatum et fide susceptum*).

This statement calls for some immediate comment. Certainly it is true that, by the time the theological wheel of operations is prepared to move to systematics in the proper sense of that term, the mediation of the mystery of God does occur proximately through those affirmations that have been made in doctrines. And clearly this is what Lonergan means here by mediation through a truth that has been revealed by God and accepted in faith. But it must also be emphasized with Hans Urs von Balthasar that (to use Lonergan's language) there is a quite definite sense in which the object that moves to theological understanding of divinely revealed mysteries, namely, the intelligibility of God, *is* mediated through an elemental meaning grasped by "the eye of religious love" *in sensible corporeal matter* before ever it is mediated through a formally true statement or set of statements, that is, through the full acts of meaning that consist in judgments.

For Balthasar (correctly, I believe), such mediation of the intelligibility and goodness of God through the elemental meaning of the beauty that reflects and expresses God's glory precedes and motivates the assent of faith itself and must be preserved even as faith moves to beliefs, beliefs to doctrines and dogmas, and doctrines and dogmas to theological understanding. The object that moves to theological understanding of divinely revealed mysteries, the very intelligibility of the mystery of God, is mediated to us first through the elemental meaning (to use Lonergan's term) constitutive of the 'form' of revelation itself, the elemental meaning

residing in the embodiment of the glory of God in created forms and above all in the assumed humanity of Jesus, in his risen body, and in the drama of his existence. It is mediated through the incarnate meaning of a deed that is true. And that mediation occurs before ever the truth of the divine deed is formulated in doctrines or dogmas. In fact, it is mediated through the incarnate meaning of many deeds that are true, under the impetus of the universal mission of the Holy Spirit.

If I am not mistaken, Lonergan's later conception and formulation of the entire theological enterprise and of its dependence on religious experience and conversion allow for the point that I am making. So does his later understanding of the distinction between faith and beliefs. But it is difficult to account for this point within the framework of the understanding of theology that still is present in *De Deo trino*. And so I am proposing here a qualification of what he says in that work, one that I believe can be reconciled with statements in the 'later Lonergan,' but one also that the Lonergan of 1964 (or 1957, when that part of the text that we are studying was first published) might not have been prepared to grant.

It is primarily Balthasar who draws our attention to the mediation that occurs through the aesthetic *form of revelation*, especially in the incarnation, which is the center of that form, and through the dramatic sequence of events that constitute Jesus' history and that disclose the mystery of divine grace and human freedom. But there is to be added to Balthasar's explicit emphases, which are largely christological, the mediation that occurs through the sensible manifestations of the work of the Holy Spirit in human hearts, whether within explicitly Christian contexts or not: consolations and desolations, created images and desires, manifestations of call and mission, what Eric Voegelin (I believe) calls the silent voice of conscience and grace.<sup>27</sup> In fact, it is ultimately in these aesthetic and dramatic dimensions not only of revelation, but also of redemption and the universal gift of grace, that the church finds the *evidence* for formal statements regarding its constitutive meaning.

<sup>27</sup>I cannot locate the text, but I am almost certain the expression is Voegelin's. This is not to say that there is not an adequate pneumatology in Balthasar; I am not prepared to make that judgment, one way or the other. It is simply to insist on the balance, indeed even the creative tension, of the divine missions in a way that is not always apparent in his work.

This elemental mediation of the intelligibility and beauty and goodness of God is prior to, and grounds, the mediation of the divine mystery that occurs through the full meaning of those judgments that are dogmas, the mediation to which Lonergan refers in the text that we are studying, a mediation that occurs through true propositions. God's goodness, Balthasar says, does not encounter us first in "already articulated sayings" that are true but in a *deed* that is true, a deed whose meaning is formulated only later in human sayings that we hold to be true. And in that deed the beauty, the glory, of the revealing God becomes the first indication of revelation. Balthasar puts it best: the "rightful place" of the *pulchrum* "within the total ordered structure" is "as the manner in which God's goodness (*bonum*) gives itself and is expressed by God and understood by [us] as the truth (*verum*)."<sup>28</sup> The reception of precisely *such* a self-giving of God is, I believe, a primal religious experience. One knows in this experience that the deed is already meaning and truth, and so 'word.'<sup>29</sup> *Faith knows that*. The aesthetic reception of God's self-giving in the mode of the *pulchrum* is nearer to the immediate self-giving of the beatific vision than anything else that we can experience in this life. Even the most intense experiences of mystical union are but an intensification of the self-gift of the goodness of God in a manner that can only be called beauty. The forms that the self-gift, once received, can take are as many as the individual recipients, since God treats each of us differently, but what is common to them all is the mediation of the goodness and intelligibility of God in the meaning inherent in the received gift.

That meaning Lonergan would call elemental. It is later (sometimes) 'promoted' to formal, full or actual, and constitutive status through human words proceeding under God's grace and direction from human

<sup>28</sup>Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Seeing the Form*, volume 1 of *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, trans. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis, ed. Joseph Fessio, S.J., and John Riches (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982) third unnumbered page of Foreword.

<sup>29</sup>Thus Lonergan: "By the word is meant any expression of religious meaning or of religious value. Its carrier may be intersubjectivity, or art, or symbol, or language, or the remembered and portrayed lives or deeds or achievements of individuals or classes or groups." *Method in Theology* 112.

insights; but the elemental meaning of the divine deed will always exceed our ability to formulate it in 'articulated sayings.'<sup>30</sup>

(2) Lonergan's second point is that the theological understanding proper to systematic theology is of necessity imperfect and incomplete (*imperfecta*). In Scholastic terms, it is a finite act determined by a finite *species intelligibilis*, and a finite act is in no way proportionate to perfect understanding of the infinitely perfect God. So, since the object of theological understanding is a mystery hidden in God, it is not possible in this life and short of the beatific vision that theological understanding be perfect or complete. In fact, we see here the ground of the insistence on the apophatic dimension of theology that has been a constant emphasis throughout the history of Christianity. And to this we may add with Karl Rahner that because, as Paul puts it, hope 'remains,' even the beatific vision is not 'perfect comprehension' in the sense of a grasp that transcends self-surrender to the uncontrollability and incalculability of God. Rahner and Lonergan both follow Aquinas in saying that in the beatific vision God becomes the *species intelligibilis* that enables the vision. But even there, understanding remains surrender to what cannot ever be controlled or calculated. 'Mystery' remains, then, in the beatific vision, and understanding is still *intelligentia mysteriorum*.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup>I believe that what I have just said is consistent with the position on faith found in *Method in Theology*. I do not know whether it is consistent with that found earlier, and especially in "Analysis fidei." Furthermore, Lonergan's later position on faith can probably be easily reconciled with that proposed by Balthasar in the first volume of *The Glory of the Lord*, whereas I am not sure that his earlier position can. We might think as well of Eric Voegelin's constant attempts to penetrate to the engendering experiences that lie behind the statements of doctrines (whether philosophical or theological). Also related to this discussion is the valuable contribution of Avery Dulles, *Models of Revelation* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983) chapter 9, where Dulles moves beyond model thinking to argue that revelation takes the form of symbolic communication, that is, of what Lonergan would call elemental meaning. The issue is related to the other functions of systematic theology beyond that function that Lonergan emphasizes, the function of understanding those mysteries that have received dogmatic formulation.

Perhaps it is worth mentioning at this point that Balthasar's presentation of the issues in terms of the transcendentals (*pulchrum, bonum, verum*) raises the discussion beyond the conceptualist criticisms of 'experiential-expressive' models found in George Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984).

<sup>31</sup>See Karl Rahner, "On the Theology of Hope," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 10: *Writings of 1965-1967* 2, trans. David Bourke (New York: Seabury, 1977) 242-259. One of the

(3) This imperfect understanding is also analogical. A finite act of understanding regards directly something finite, and what directly regards the finite can be extended to the infinite only by way of analogy. The analogy, according to Vatican I, is with realities that can be known by the natural use of human intelligence. As I said in the previous article, this point is important for adjudicating the relationship between Lonergan and Balthasar. Balthasar also employs and recommends analogies, and they can be helpful analogies; but they are not always the analogies of which the First Vatican Council spoke. For example, his analogy between the economic and the immanent Trinity is an analogy *between mysteries of faith*, not an analogy from nature to understand supernatural mystery.<sup>32</sup>

(4) This imperfect and analogical understanding is also obscure. Analogy is valid only insofar as there exists some likeness (*similitudo*) between creator and creature. But, as the church teaches in a formal statement, "between creator and creature there cannot be acknowledged so great a likeness that there is not to be acknowledged between them an even greater unlikeness."<sup>33</sup> Some light may proceed from the likeness, but a greater darkness proceeds from the greater unlikeness.

The elemental dimension of experience that first mediates the mystery, the dimension to which I called attention in commenting above on Lonergan's first point, supports the methodological assertion of the obscurity of theological understanding. But I might add that this point regarding the greater unlikeness in the midst of analogical likenesses

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readers of the present paper pointed out to me a connection with Lonergan's position on Jesus' own knowledge. Jesus did possess the beatific vision, but he did not know all that is in God's power, including why God chose this universe that entails, among other things, Jesus' own passion: all of which bears on the uncontrollability and incalculability of God even as regards the incarnate Son as man.

<sup>32</sup>In addition, of course, Balthasar does call for and develop aesthetic and dramatic analogies that in their own way more closely approximate the ideals of the Council (although it certainly cannot be said that the Council intended aesthetic and dramatic analogies). My point is not to deny that Balthasar's aesthetic and dramatic analogies have some affinity to the Council's notion of theological understanding but rather to distinguish the analogies with 'nature' (to which the aesthetic and dramatic analogies belong) and analogies between mysteries of faith, such as the analogy that Balthasar relies on between 'immanent' and 'economic' Trinity, that is, between procession and mission.

<sup>33</sup>DB 432, DS 806.

holds also for the aesthetic analogies employed by Balthasar, where the analogy is between inner-worldly *beauty* and the otherworldly *glory* that reveals itself especially in Christ. And it holds, too, for Balthasar's analogies of faith, for example, for the analogy that he constructs between what have come to be called (for better or for worse) the economic and the immanent Trinity. On Lonergan's Thomist account (which Balthasar shares<sup>34</sup>) the so-called 'economic Trinity' is identically the missions of Word and Spirit, and the missions are identically the divine processions linked with a created external term. As created, the external term is finite. For Lonergan, the created external term that is the consequent condition of the mission of the Word is the secondary act of existence of the assumed humanity; and the created external term that is the consequent condition of the mission of the Spirit is sanctifying grace, issuing in the habit of charity.<sup>35</sup> As created and finite, these external terms would seem to fall under the same limitations as other finite realities, as far as their likeness to God is concerned (even though they are created *grace*, and so supernatural, and so partaking of the very mystery in which they permit us to share). At this point, I am simply indicating questions that need sorting out. A great deal of reflection is set loose by Lonergan's understanding of understanding in theology, and very little has yet been done to pick up on the questions that his work enables us to raise.

(5) However imperfect, analogical, and obscure this understanding may be, it does grow in the course of time. The assertion that grace does not take away nature but perfects it holds as well for the grace that is at work in authentic theology. The human mind advances slowly to more perfect acts through a series of intermediate acts; insights accumulate into viewpoints, and viewpoints become more and more extensive and inclusive. There is a self-correcting process of learning that can range all the way from shifting the balance of one's thought to changing one's judgments so that one now holds to be true what earlier one regarded as

<sup>34</sup>They both hold that the divine missions are the divine processions joined to a created term. Balthasar does not rely on a precise understanding of intelligible emanation to gain some remote and analogical understanding of divine procession, nor to my knowledge does he have a methodological doctrine of extrinsic or contingent predication.

<sup>35</sup>See *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* 234-235.

false, and vice versa. But what Lonergan is affirming at this point is especially the deepened grasp over time of just where the mystery lies and why, and the heightened appreciation of what does and does not help one to understand it, and in what that understanding consists. Consider the following from *Verbum*.

the psychological analogy truly gives a deeper insight into what God is. Still, that insight stands upon analogy; it does not penetrate to the very core, the essence of God, in which alone Trinitarian doctrine can be contemplated in its full intelligibility; grasping properly *quid sit Deus* is the beatific vision. Just as an experimental physicist may not grasp most of quantum mathematics, but under the direction of a mathematician may very intelligently devise and perform experiments that advance the quantum theory, so also the theologian with no proper grasp of *quid sit Deus* but under the direction of divine revelation really operates in virtue of and towards an understanding that he personally in this life cannot possess.<sup>36</sup>

(6) This imperfect, analogical, obscure, and slowly evolving understanding is also synthetic. Not only do we inquire first about this and then about that, but also, as we come to understand this and then that, we inquire further as to how they are related to one another. After the individual mysteries of faith have been considered separately, there arise questions about their connection with one another and with our last end.<sup>37</sup> As these questions are answered we approach, and eventually arrive at, a synthetic understanding. It is only at this point that a systematic theology is actually being assembled, a unified statement expressing a consistent and coherent understanding of the realities affirmed in the meanings that are constitutive of the community of the church.

(7) This very synthesis is itself imperfect, analogical, obscure, and slowly evolving. Synthesis is the understanding of many things together,

<sup>36</sup> *Verbum* 215.

<sup>37</sup> The addition of "and with our last end" depends, of course, on *DB* 1796, *DS* 3016, on which Lonergan relies for his understanding of systematic theology. But the relation of our supernatural end to the act of faith and the mysteries that we affirm in faith is also explained by Lonergan in his short Latin work "Analysis fidei." While I believe that there are elements of that work that Lonergan may have moved beyond, this is not one of them.

and the same reasons that ground the affirmation that the understanding of individual mysteries must be imperfect, analogical, obscure, and slowly evolving obtain for the understanding of many mysteries together.

The 'slowly evolving' aspect occupied Lonergan in greater detail in other works, and most principally in the opening part of his 1959 course "De intellectu et methodo."<sup>38</sup> But further reflection on that notion (except for what Lonergan says later about the proper development of systematic achievement) must be postponed; it belongs properly in the treatment of the relation between system and history. Lonergan introduces discussion of this relation in the later sections of the chapter whose early sections we are examining here.

(8) Although even a synthetic theological understanding is imperfect, analogical, obscure, and slowly evolving, nonetheless it can also be most fruitful. The condition of one who understands is always better than that of one who does not, whether it be for the sake of apprehending truth, or teaching it to others, or moving oneself to decision and action, or counseling and directing others. The more theological understanding can be extended to everything that has been revealed by God, the more fully can what has been revealed be apprehended, the more deeply can it be affirmed (in real and not simply notional assent), the more efficaciously can it be taught, and the more faithfully can the whole of human life in all its aspects be directed to our ultimate and supernatural end.

(9) So worthwhile is the pursuit of theological understanding, Lonergan holds, that no small or mean profit is derived even if one attains but little of such understanding. A person who is seeking theological understanding has to attend to everything that leads to such understanding, and so to all that God has revealed to us and to all that the church proposes to be believed by all. Obviously no small or mean profit accrues to one who seriously, perseveringly, accurately, exactly considers the things that have been revealed and the things that are to be believed, both in themselves and in what follows from them. It is not true that

<sup>38</sup>It is also the dimension of systematic theology that I refer to when, in "Bernard Lonergan and the Functions of Systematic Theology," I speak of a genetic sequence of systematic statements. For greater detail on this notion see Robert M. Doran, "System and History: The Challenge to Catholic Systematic Theology," in *Theological Studies* 60:4 (1999) 652-678.

unless one actually arrives at profound understanding of the mysteries, one has been wasting one's time.

(10) Finally, as we have seen, the First Vatican Council authoritatively put its stamp of approval on this conception of theological understanding. It affirmed that in fact there does exist such an imperfect, analogous, obscure, gradually evolving, synthetic, and most fruitful understanding. "Reason illumined by faith, when it inquires carefully, devoutly, and soberly, attains by God's gift some understanding, indeed a most fruitful one, of the mysteries, both by analogy with what it knows naturally and from the connection of the mysteries with one another and with our last end. But never is reason made capable of penetrating the mysteries as it penetrates the truths that constitute its proper objects."<sup>39</sup> Again, "Let ... understanding, knowledge, and wisdom advance mightily and strongly in individuals and in all, in one person as well as in the whole church, according to the degree proper to each age and each time."<sup>40</sup>

### SECTION 3 OF THE 1964 VERSION: QUESTION OR PROBLEM

Here we move to the issue of the differences between the earlier and later versions of this chapter. The third section of the 1964 edition of the first chapter, a section entitled *De quaestione seu problemate* does not appear in the earlier version. It treats, not the act by which we arrive at the goal of theological understanding, but the series of acts by which that goal is *intended* before it is reached. The anticipation is named a question (*quaestio*) or a problem (*problema*). The section investigates (1) what is meant by these terms and (2) how a question or problem, that is, the anticipation of a goal, can be methodically organized so as to lead expeditiously to a resolution. Here is where I find the evidence for part of my hypothesis regarding the relation between the two versions of this

<sup>39</sup>DB 1796, DS 3016.

<sup>40</sup>DB 1800, DS 3020. We will see in the next section that in the 1964 version Lonergan presents a rather idiosyncratic interpretation of the "understanding, knowledge, and wisdom" extolled by the Council, an interpretation that was influenced by his attempts to come to terms with the ideal of mathematical or symbolic logic and to relate his own thoughts on method to such an ideal.

chapter, namely, for the claim that in writing this text Lonergan was attempting to relate his thought on systematic understanding to the ideals of contemporary mathematical or symbolic logic, ideals that he addressed in some detail and with a great deal of sophistication in his 1957 lectures at Boston College.<sup>41</sup> These ideals are on his mind as he writes this section.

The focus on 'question' or 'problem' in systematics has its own history in Lonergan's development. Clearly, this section is related *ahead* to the section called "Mystery and Problem" in the chapter on systematics in *Method in Theology*, where the issue is presented more clearly because the issues related to logic that are in the forefront of Lonergan's presentation in 1964 have been settled. But it is also related *back* to a series of lectures and courses that Lonergan gave between the two editions of his systematics of the Trinity. It was in these lectures and courses that the issue of 'the problem' or 'the question' became prominent in his discussion of what systematic theology is all about.<sup>42</sup> The treatment of *problema* or *quaestio* appears in 1964; no explicit attention was paid to it in the earlier *Divinarum personarum* of 1957 and 1959; but the complexities of the 1964 treatment have to be traced to issues that arose, I believe, in the 'in-between' period, and the clarity of *Method in Theology* is due to the fact that those issues eventually came to be settled in a manner that allowed Lonergan to move on. Such are the broad parameters, I believe, of this particular development on Lonergan's part.

The relevant issues that arose in the period between the publication in 1957 of *Divinarum personarum* and the revision of 1964 as the *pars systematica* of *De Deo trino* have to do especially with the distinction of method from logic. Lonergan was always aware of the distinction. I am not trying to claim that the distinction arose for him only at this time. But the 1957 lectures on mathematical logic express an explicit focusing on the distinction, and especially a concentration on how to express it in a way that might enable communication with contemporary logicians while

<sup>41</sup>These lectures will be published as part 1 of *Phenomenology and Logic* (see above, note 19).

<sup>42</sup>For the development of the treatment of 'problem' or 'question' as it affects systematic theology see the notes on the courses "De intellectu et methodo" (1959) and "De methodo theologiae" (1962) as well as the 1962 Regis College Institute, "The Method of Theology."

assuring Scholastic philosophers and theologians of the distinct procedures peculiar to the exercise of their specialties. Some of the key issues in Lonergan's own development of a position on method emerged as he confronted these issues. The concern is most clear in the opening section of the 1959 course "De intellectu et methodo," but it is also apparent in the section that we are studying at present, and especially in the interpretation that Lonergan gives here to the notions of *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia*. From his struggles during this period with the question of how to formulate the difference between logic and method, Lonergan derived positive fruit in his understanding of several important points in his own understanding of method, and especially in his understanding of 'foundations.' The direction in which he will go on the question of foundations is clear already in the fourth of the lectures of 1957 on mathematical logic; but it is worked out with ever greater precision as he attempts to speak of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge or science in the context of distinguishing Scholastic procedures from logical method and of relating the two to one another. But he had to go through this complex effort in order to arrive where he did. What we see in *De Deo trino* is an instance of the effort.

These are the considerations that govern the interpretation that I am presenting here of this section of the first chapter of *De Deo trino, Pars systematica*. Let us move, then, to exposition.

### 3.1 Questions Occur Spontaneously, Explicitly, and Knowingly or Reflexively

A 'question' or 'problem' can arise in three ways: spontaneously, explicitly, and knowingly or reflexively (*scienter*). A 'question' or 'problem' occurs *spontaneously* whenever we experience the wonder that Aristotle called the beginning of all science and philosophy. A question occurs *explicitly* when we clearly and distinctly say what it is we are seeking. And a question arises *knowingly or reflexively (scienter)* when we are able to present reasons for asking a particular question.

When problems arise for systematics, the precise reasons for raising them are presented, and so the manner in which the questions arise is the third, reflexive manner. The question for systematics expresses some such

difficulty as, *How* can this be true, *What* can this possibly mean? where *this* has already received a clearly defined problematic status.

### *3.2 Reasons Regard Coherence, Understanding, or Fact*

A further set of distinctions is required. Not only does the raising of a properly systematic question include the indication of the reasons one is asking the questions, but also such reasons may be at least threefold and only one of the types qualifies as properly systematic.

Questions for which reasons may be given can regard *coherence, understanding, or fact*.<sup>43</sup> But only questions for understanding are proper to systematic theology. Questions about coherence or about fact are not properly speaking systematic questions, however much they may be related to the goals and objectives of systematic theology.

The example that Lonergan uses to illustrate the differences among these three reasons for raising questions is the question of the 'aseity' of the Holy Spirit. Questions about the aseity of the Holy Spirit can be asked in the interests of coherence, or for the sake of understanding, or in the form of a question of fact.

If the reason for asking the question has to do with coherence, the question will be something like the following.

<sup>43</sup>A theology that would take account of and address so-called 'postmodern' concerns and the various hermeneutics of suspicion would have to come to grips as well with darker 'reasons' for asking questions than those that Lonergan mentions at this point. Here, of course, the word 'reasons' does not refer to anything within reflective self-awareness that can be provided as a legitimate intellectual motive, but rather with causes and 'motives' that lie at another level, requiring a hermeneutic of suspicion if they are to be uncovered. But such an investigation would be a matter of dialectic and foundations. Systematics presupposes a precarious intellectual genuineness under grace that not all postmodern worldviews would acknowledge as a possibility. Lonergan had no doubt that 'the age of innocence is over,' and the differentials that he proposes for progress and decline, authenticity and inauthenticity, address precisely this situation. In particular, he knows how precarious cognitive authenticity is. But he is also aware of its conditions, as is clear from his outline of the dimensions of conversion. Without grace we are incapable of *any* sustained intellectual integrity.

I believe, too, that what I have called psychic conversion is pertinent to various post-Nietzschean suspicions and to uncovering biases that would use questions as instruments of power or for some other less worthy end. In fact, it may be, at least in some instances, the *most* pertinent aspect of generalized empirical method for adjudicating such issues.

How can the Holy Spirit be *a se* if the Holy Spirit is from the Father and from the Son? For whoever is from others is not *a se*.

Yet how can the Holy Spirit not be *a se*, since the Holy Spirit is God, and God is *a se*?

Obviously there exists a problem that demands some kind of answer, but in this case it is a problem of coherence. As Lonergan emphasizes in the studies that he did of mathematical or symbolic logic (which influenced both his lectures "De intellectu et methodo" and the treatment of 'question' or 'problem' that we are now considering), questions that have to do with coherence or consistency arise if it seems that either part of a contradiction can be established or demonstrated.<sup>44</sup> That is precisely the case in the question under consideration.

The same express question, Is the Holy Spirit *a se*? can be asked for other reasons. One of these is concerned with the problem of *understanding*. Granted that the Holy Spirit is both *a se* and not *a se*, how can both of these alternatives be true? The question for understanding is the type of question entertained and pursued in systematic theology: granted the doctrine, how can it be true? In this case, the answer would be simple if the Holy Spirit were composite, for then in one regard the Holy Spirit could be *a se*, and in another regard not *a se*. But the Holy Spirit is entirely simple, and so there arises a very serious problem of understanding: How can the utterly simple Holy Spirit be both *a se* and not *a se*? Again, this is precisely the type of question entertained in systematic theology: granted that the doctrine is true, how can it be true?

Finally, the same express question can address the problem of *fact*. Does there really exist a third divine person? Is the existence of the Holy Spirit taught in the "fonts of revelation"? Is it understood in the fonts of revelation in the same sense as appeared later in the councils and the writings of theologians? Here we revert from systematics to a question for doctrines or, in Lonergan's earlier language, to a question for dogmatic theology as contrasted with systematic theology.

The three kinds of questions are intimately connected, but at different times one or other form of the question will be more pro-

<sup>44</sup>See especially the first lecture on mathematical logic.

nounced. At the very beginning of a scientific enterprise, when it might be necessary to persuade people to engage at all in such inquiry, it can be most useful to posit the problem of coherence. Thus in the history of theology Abelard, following in the footsteps of canonists and anticipating the development of speculative systematic theology, wrote his *Sic et non*, offering both affirmative and negative support from authorities for 158 different theological propositions. In this way he demonstrated that *questions exist*. His efforts were followed by a number of attempts to resolve the questions. Some wrote books of sentences, in which the materials of the problems from the scriptures and the Fathers of the church were gathered and arranged. Others developed various solutions and made them available either by way of commenting on books of sentences, or more independently in shorter collections of *quaestiones*, or even in those larger works that qualify as *summae* of the whole of theology. With these developments there began the movement from questions regarding the coherence of doctrinal statements to questions that seek to understand those same statements.

### *3.3 Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge*

In the *Quaestiones disputatae* and the *Summae* the concern shifted from coherence to understanding. Genuinely systematic theology began at this time. But when the objective is ordered, synthetic understanding, new problems arise. Perhaps the most important of these is that questions cannot be put in just any order whatever; some questions cannot be resolved until and unless others are settled first, and, conversely, once some questions are settled, the way is open for the solution of others.

The systematic ordering of questions occurs according to what Lonergan, following Aquinas, calls the *ordo disciplinae* or the *ordo doctrinae*. It is clear that Aquinas rearranged the order of theological questions as his own development went forward. His development precisely as a *systematic* theologian can be ascertained by following the course of the various ways in which he arranges the questions. One order, in retrospect seen to be almost haphazard when contrasted with what followed, is found in his commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. A quite different and much more systematic order is found in the *Summa theologiae*. In between,

in the *Summa contra Gentiles*, there can be found yet another order that in many ways is transitional. Moreover, by the time at least of the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas had become aware of the significance of the different ways of ordering questions. In the Prologue to the *Summa theologiae* he distinguished the order of learning (*ordo disciplinae*) from, for example, the order to be followed when one is commenting on a book. "We have considered how newcomers to theology are greatly hindered by various writings on the subject, partly because of the multiplication of useless questions, articles, and arguments, partly because what is necessary for such people if they are to understand is presented not according to the *ordo disciplinae* but according to the requirements of textual commentary or the occasions of an academic debate, and partly because repetition has bred boredom and confusion in the minds of the students."<sup>45</sup> The statement reflects his own learning process regarding the ordering of questions: he was not always as clear on the matter as he is by the time he writes the *Summa theologiae*.

Lonergan's reading of Thomas's development toward the *ordo disciplinae* can be found in *Method in Theology*, where he appeals to the example of Thomas's various treatments of God.

in the first book of the *Scriptum super Sententias* there is no separation of the treatment of God as one and of God as Trinity; at random questions regard either the first or the second. But in the *Summa contra Gentiles* a systematic separation is effected: the first book deals solely with God as one; Chapters Two to Twenty-six of the fourth book deal solely with God as Trinity. In the first part of the *Summa theologiae* questions 2 to 26 regard God as one, while questions 27 to 43 regard the Trinity. What in the *Contra Gentiles* was treated in very separate books, in the *Summa theologiae* is united in a continuous stream. For questions 27 to 29 are still concerned with God, while the elements of Trinitarian theory are gradually constructed. Question 27 asks, not whether the Son proceeds from the Father, but whether there are processions in God. Question 28 asks whether these

<sup>45</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1, Prologus.

processions give rise to relations in God. Question 29 asks whether these relations are persons.<sup>46</sup>

So much for the general issue of the *order of questions*. Now we must relate that issue to a quite complex question regarding the interpretation of the text under investigation. The views given here are my own, and they are subject to refinement and correction from other Lonergan scholars. I put them forward as a hypothetical account of the available data.

The first point is clear. There is a certain order of questions and of ideas that is appropriate to systematic theology, and that order is quite different from the order that we follow when, for whatever reason, we are doing anything other than systematics. Conversely, we are doing systematics in the strict sense of that term only when we are following the systematic ordering of questions and ideas. When one is not following that order, when one is proceeding according to a different order, one may be doing something that is not only worth while but also necessary. One may be doing something that has to be done before one can do systematic theology. One may be doing something that is preparing one to do systematics. But one is not doing systematic theology itself.

It is only after acknowledging this point that difficulties arise in interpreting the text under investigation. In the 1964 edition of the first chapter of *De Deo trino*, Lonergan addresses the issue of systematic order first by giving, in section 3, a quite idiosyncratic meaning to the terms *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia* (*wisdom*, *understanding*, and *knowledge*). Moreover, a longer treatment of the two ways of ordering ideas occurs later in the chapter, in section 5, and that section contains one important

<sup>46</sup>*Method in Theology* 346. This passage provides an important clarification and in fact a correction to some facile criticisms of Aquinas. When Thomas is criticized for separating the treatment of God as one and the treatise on the Trinity, where the treatment *de Deo uno* is regarded as philosophy, and where Thomas is said to allow philosophy to have the upper hand over theology, it should be recalled that by the time of the *Summa theologiae* the treatment of God as one and the treatment of the Trinity are "united in a continuous stream." The separation clearly is found in the transitional *Summa contra Gentiles*, where Thomas is still on his way towards a systematic theology in the fuller sense of following as much as possible the *ordo doctrinae*. The separation is not found in the *Summa theologiae*. Moreover, in neither text does Thomas ever function simply as a philosopher. Philosophy alone is for him a pagan enterprise. He took over and transformed Aristotle's philosophy, as he understood it, in the service of theology.

difference from the earlier version of the chapter: in the earlier version there was a third movement to the act of theological understanding, namely, the historical movement, whereas in the 1964 text only the dogmatic (analytic, *via inventionis*) and systematic (synthetic, *ordo disciplinae*) movements are strictly movements toward the systematic act. Correlative with this difference, I believe, is the treatment of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge in section 3 of the 1964 text, a treatment, again, that does not appear in the earlier version.

My hypothesis is that Lonergan is interpreting the meaning of the terms *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia* against the backdrop, as it were, of his concerns with contemporary logic. In doing so he is engaging these terms in what Husserl calls an *Umdeutung*, a shift in meaning from the way in which they were employed in Thomas's texts.<sup>47</sup> Even more certainly, there has been a shift in meaning from the way in which the terms were employed in the document of Vatican I to which Lonergan appeals so often; in fact, there has been even a shift in the order of the terms, since the Council speaks of *intelligentia*, *scientia*, and *sapientia*. When the Council prays that understanding, knowledge, and wisdom increase in each person and in the whole church, it is not using these terms in the same way that Lonergan uses them in this text. But also, Thomas's question regarding the intellectual virtues in the *Prima secundae* of the *Summa theologiae*, q. 57, a. 2, asks about *sapientia*, *scientia*, and *intellectus*, in that order, and his response speaks first of *intellectus*, then of *sapientia*, and finally of *scientia*, and his meaning is not exactly the same meaning that Lonergan gives these terms in *De Deo trino*. Lonergan's order (wisdom, understanding, knowledge) is his own, and it is governed by logical concerns, whereas, in all likelihood, the Council's meaning is more rhetorical than technical, while Thomas's meaning, although technical, is governed more by the spontaneous procedures of his own mind than by any strictly logical ordering. Thomas's meaning is theoretical, and the Council's meaning is post-theoretical. But when Lonergan tries in the text under investigation to give the terms a technical meaning, he does so, not so much in the light of the meaning of these terms in Aquinas's writing on

<sup>47</sup>Lonergan interprets Husserl's notion of *Umdeutung* in chapter 11 of *Phenomenology and Logic*.

the intellectual virtues as in the light of his own concern with contemporary logical ideals.

While *De Deo trino*'s interpretation of *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia* is not found in the earlier version of this text, *Divinarum personarum*, it is presaged, I believe, by the treatment of *sapientia* in the first part of "De intellectu et methodo," where Lonergan is engaged in working out the notion of foundations, still reaching for something that he has not yet quite discovered or at least figured out how to express. If that is the case, then we might say that in the 1964 *De Deo trino* he is trying out one way of resolving those efforts; and it is a way that he will not adhere to for long. This particular treatment of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge is not found, to my knowledge, in any of his other writings on systematic theology. It is influenced by his studies in mathematical logic and by his concern to relate theological procedures to the procedures of contemporary logicians and to distinguish method from any and all purely logical ideals. This, at least, is my hypothesis, and I put it forward in the interest of discussion among Lonergan scholars, so that we may clear up what have been long-standing difficulties in attempting to understand the differences between the earlier version and the later version of the chapter under consideration.

It is clear, then, from the 1957 lectures on mathematical logic that Lonergan studied carefully the issues raised by contemporary logicians. He read widely in the field, he took the questions with utmost seriousness, and his studies had a profound influence on the series of questions that he had to work through as he came to his position on method in theology. This was no incidental encounter in his development, and much of the output, published and unpublished, in the late 1950s and the early 1960s is devoted to coming to terms with it.

The influence of these concerns on the question of theological method becomes clear, perhaps for the first time, in the first part of the course that Lonergan taught in the spring of 1959, "De intellectu et methodo." Both there and in the 1964 revision of his 1957 text of the chapter that we are investigating, he is attempting, in part, to prevent theology from being overly influenced by the logical ideal, and so to distinguish the methodical point of view from the logical. But he is

laboring hard to understand the distinction and to express it clearly, and one could even say that he comes close to flirting with the logical ideal. He is attempting to work out what precisely a deductivist ideal in theology would be. While he is concerned throughout to show how theological method ultimately will demand something different, he is more attracted to the logical ideal at this time than we might suspect, knowing as we do the direction in which his subsequent development was to move. The questions posed by logical ideals assume an importance, in both "De intellectu et methodo" and the 1964 text of *De Deo trino*, that later was transcended. It is almost as if he tried seriously for a time to entertain the idea of a deductivist approach in systematics, never committing himself to it, and yet only later definitively abandoning it as not worth the effort or as not fruitful in the long run. He seems to have gone through a period in which he was absorbed with addressing the logical-deductivist ideal. He never subscribed to this ideal, but he did ask seriously about its possibility, even for theology. He remained ever suspicious of its limits, especially as far as theology is concerned. In fact, his awareness of the limits is clear already in *Insight*, where Gödel's theorem figures prominently in the very "Introduction" to the book. The limits are also clearly presented in the second of the lectures on mathematical logic, and that lecture influences the direction in which the subsequent three lectures will go. But a period of deep absorption with the issues seems to have lasted from about 1955 to 1965, and in the 1964 edition of *De Deo trino* such absorption affects the way in which Lonergan will interpret the meaning of the *ordo doctrinae*, the meaning of the church's few conciliar statements regarding systematic theology, and the meaning he will assign to the intellectual habits of *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia*.

The passages of *Method in Theology* that treat the systematic ordering of ideas (which itself is essentially the same as the ordering discussed in *De Deo trino*) do not seem to be under the same influence. The fascination has not only passed, but Lonergan has found an explicit way to get beyond it.

That is my basic hypothesis about this particular dimension of "what was going forward."

There is also an open question, I think, to what extent this concern for the relation of method to logic influenced Lonergan, when rewriting the chapter under investigation, to remove the fascinating, indeed programmatic, passages on *theology and history* that can be found (albeit in smaller type<sup>48</sup>) in the text of *Divinarum personarum*. I will discuss these passages in detail in another article. This question is worth exploring in some detail. It is one of the major questions to be faced in any interpretation of this extremely complex period in Lonergan's development. For the moment I leave it as a question, although I would risk stating the additional hypothesis that there is a connection: as logic is addressed, the vision of a more concrete and comprehensive synthesis of history fades, and as the exaggerated concern for logical issues is transcended with the breakthrough to functional specialization, that vision returns, at least to the extent that the mediated object of systematics is said to be *Geschichte*. A new technique for explaining history, the technique first uncovered in *Insight* under the rubric of dialectic, regains its prominence, and with that move the possibility of a new form of systematic theology is released. Still, that new form does not appear clearly even in *Method in Theology*, despite the fact that Lonergan has transcended the logical concentration that we find in the 1964 text of *De Deo trino*.

Let us turn, then, to the treatment of the intellectual habits of *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia* in the section under investigation.

Lonergan interprets the Latin adage *sapientis est ordinare* (it is the task of the wise person to put things in order) in the context of his understanding of the *ordo disciplinae*. It is the office of wisdom to discover that problem that is first in the sense that (1) its solution does not presuppose the solution of other problems, (2) its solution leads to the expeditious solution of a second problem, and (3) the solution of these two means that a third can be solved immediately, and so on through all consequent

<sup>48</sup>The Latin of both versions is printed in two typefaces, one larger and the other smaller, depending on the relative importance of the matter; this is similar to what we find in Barth's *Church Dogmatics*. I have found evidence in the Lonergan archives that the distinction of typefaces was important to him, and not simply a printer's or editor's decision. A particular passage in larger typeface in chapter 2 of *Divinarum personarum* was marked in his hand for smaller typeface, and, sure enough, smaller typeface is what we find in *De Deo trino*.

connected problems.<sup>49</sup> Understanding or *intelligentia*, then, has to do with principles, with what is first in some order,<sup>50</sup> and so it is the office of understanding to grasp the solution of that problem that wisdom has identified as first. And since the order dictated by wisdom is such that, when the first problem is solved, the others are solved expeditiously, *intelligentia* contains in itself virtually the solutions to the remaining questions.<sup>51</sup> Finally, knowledge or *scientia* is about conclusions. But questions are put forth in such an order that, when the first is solved, there is no problem with proceeding to the solution of the others. Thus, because the remaining solutions are connected to the first as conclusions are connected to a principle, all solutions except the first pertain to knowledge or *scientia*.<sup>52</sup>

This particular treatment of the intellectual virtues of *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia* seems clearly to be governed by a desire to come to grips with the logical ideal that Lonergan addressed in some detail in his 1957 lectures on mathematical logic. The similarities to the portrayal of that ideal in the first lecture are obvious. I am *not* saying that Lonergan is attempting to present systematic theology as an axiomatic system along the lines of a mathematical-logical formalization. I am saying that his presentation in 1964 of the systematic ideal in theology, and especially of the *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia* that govern that ideal, is influenced by his attempt to come to terms with contemporary logic and to clarify where the systematic ideal in theology is similar to the logical ideal and

<sup>49</sup> "... sapientis est ordinare, et ideo sapientis est primum invenire problema quod eo sensu primum est quia (1) eius solutio solutionem aliorum problematum non praesupponit, (2) eo soluto expedite solvitur alterum, (3) primo alteroque solutis statim solvitur tertium, et similiter deinceps per omnia problemata consequentia atque connexa." *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* 15.

<sup>50</sup>An existential differentiation of "what is first in some order" is what will lead Lonergan eventually (in fact, soon after the publication of the *pars systematica*) to his own position on foundations. With the emergence of that position, the fascination with the problems raised by logic fades. The problems are still important, of course, but they no longer preoccupy Lonergan. In fact, he presents his own notion of foundations, of "what is first in some order," by contrasting it with the deductivist ideals of the logicians. See Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 269-270.

<sup>51</sup>*De Deo trino: Pars systematica* 15.

<sup>52</sup>*De Deo trino: Pars systematica* 15.

where it differs from it. And I am saying that, in proceeding in this way, Lonergan is giving an *Umdeutung*, a shift in meaning, to both the Thomist understanding and the conciliar usage of *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia*.

In the fifth lecture on mathematic logic, Lonergan considers the question whether Scholastic thought is an axiomatic system — the lectures were given to Jesuits familiar with Scholastic philosophy and theology. That question is not the same as the question, “Is Scholastic thought to use deduction, is it to use syllogisms?” The theses in Scholastic manuals involve deductive arguments, but they differ from the axiomatic systems that symbolic logicians attempt to construct in that the arguments work in different ways, from different premises, and in that they allow for the introduction of new points and new insights to meet new objections as one goes along. “So what do you have? You have a sequence of positions. One position will depend on another, but it will also depend upon further evidence drawn from other fields or from other aspects of the matter.”<sup>53</sup> And that is precisely what the axiomatic systems of the logicians will not allow. The question whether Scholasticism is to be cast in the form of an axiomatic system is the question, “Is the Scholastic at the beginning of the whole course of philosophy, or is the professor of a particular section of philosophy at the beginning, to lay down a set of principles, premises, and say nothing in the whole course that he does not deduce with strict rigor from those premises?”<sup>54</sup> Again: “Theology uses deductive argument; it argues from scripture, it argues from the Fathers, it argues from the councils, it argues from the opinion of the theologians, and it argues from papal documents, all of them deductive arguments. But theology is not the exposition of an axiomatic system. The speculative part of a given treatise may, more or less, be something like an axiomatic system. But that is only one element in theology.”<sup>55</sup>

Now, in the section of *De Deo trino* that we are examining, Lonergan exhibits a concern with considering how close the speculative part of theology may come to something like an axiomatic system. In “De

<sup>53</sup>Quoted from the manuscript of lecture 5, as prepared for publication in *Phenomenology and Logic*.

<sup>54</sup>Quoted from the manuscript of lecture 5.

<sup>55</sup>Quoted from the manuscript of lecture 5.

intellectu et methodo," he goes into far greater detail in examining how the obvious 'sequence of positions' (see the quotation above from the fifth lecture on logic) can still qualify in any way as logical. He quotes I.M. Bochenski to the effect that "the reduction of the *Summa theologiae* of St Thomas to symbolic logic will require the collaboration of many specialists working over a period of three or four centuries."<sup>56</sup> In the fifth lecture on mathematical logic, he says that it is not impossible, but perhaps also not very desirable, that a philosophy that conceived itself as an open structure could be expressed in the form of an axiomatic system. And in the section of *De Deo trino* under investigation he seems to be at least gently exploring what such an exposition might mean within the context of systematic theology.

Let me provide just a bit more evidence. The formulation that we have seen of the systematic ideal in theology in terms of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge is much more rigorous than the use of deduction in trinitarian theology that Lonergan speaks of in the fifth lecture on mathematic logic, indicating to me that perhaps the problem became more acute. Here is what he says in that lecture.

For example, take the treatise on the Trinity. There is the psychological analogy. You posit two processions in God. You deduce from the two processions four relations. You show that the relations are identical with the substance and although identical are rationally distinct from it, and that three of them are really distinct from one another, and that they are subsistent. And you show that the subsistent relations in God, divine subsistent relations, are persons. So, there are speculative procedures for setting up the treatise on the Trinity, and the sequence of notions is somewhat deductive. Is there a rigorous deduction from processions to relations? Well, theologians offer a *ratio theologica* in that direction, but at the same time they argue from scripture: the names 'Father' and 'Son' are relative names. They also argue that it is only if the persons are relations that you can have real distinctions in the absolute being. They argue perfectly from the name 'person.' In other words, the arguments they bring in to affirm the thesis come from all over. There is the fundamental

<sup>56</sup>Quoted from Michael Shields's translation of the first part of the student notes on "De intellectu et methodo."

line of development in the thought, but the trinitarian speculation does not rest simply on that fundamental line. It rests on considerations coming from all over.<sup>57</sup>

This is a different view, I believe, from the ideal presented in *De Deo trino*, with its procedure of locating the first problem, whose solution allows for the expeditious solution of the second problem, with the two together allowing for the immediate resolution of the third, "et similiter deinceps per omnia problemata consequentia atque connexa" (and similarly from there through all the consequent connected problems). The latter ideal approximates much more closely the axiomatic systems that Lonergan discussed in the lectures on mathematical logic, and especially in the first lecture, where the ideal was set forth. The discussion quoted from the fifth lecture on mathematical logic also is much closer to the actual procedures of St Thomas, to Thomas's meaning of the three speculative intellectual virtues,<sup>58</sup> to Lonergan's own procedures in trinitarian theology, and to the meaning of *intelligentia*, *scientia*, and *sapientia* (spoken of in that order) in the text of the First Vatican Council's prayer for theological development: closer than is Lonergan's treatment of *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia* in the first chapter of the systematic part of *De Deo trino*.

But I do not mean this evaluation to be simply negative. There is considerable motivation for the attempts that Lonergan is making in this section. In another article, I will try to examine in detail Lonergan's contrast in this text between the analytic and synthetic ways of proceeding. That contrast remains a feature of his thought through all of the subsequent developments. The presentation of the two ways in this chapter is perhaps the most complete and thorough to be found, not only in Lonergan's writings but anywhere in theological literature. The position is found again in the chapter on systematics in *Method in Theology*. A significant qualification on it was made in *De constitutione Christi*, one that

<sup>57</sup>Quoted from the text of chapter 5 of *Phenomenology and Logic*.

<sup>58</sup>See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1-2, q. 57, a. 2, for Thomas's basic meaning of *sapientia*, *scientia*, and *intellectus* (sic) as speculative intellectual virtues. It can reasonably be argued, I think, that more than a stretch is required to align it with Lonergan's meaning in *De Deo trino*.

does not appear explicitly in either *De Deo trino* or in *Method in Theology*, but that must be included in any complete presentation of Lonergan's notion of systematic theology. But the important point at this stage of our argument is that there are the two ways of proceeding. It is not a simple matter, nor is it self-evident. Lonergan struggled to articulate it, and what may appear to be an exaggerated concern with logical-deductivist ideals at this time in his development is one indication of his struggle. Much of what passes for systematics or calls itself systematic theology or synthesis is still in the *ordo inventionis*, and not in the *ordo doctrinae*.<sup>59</sup> That is what he is trying to clarify and rectify. The problem is especially acute in an age when positive studies, exegesis, and historical research have been so prominent that the systematic *habitus* is in danger of being completely forgotten or its possibility denied. In the earlier version of the material under consideration here, Lonergan at least hinted that a new type of synthesis is being prepared by today's positive research. But in the present section he is simply reminding us that, no matter what type of synthesis we may have in mind, the first element in the synthetic *habitus* is the facility for finding the proper order of the questions that will head toward a synthetic understanding. That emphasis can and must be preserved, even as one disengages it from what is perhaps too great a concern for the procedures of symbolic logicians.

At the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that, when the logical-deductivist ideal became briefly perhaps too prominent in Lonergan's concerns, he dropped from his text the hints on a synthetic recovery of the results of positive research. The correlation, I believe, is not purely coincidental. The synthetic theology of history can be restored to the center of reflection on systematic theology without lessening the positive results of Lonergan's exposition of the *ordo doctrinae*. But those positive results will stand forth clearly only when they are disengaged from an overly logical context.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>59</sup>My own reading of Wolfhart Pannenberg's three-volume *Systematic Theology* is that most of it is not what Lonergan would regard as systematics. It is work in a number of other functional specialties, sometimes very good work in those specialties. One is hard pressed to find any argumentation in the *ordo doctrinae* in the work.

<sup>60</sup>Further evidence for the textual hypothesis that I am presenting can be found in later references in this same chapter to the three intellectual habits, in sections . There are

There are other longer-term advantages of the struggles we are discussing. If it is the office of *sapientia* to discover the problem that is first in a deductivist fashion, *understanding (intelligentia)* is, not simply the act of insight itself, but *a habit of understanding* with regard to principles. Now a principle is what is first in some order, and a benefit of Lonergan's preoccupation with the logical-deductivist ideal is that the clarifications it brought enabled him to clarify several meanings of "what is first in some order." At this point he is still trying to give the expression a propositional meaning. We might say that he is still moving out of 'foundationalism' in the pejorative sense of that term emphasized by so many writers today. Lonergan succeeded in overcoming that sense of 'foundationalism' more than thirty years ago. When he moved to an explicit acknowledgment of the centrality of *operations*, the whole context changed.<sup>61</sup> It was clear by 1967 that even in his own work the "shift from a deductivist to an empirical approach has come to stay."<sup>62</sup> The 'deductivist' approach to which he is referring in this comment is the method of what Lonergan calls 'conclusions theology,' which is something that he always opposed. Never in his flirtations with a deductivist ideal did he believe that theology's "theses were conclusions to be proven from the premises provided by Scripture and Tradition."<sup>63</sup> But we may speculate, I think, that by this time Lonergan had also abandoned any easy accommodation with the logical-deductivist ideal even for systematics itself, that is, even for the task of understanding the mysteries of faith. And with

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passages in the last three sections of the chapter that mention the three habits. The passages were written for *Divinarum personarum* and retained in *De Deo trino*. The order is that found in the conciliar statement: *intelligentia, scientia, sapientia*, and the meaning is much closer to Thomas's meaning in the passage mentioned above in note 58. (It might be objected that the conciliar order appears also in section 4, written for the 1964 text, on p. 27, but I suggest that here the order is dictated by the fact that Lonergan is at this point discussing the gradual development of *intelligentia theologica*.)

<sup>61</sup>At least in principle, he was beyond 'foundationalism' in *Insight*, if indeed he was ever caught in it.

<sup>62</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Theology in Its New Context," in *A Second Collection*, ed. Bernard J. Tyrrell and William F.J. Ryan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 59.

<sup>63</sup>"Theology in Its New Context" 58. His opposition to conclusions theology is just as strong during the period in which he was concerned with the logical ideal as it was later.

this realization comes the broadening of what is meant by 'first in some order.'

If the ordered set consists in propositions, then the first will be the logically first propositions. If the ordered set consists in an ongoing, developing reality, then the first is the immanent and operative set of norms that guides each forward step in the process ... if one desires foundations for an ongoing, developing process, one has to move out of the static, deductivist style — which admits no conclusions that are not implicit in premisses — and into the methodical style — which aims at decreasing darkness and increasing light and keeps adding discovery to discovery. Then, what is paramount is control of the process. It must be ensured that positions are accepted and counterpositions are rejected. But that can be ensured only if investigators have attained intellectual conversion to renounce the myriad of false philosophies, moral conversion to keep themselves free of individual, group, and general bias, and religious conversion so that in fact each loves the Lord his God with his whole heart and his whole soul and all his mind and all his strength.<sup>64</sup>

It is important for us to grasp, I think, the struggle that Lonergan himself went through to arrive at this position. While it may be claimed that the position can be found already in *Insight*, indeed even in *Verbum*, it was not until many years later that he was able explicitly to say,

it does seem necessary to insist that the threefold conversion is not foundational in the sense that it offers the premisses from which all desirable conclusions are to be drawn. The threefold conversion is, not a set of propositions that a theologian utters, but a fundamental and momentous change in the human reality that a theologian is. It operates, not by the simple process of drawing conclusions from premisses, but by changing the reality (his own) that the interpreter has to understand if he is going to understand others, by changing the horizon within which the historian attempts to make the past intelligible, by changing the basic judgments of fact and of value that are found to be not positions but counterpositions.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>64</sup>*Method in Theology* 269-270. To these three conversions, I have proposed that there be added a psychic conversion that, among other things, would help one adjudicate tendencies to dramatic bias.

<sup>65</sup>*Method in Theology* 270-271.

In retrospect we can see that this position was more than prefigured in *Insight* and that it is present in the discussion of foundations in the lectures on mathematical logic; but the appropriation of its significance for the issues that we are treating here may still have taken some time to come to fruition. When it is asked, What happened to the *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia* of *De Deo trino*? I want to suggest that the three terms were given a forced meaning in *De Deo trino*, that this meaning is not exactly what the First Vatican Council was talking about when it prayed for an increase of these virtues in the church, and that the theological place assigned principally to *sapientia* or wisdom in this forced and stylized sense is later occupied by the concrete dynamics of religious, moral, and intellectual conversion.

### 3.4 Categories and System

Two further points will bring to a conclusion our presentation of the issues addressed in section 3 of the chapter under investigation. The first has to do with *concepts and terms* (in Lonergan's later terminology, *categories*), and the second with the dialectical history of systems.<sup>66</sup>

If the various sets of problems and solutions are interrelated, then the concepts and terms (categories) that express them will also be interrelated. Just as when the first problem is solved the others are already virtually solved, so also the concepts and terms that define and express the first problem and its solution should not undergo drastic change when one comes to defining and expressing the other problems and their solutions. Thus the very interconnectedness of questions and solutions *demand*s the formation of *systematic concepts and a technical terminology* corresponding to those concepts. Systematics cannot be done without a differentiation of consciousness that enables one to maneuver in the realm of theory. Lonergan is here emphasizing what in *Method in Theology* he would call the systematic exigence. The critical exigence that had already

<sup>66</sup>Apart from obvious side comments of my own (such as the brief discussion of Rahner on the Trinity) and from the footnotes, the remainder of the text of this paper is simply an exposition of what Lonergan says about these issues.

appeared in *Insight*<sup>67</sup> has not yet made its explicit entry into theology, or, if it has, it has not been made explicit in this particular text. By the time of *Method in Theology* there will be an insistence not only that systematic theology demands that technical terms be employed but also that “for every term and relation there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness.”<sup>68</sup> What is important at this earlier point is the insistence on the systematic and theoretical: achieving the theological understanding proper to systematics is not just a matter of finding individual responses to individual questions; the demands are far more rigorous; the entire series of questions has to be properly ordered (the task of what is here called *sapientia*). The first question must be solved by a fruitful act of understanding (*intelligentia*). Other questions have to be solved in an orderly fashion by the power of the first solution (*scientia*). A system of definitions must be introduced in order to formulate the solutions. And a technical terminology must be developed to express the defined concepts.

### 3.5 The Dialectical History of Systems

A system can undergo various adventures in its history. It is proper to a good system that, once having been discovered, it will grow and be perfected. This alone serves to distinguish a system that is based on the methodological pursuit of understanding from the static, deductivist ideal of logic, where, as Lonergan makes very clear in the first of his 1957 lectures on mathematical logic, everything must be contained from the outset, and if it is not one must start over. A system grows because new insights are added, new connections are drawn, new implications are realized, and new and higher viewpoints are attained.

On the other hand, accidents happen; the continued growth of a systematic achievement is no more guaranteed than the occurrence of fruitful insights. The course of theological decline can follow at least the threefold process that Lonergan mentions in the text under investigation:

<sup>67</sup>“... every statement in philosophy and metaphysics can be shown to imply statements regarding cognitional fact.” *Insight*5.

<sup>68</sup>*Method in Theology* 343.

first, the system can be poorly understood; second, it can be rejected out of hand; third, the very facts that it would understand can be denied.

There is, then, an ideal line of pure progress. Thus we can speak of a series of genetically related systematic developments. Once a system has been discovered, its *proper* course of development entails that it will grow and be perfected in this way. It will grow insofar as vitally, organically, intellectually, and rationally (1) it is extended to all other parts of theology, and (2) it assumes for its own ends both philosophy and other disciplines.<sup>69</sup> It is perfected insofar as the understanding of the principle grows, for then conclusions drawn from the principle will penetrate matters more profoundly and be extended more widely to illuminate ever further dimensions of the related questions and problems.

Obviously, this does not always happen, as is clear, for example, from the subsequent history of the synthesis that *de facto* was achieved by Thomas Aquinas. The system can be poorly understood, then it can be totally rejected, and finally the very facts that it once understood can be denied. I hesitate to suggest what seems to me to be the clearest contemporary example of this course of events, since it involves the work of Karl Rahner, for whom I have enormous respect (and whom Lonergan relied on for some key elements in his own work, such as the meaning of sublation and the interpretation of St Ignatius's "consolation without a cause.") Nonetheless, in our own day, I fear, Rahner's slogan-like statement of his Trinitarian *Grundaxiom* ("The immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity, and vice versa") hides what has to be judged a misunderstanding of Thomas's *emanatio intelligibilis*. From this lack of appreciation of a genuine systematic achievement, some have moved all too easily (and quite contrary to Rahner's intentions, it must be added) to collapsing the immanent into the economic Trinity. This is the second step of which Lonergan speaks: the rejection of the system that first had been poorly understood. The next step is all too easy: the denial that there is in fact any immanent inner life of God to be understood.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup>Note the insistence on what in *Method in Theology* are called general categories, that is, categories that theology shares with other disciplines.

<sup>70</sup>For what seems to be a straightforward movement through these three steps, see Nancy A. Dallavalle, 'Revisiting Rahner: On the Theological Status of Trinitarian Theology,' *Irish Theological Quarterly* 63:2 (1998) 133-150.

At the root of a poor understanding of a system is a poor understanding of its principle. Rahner, it seems, just did not understand Aquinas on *emanatio intelligibilis*.<sup>71</sup> Without that first step, one will draw a blank on the whole of Thomist Trinitarian theology. The immediate result of poorly understanding principles is that the first problem and those consequent problems that are closely connected with it are at best only imperfectly solved. Imperfect solutions are only partly solutions; they are also partly new problems. (New problems can originate, of course, from investigating scripture and the church's tradition more deeply, but in the present case the new problems arise for a quite different reason, namely, because a system has been poorly understood.) Rahner, of course, is not alone. In Lonergan's view, theologians have failed for seven centuries to understand the *emanatio intelligibilis* that is the principle employed to resolve the very first problem in a systematics of the Trinity, the problem of the divine processions. Lonergan's study of *verbum* in Aquinas was undertaken in order to correct that failure, but his own work on these issues has by and large met the same incomprehension as did that of Aquinas.<sup>72</sup>

The next effect of not understanding the principle is that the order in which the new problems are addressed is one that has been imposed by those who do not understand the issue. The problems are then solved by the same people whose poor understanding was the *fons et origo* of the problems in the first place. A new system may arise, but it will be at best a mere vestige of an adequate system. Its problems are not really problems, but the artificial product of misunderstanding. Its order satisfies only those who have no habitual inclination toward establishing a genuinely systematic order. Its principle suffices only for those whose understanding is superficial. Its 'knowledge,' that is, its drawing of conclusions, is a

<sup>71</sup>I have recently discovered that Lonergan acknowledges this in one of his responses to questions at the 1969 Regis College institute on Method in Theology: "Kant does not know about insight, and neither does Maréchal. Rahner has the same problem. They do not understand the action of intelligence. A person, insofar as he is acting intelligently, rationally, responsibly, is a principle of something else. It occurs because this is intelligent, or rational, or responsible."

<sup>72</sup>At some point we need to ask just what is responsible for the enduring oversight of what is meant by intelligible emanation.

morass of obscurity and confusion. And because the foolishness of the unwise is multiple, no single foolishness pleases everybody; and so an even newer system replaces the first replacement. Great strokes of genius may multiply unexpectedly, but what is really ruling the day is not reason enlightened by faith but the study of parts. The data are being prepared, Lonergan says, not for the history of the sciences but for the sociology of knowledge.<sup>73</sup>

It can follow that the poorly understood system will itself be totally rejected. Many students of theology have never known anything but the mere vestiges of an adequate system. They acknowledge that the ersatz system is bad, but, as happened in the case of many medieval Augustinians, they can easily proceed to the mistake of judging that every system is an aberration. They can also labor under a deeper ignorance, for they can fail to grasp what it is to understand, and then they will identify what is really a problem of understanding as a problem of truth or of fact. They may regard a genuine systematic understanding of some aspect of divine revelation, not as an understanding at all, but as a new doctrine resting on philosophical dogmas or scientific hypotheses that are not theological. For example, at the time of the Aristotelian-Augustinian conflict, subjecting the ideas of the saints, and especially of Augustine, to systematic understanding was considered by some to be, not an effort to understand those ideas, but their rejection.<sup>74</sup> If 'system' is entirely excluded, so is the problem of understanding. In yet a later medieval

<sup>73</sup>In the light of *Method in Theology*, we may say also that the data are being prepared for the functional specialty 'dialectic.' Lonergan refers here to Yves Congar's article "Théologie" (*Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, vol. 15, Paris: Letouzey & Ané) 410, which corresponds to material that can be found in Congar, *A History of Theology* (see above, note 6) 141-143, where there are discussed (1) the consequences of the 'useless subtlety' manifest after Aquinas, when the dialectical method of the *quaestio* was pursued, not for the sake of understanding but for its own sake, and (2) the consequent crystallization of theology into petrified systems and schools, where the schools were a function of identification with distinct religious orders. The latter identification is probably what Lonergan had in mind when he spoke in this context of the sociology of knowledge.

<sup>74</sup>A similar problem can be found, I believe, in some of the work of Karl Barth. His wholesale rejection of theological complicity with "contemporary worldviews" reflects a failure to distinguish assent (judgment) and understanding of what one has assented to. See Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 3, *The Doctrine of Creation*, part 2, ed. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark) 3-19.

scenario there was a regression to the problem of coherence. With Scotus, for example, theological discussion became a matter of applying logical subtlety to questions regarding the absolutely necessary and the absolutely possible. And once these logical exercises are rejected, the problem of fact, of the truth of the doctrines themselves, comes to center stage. The very facts that a previous system attempted to understand can be denied, and this can happen in many different ways. Some (the intellectual descendants of medieval 'Augustinians') will say that the entire decline was due to the very attempt to understand the mysteries.

But the church has made it clear that a more balanced judgment can be offered. *Abusus non tollit usum*, abuses do not remove access to the proper use. While Vatican I was not ignorant of abuses, while it presented a positive and direct statement of Catholic doctrine in opposition to the semi-rationalism of its time, it also taught that an *understanding* of the faith is both possible and extremely profitable. Lonergan adapts to this issue a teaching of Newman and uses it to conclude the present section. No part of a science can be omitted without inflicting a threefold harm on the students of that science. First, the omission means that they will not know that part of the science. Second and more seriously, the science itself will be mutilated: what constitutes a science as a science is found not in a part but in the whole of that science, and so whoever takes the part for the whole is working against the science rather than serving it. Third and most seriously, a mutilated science sooner or later becomes a distorted science. Because people are intelligent and critical, they at least feel the omission. Then they seek compensation or a supplement, and the other parts of the science are so twisted from their proper role and function that they are made to bear the burden alone of giving the science its total unity. For instance, the more vehemently speculative theology is abhorred, the more ardently do people indulge in historical speculations. But historical speculations cannot take the place of systematic speculation, and the very effort to have them do so is the source of pseudo problems and pseudo systems. A mind that is unformed philosophically or theologically will simply be tossed about by the most recent theoretical winds.

## CONCLUSION

I have commented here on the first three sections of chapter 1 of the *pars systematica* of *De Deo trino*. In particular I have attempted to express a hypothesis about section 3, where the chapter differs most markedly from the earlier version. The hypothesis interprets the changes in terms of Lonergan's preoccupation with problems raised for him in his study of contemporary mathematical or symbolic logic.

I hope to follow up on this article with commentary on the further sections of the chapter. More is to be said about Lonergan's account of systematics as an understanding of the mysteries of Christian faith. And we have only begun to touch on the crucial issue of the relation of system and history, an issue that is raised quite explicitly in studying the differences between the two versions of the chapter.



## LONERGAN AND THE COMPLETION OF AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY

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**A**T THE START of the twentieth century American philosophy, like the country itself, was an adolescent flexing its newly-developed muscles. Such philosophy as it had was still largely derivative from Europe, although there was a growing impatience with the dualisms and false oppositions which had beset European philosophy since Descartes. At the end of the First World War and after the building of the Panama Canal, the young country was surprised to find itself already a world power. Enjoyment of this new status alternated with bouts of isolationism and doubt that its wisdom might not equal its enthusiasm. Henry James wrote novels depicting newly rich but naive Americans going to Europe, where they encountered for the first time a world of sophistication but also of jaded and cynical decadence. American Pragmatism carried forward the national virtues of meliorism, 'boosterism,' and optimism, as well as an emphasis on concrete detail and efficiency. Thomas Edison and Henry Ford would soon show the world the results to be obtained from the team approach to problem solving and from the assembly line. American Pragmatism combined the naturalism, empiricism, and scientism typical of English philosophy with an interest in method and an exegesis of insight in problem-solving that was distinctive and penetrating. The intentional aspect of cognitional activity, however, has remained a contentious or vexed topic in American philosophy throughout the twentieth century. Initially it came under attack as introducing 'psychologism' or endangering the objectivity of science, and the formalists attempted to expel it. In the post-modern backlash and attack

on the modern search for 'foundations' in all its forms, however, it has returned as an essential accomplice of language learning, especially of the 'abnormal discourse' essential to scientific progress. The unfortunate influence of behaviorism, however, has kept intentional activity from being studied directly; a methodological prudishness has restricted attention first to behavior, then specifically to linguistic indications of insight, thus confining study to the 'tracks the animal left' rather than opening up access to the animal itself. This unwarranted self-limitation has led to an incapacity to elaborate a satisfying science of the subject that is not reductionistic or foundationalistic in one of the dated senses, and thence to the befuddlement or lack of clear self-definition that currently besets American philosophy. Caught between competing allegiances, its best chance for survival and intellectual self-justification consists in carrying forward its traditional and legitimate pragmatic program, while freeing itself from this self-imposed methodological restriction. Only a removal of this impediment will allow American philosophy to complete its program to elaborate a satisfying science of the subject, which is the only 'foundation' for philosophy possible today — and, as it turns out, the only one philosophy needs.

#### DEWEY'S FIRST SKETCH OF A SCIENCE OF THE SELF

The dominant influences on American philosophy were ontological and methodological naturalism, empiricism, and scientism (respect for the results of science as 'objective truth,' and expanding the scientific method to embrace all knowledge). Dewey esteemed Hegel for stressing the importance of history, but he naturalized Hegel's dialectical development of Absolute Spirit into the progressive adaptation and control by individuals over their environment, in accordance with Darwinian categories, to increase satisfaction. These allegiances were only loosely compatible. Specifically, empiricism had led, in Hume, to skeptical conclusions concerning the foundation for scientific generalization, thus endangering science's claim to embody objective truth. Similarly naturalism, using a vocabulary of nerve impulses and response to stimuli, provided scant resources to ground the claim to universal validity

normally associated with scientific theories. Dewey skillfully parried these thrusts by stressing, not science as a result, but science as a method. That is, he stressed the hypothetical nature of scientific theories, their probing, falsifiable, instrumental, and approximative character. His interest fell principally on the method itself, and his major contribution to philosophy was a first articulation of the diverse elements and stages within human cognitional activity. If he removed the supports for esteeming science as 'objective truth' in a timeless classical sense, he took advantage of this loss or concession to emphasize by compensation the element of originality and novelty crucial to the ongoing practice of science; implicitly he thrust intentionality forward as the critical engine and traditionally assumed or overlooked source of cognitional progress.

It was Hume who first proposed that we locate the foundations of human knowledge, not in 'clear and distinct ideas' or logic, but in a science of human nature. Dewey's discovery of 'patterns of inquiry' in his 'experimental logic' is a major American contribution to such a science. Dewey subscribed to a program of methodological and ontological naturalism in which the 'scientific method' would be expanded and applied to all areas of inquiry. Going beyond the descriptions of Bacon and Mill, Dewey situated rational or scientific activity within the context of a problematic situation arising for a sentient organism. The purpose of inquiry is to resolve this troubling situation by actively transforming it in accord with an experimental idea. Such an idea allows the subject to 're-see' or reinterpret the situation in terms of realities or relationships not previously discerned, which open up strategies for action that will alter the situation and remove its troubling aspect. The resulting scientific theories do not frame timeless verities, but rather are projected solutions to historical problems, without the universality and invariance traditionally attributed to the former.

#### ANTI-PSYCHOLOGISM

In the first half of the twentieth century American philosophy was subject to a number of influences seeking a firm foundation for the objectivity of knowledge, principally science. In Europe a new wave of irrationalism

stemming from the philosophies of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, together with the *Zeitgeist* of the late Romantic movement which moved towards pessimism, aestheticism, and decadence, roused a number of thinkers to return to traditional theories of epistemology and to reinvigorate them. Science itself was not immune to these destabilizing forces; Einstein's General Theory of Relativity overturned the assumptions of classical mechanics which had seemed invulnerable to change, and the paradoxes of transfinite mathematics opened the possibility that simple arithmetic might harbor contradictions. Firmer foundations were wanted, and these were sought either in logic, in supposedly invariant transcendental structures of the mind, or in the bedrock of empirical sensation. In England Russell and Whitehead attempted to reduce arithmetic to logic, neo-Kantianism flourished at Marburg and elsewhere in Germany, and at Vienna neo-positivism commanded allegiance. All of these programs would have an influence on American philosophy, as occasionally a philosopher from one or the other of these movements came to teach in America and influenced a new generation of students.

What unified philosophers from diverse orientations, such as Frege, Husserl, Brentano, Carnap, and the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus*, was an opposition to *psychologism*, or a naturalistic study of human cognitional activity that failed to attend to or justify the scientific claim to objectivity. For them such a psychology was only half a psychology; it failed to examine what was significant about human psychology, its claim to truth. In short, *psychologism* was a psychology which had given up any ambition or pretense of being an *epistemology*. As a naturalistic science, it could take its place as a subordinate discipline within the newly-developing behavioral investigations, as a branch of nervous activity. In a time of crisis in the foundations of knowledge, however, when new and stronger normative standards separating truth from error were looked for, it was unacceptable as a final word on the psychology of human knowing. For this a philosophy of foundations was needed, and this gave rise to a succession of programs in American philosophy during the mid-twentieth century.

## FOUNDATIONALISM

In a sense, foundationalism is nothing new in modern philosophy. A series of foundationalistic programs have defined Western philosophy since Descartes's attempt to defeat hyper-skeptical doubt in the second *Meditation* by uncovering an unshakeable foundation for traditional knowledge. Descartes's proposal of the self as a 'clear and distinct' idea which would serve as such a foundation attracted few followers, but his *project* and practical redefinition of philosophy as the search for an indubitable foundation for knowledge (in contrast to the classical standard of invariant causes) was accepted by philosophers of other persuasions, and has made foundationalism synonymous with philosophy in the modern period.

Descartes pursued a rational reconstruction of knowledge based on the traits which characterized the experience with which he vanquished the arch-skeptic, the experience of himself which he found to be 'clear and distinct.' Hume professed to be unable to discover himself anywhere in his experience; and anyway clarity and distinctness were primarily psychological traits which could accompany in principle *any* idea which we find resolves a puzzle for us; they are thus not infallible indicators of truth. The empiricists thence pursued a reconstruction of knowledge based on sense experience. Roused from his dogmatic slumbers by Hume's skeptical results, Kant reasoned backward to uncover what he claimed were universal and necessary structures of the mind; since these 'transcendental' categories may validly be applied only to an object of possible experience, they may also serve as normative criteria by which to separate knowledge from illusion. Each of these programs identified a privileged level of experience, whether rational ideas, sense experience, or transcendental *a priori* concepts; by attempting to trace candidates for knowledge back to these strata, one could separate truth from error. In the alarmist 'conspiracy theory' atmosphere created by Descartes's deliberately provoked and methodically cultivated contest with the supreme skeptic, the traditional corpus of knowledge must either be rejected or reconstructed on one or other of the 'foundations' proposed by these three principal programs of the modern period. All moderns are founda-

tionalists; they differ only in their candidate for a sure foundation for knowledge.

This program was extended and intensified during the twentieth-century backlash against psychologism. Frege joined Russell and Whitehead in attempting to trace arithmetic back to formal logic. Husserl through the *epoché* of his phenomenological reduction tried to find invariant and necessary structures of the constituting ego. The most novel and impressive example of foundationalism, however, was the attempt by the early Wittgenstein, and later Carnap and the followers of the Vienna Circle, to set up a formal linguistic system that would trace all acceptable propositions back to a set of 'atomic sentences' or intuitively validated primitive statements, rational or empirical. The logical rules for such a system would be carefully chosen in advance; once the rules were specified and the axioms set, the system would generate all the propositions which would be considered true. Statements from metaphysics or religion which could not be translated into this formal system would be dismissed, not so much as wrong as merely meaningless. It was hoped that by this method a host of pseudo-problems which had bedeviled philosophy and Western culture generally for hundreds of years could be caused to evaporate.

Common sense and the various natural sciences were to be reconstructed on a base of privileged linguistic units and the rules specifying their proper combination. A critical methodological step takes place here in the modern treatment of intentionality. Concessions to a behaviorist model which effectively screens the subject and its intentional activity behind a repertoire of external activity were made in the interests of scientific accessibility and verification. The contents of the epistemological base are no longer the private 'ideas' open to the introspective gaze of a solitary subject. While these are not denied, they are not available for inter-subjective examination by the scientific community; hence they cannot serve as a satisfactory base for a trustworthy elaboration of truth-functional discourse. Linguistic units, by contrast, are public and accessible; yet at the same time they are undeniably charged with intentional content. Could they not serve as an acceptable replacement for the private mental contents of traditional modern foundationalism, both

rationalist and empiricist, thereby capturing what we mean by 'intentionality' and simultaneously conforming to the contemporary naturalist craving for a unitary scientific method that would validate all forms of respectable discourse? If we cannot capture the elusive animal of intentionality for critical examination, could we not study the 'tracks' the animal, and only that animal, could leave, and still elaborate a penetrating, complete, and satisfying science of intentionality on that basis?

#### ANTI-FOUNDATIONALISM

Anti-foundationalistic stirrings can be found in Wilfred Sellars's rejection of the 'myth of the given' in favor of the epistemic priority of propositional knowledge, and in Quine's rejection of a strict analytic-synthetic distinction in favor of a holistic approach whereby a web of beliefs is tested collectively rather than sentence by sentence — both ways of rejecting the foundationalism of traditional American and English empiricism. Quine's anti-foundationalism goes back to Dewey's rejection of the quest for certainty in favor of pragmatic criteria for truth. The more radical anti-foundationalism of Richard Rorty, however, must be traced back to the influence of the later Wittgenstein. The Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations* and the posthumously published *On Certainty* had undergone a profound alteration in his attitude towards language from the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus*. No longer was language to be reconstructed on the basis of some privileged but supposedly undeceiving foundation. There was no such foundation. As a general orientation, language needs no correction from any perspective outside of language itself. If certain sentences strike us as puzzling or nonsensical, this does not necessarily mean that they should be culled out or subjected to linguistic extermination. Rather, the fault may lie with us, that we do not yet properly understand the role they play within the 'language game' of which they form a part. The practitioners of a language apparently experience no such embarrassment or confusion. To learn a language is not to be confronted in an intuitive, undeniable fashion with the entities which that language is 'about,' as Augustine thought, but rather to learn the 'rules of the game,' the role or significance attributed to various kinds

of statements — a role which may differ significantly from a statement's apparent or literal interpretation. Rather than attempt to dictate to and make language over after some ideal but unrealistic model, we do better to adopt a more humble attitude, to give language the benefit of the doubt as *already having* meaning, and attempt to delineate and comprehend the various mutually-irreducible language games which speakers may legitimately engage in. Against the foundationalist assumption of concealment, Wittgenstein insists that nothing of philosophical importance is hidden.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, nonsensical statements are still possible, and inappropriate questions may still be posed, as when radical doubt is brought against basic beliefs; but such psychological episodes can take place only when we forget how language is *used*. Indeed, this fact supplies one of the principal employments and justifications for philosophy in a post-foundational age: the therapeutic task of reminding us of how words are normally or correctly employed, so that problems based on such an exaggerated or hyper-inflated sense may be, not solved, but rather *dissolved*. "The reasonable man does not have certain doubts," writes Wittgenstein.<sup>2</sup> "Giving grounds ... justifying the evidence, comes to an end; — but the end is not certain propositions striking us immediately as true, i.e. it is not a kind of *seeing* on our part; it is an *acting*, which lies at the bottom of the language game."<sup>3</sup> "But the end is not an ungrounded presupposition: it is an ungrounded way of acting."<sup>4</sup> In his second phase Wittgenstein insists on seeing language games as embedded in a common form of life: "I did not get my picture of the world by satisfying myself of its correctness; nor do I have it because I am satisfied of its correctness. No: it is the inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false."<sup>5</sup> In this new appreciation the project

<sup>1</sup>L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 1953) 435.

<sup>2</sup>L. Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, trans. D. Paul and G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: Harper and Row, 1972) 4, 24, 56.

<sup>3</sup>Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* 204.

<sup>4</sup>Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* 110.

<sup>5</sup>Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* 94.

of foundationalism which has dominated modern philosophy loses its rationale. As Rorty puts it, "The cases in which doubt plays no role are cases in which we do not let doubt play a role — not cases with respect to which we are in a different psychological state."<sup>6</sup> As Wittgenstein writes: "(D)oubt gradually loses its sense; the language game is just like that"<sup>7</sup> and "My life consists in my being content to accept many things."<sup>8</sup>

Rorty extends Wittgenstein's therapeutic role for philosophy in a wide-ranging attack on any species of foundationalism. Philosophy has no particular subject matter over that of the special sciences. There is no ground for philosophy assuming a superior posture over the other sciences. Each is relatively autonomous, is capable of discerning truth from error within its own domain, and requires no guidance, oversight, or policing by philosophy. Philosophy is reduced to being one voice within the ongoing conversation of mankind and should revise its ambition from that of evaluating the whole to chastening this inveterate temptation to rule and to keeping the cultural conversation lively and zestful.

There is a refreshing release that comes from accepting Rorty's sweeping anti-foundationalism. Common sense and scientific discourse need no longer be 'normalized' and regularized, reconstructed on the basis of one or another privileged level of reality, experience, or language. There is no such privileged level that may act as a 'foundation' for the others. All the language games that have established themselves on pragmatic grounds are equally valid, and which ones we engage in, and which new forms of discourse are allowed to arise, are questions to be decided on grounds of enjoyment rather than whether the basic terms can be put into contact with a putatively privileged stratum of experience, the 'really real.' In a democratic, rainbow revision of a previously monochromatic, single-stratum ontology, and as an overthrow of the Cartesian epistemology of concealment, the terms of *all* language games that can establish themselves culturally are respected as indicating something real. The foundation of knowledge is groundless belief. As Wittgenstein

<sup>6</sup>R. Rorty, "Cartesian Epistemology and Changes in Ontology," *Contemporary American Philosophy*, ed. J.E. Smith (London: Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1970) 283.

<sup>7</sup>Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* 56.

<sup>8</sup>Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* 344.

writes: "It is so difficult to find the beginning. Or better, it is difficult to begin at the beginning and not to try to go further back."<sup>9</sup> 'Going further back' was what foundationalism was all about. On the contrary Rorty can now write: "Let a thousand discourses bloom!"<sup>10</sup>

At the same time it may be charged that the linguistic behaviorism of the later Wittgenstein and Rorty continues an evasion strategy together with the earlier formalist or foundationalist approach to language which effectively screens and conceals the intentional subject that is the source of language. Indeed, so powerful is the continuing fear of the charge of psychologism, embarrassment and confusion over Hume's reduction of the self to a congeries of disparate psychic episodes, and dissatisfaction with what Quine calls the spectator view of the self that went together with foundationalism — that is, the post-Cartesian view of the self as a 'ghost in the machine' (Ryle) that receives something immediately or as 'given' — that the ambition of contemporary anti-foundationalist linguistic behaviorism, like its earlier formalist and foundationalist counterparts, is to develop an encompassing or satisfying theory of language which makes no mention of private mental states, psychological episodes, or the intentional self at all. Post-foundationalist linguistic behaviorism attempts to "explicate meaning without truth conditions, truth without extralinguistic sources of truth value, and knowledge without intentional relations between persons and objects."<sup>11</sup> Restricting itself methodologically to such a narrow resource base, however, threatens the project with a lack of power or comprehensiveness — that is, it may not be able to reach or justify important regions of linguistic activity.

Rorty himself points out one such area where the function of intentionality cannot be overlooked or eliminated. Following the breakthrough work of Thomas Kuhn in his *Structures of Scientific Revolution*, Rorty distinguishes 'normal discourse,' where there are shared criteria of agreement and the rules of the language game are familiar and clear, from 'abnormal discourse' where a revolutionary proposal or a

<sup>9</sup>Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* #471.

<sup>10</sup>Michael H. McCarthy, *The Crisis of Philosophy* (New York: SUNY Press, 1990) 216.

<sup>11</sup>McCarthy, *The Crisis of Philosophy* 217.

paradigm shift has occurred. In the latter the discourse is strange, we are unsure how to evaluate it, and agreement on criteria is provisionally lacking. Foundationalist linguistic philosophy concentrated on science as normal discourse, as an achieved fact, with its propositions 'founded' and reconstructed on a privileged level of base concepts. This is science normalized and systematized, immune to change, ready to function as a definitive and final map of the world. It is science in its Sunday clothes, ready to sit for a family portrait. Science as it is *practiced*, however, is something different — dynamic, not static, scruffier, messier, with tears in its clothes and yet a gleam in its eye. Science is perpetually unfinished, with significant sectors of data currently without satisfactory theoretical explanation, and punctuated by unpredictable but regular upheavals where its most basic assumptions are called into question and data falls into new and unexpected arrangements along previously undiscerned axes.

To invoke linguistic behaviorism as a sufficient explanation of how language operates is to freeze civilization in the already-established language games of normal discourse, to preclude advance to new forms of language where the rules are not yet clearly worked out, and to fail to explain (or to engage in only a 'hand-waving' type of explanation) the most interesting and characteristic aspect of science, the advance to a new theoretical grasp of the material. An open admission and adequate treatment of intentionality is unavoidable as a revised 'foundation' for an adequate science of language, because the only way abnormal discourse can be 'normalized' is for significant segments of the population to 'catch on' or to 'see the point' behind revolutionary proposals in our interpretation or 'reading' of complex situations, in science and elsewhere. When such agreement ultimately takes place, the proposals are accepted as an advance and perhaps the work of genius. When such agreement does not take place, the proposals are viewed initially as puzzling and ultimately dismissed as nonsense. Without insight or intentionality we have no way of explaining how new language games arise which are embraced enthusiastically by large segments of the population, nor the powerful hold they exercise over their devotees after they have overcome sometimes formidable resistance. After having evaded intentionality

methodologically for several hundred years, and having tried in vain to locate the 'foundation' of knowledge elsewhere, this recent progress in our appreciation of how science really works makes this 'oversight of insight' no longer tenable; both a relaxation of our allegiance to behaviorism, or the restriction of scientific discourse to publicly verifiable data, and a 'paradigm shift' in our search for a 'foundation' of knowledge, become methodological correctives whose avoidance or postponement can no longer be justified. Wittgenstein explained both the difficulty and the need for this step by the 'hiddenness of the familiar': "One is unable to notice something because it is always before one's eyes. The real foundations of his enquiry do not strike a man at all. . . we fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful."<sup>12</sup>

#### LONERGAN

There is one contemporary philosopher who has developed a sophisticated study precisely of the intentionality of the inquiring subject. As has been argued by Michael H. McCarthy in his *The Crisis of Philosophy*,<sup>13</sup> the Canadian philosopher Bernard Lonergan has put forward not only an epistemology which distinguishes satisfactorily the various and irreducible stages of cognitive resolution, he has done so without the methodological constraints which have bedeviled and compromised the work of previous philosophers in the Anglo-American tradition. The result is a more penetrating and comprehensive retrieval than Dewey's of the crucial role of intentionality in the recurrent and distinctive human process of cognitional resolution. Further, this is precisely the kind of contribution of which the dialectic of the Anglo-American tradition in philosophy stands in need to bring it to synthesis and completion.

This is not the place for an exhaustive presentation of Lonergan's theory, but the main distinctions he makes may be rehearsed.

A recurring and self-reinforcing cycle of experience, understanding, and judgment structures the way human beings negotiate their way about the world. Experience is not a passive intuitive exposure to immediate

<sup>12</sup>Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* 129.

<sup>13</sup>See above note 10.

data; it is structured by preconceptual desires and the results of past cognitive activity. A thoughtful inquiry frames the questions by which subjects engage their environment in a dialogue. Insight does not occur in a vacuum; an exploratory question anticipates what kind of intelligibility one might find in a situation. Tension increases as alternative schematic models are explored. Until insight occurs, the answer to an absorbing question eludes the subject. "Insight is a preconceptual event that consciously unifies and organizes the data of experience the subject is investigating. In the act of understanding, the cognitive subject either grasps an *intelligible unity* within the data or grasps a pattern of *intelligible relations* among its various elements."<sup>14</sup> This is not to say that insight is always correct. It requires the third stage of critical testing and judgment before our grasp on previous theories is relaxed and we shift our allegiance, always somewhat tentatively, to the novel interpretation. 'Certainty' or the powerful psychological force of the new arrangement of data, as when the different parts of an optical illusion 'tumble' into a novel pattern, or a move suggests itself in a chess game, is no guarantee of its ultimate appropriateness. We have to look around the board and explore other consequences of the move, before we declare that it is the best one.

#### OBSERVATIONS

There are two relevant points to be made when approaching American philosophy from a classical (pre-foundationalist, or classical foundationalist — the foundation must be invariant but not certain) standpoint.

It is important to note that, while respecting science's claim to represent 'objective truth,' this evaluation represents a step down from what Plato and Aristotle meant in contrasting 'knowledge' with 'opinion.' Indeed on Dewey's appreciation, science would fall more under 'opinion' than under 'knowledge,' since it is inherently revisable and approximative. Even apart from the Pragmatic theory, we can say that mathematical science is not knowledge as the Greeks understood it. Knowledge consists in a causal explanation that is unchanging (if not certain, which is a modern requirement). Mathematical science does not

<sup>14</sup>McCarthy, *The Crisis of Philosophy* 266.

conform to this requirement. This may strike us initially as a setback, but it can also be experienced as liberating, for nothing significant that science traditionally has done for us has been lost. It appears today that there will always be some data which even our best theory of a given domain will not be able to explain. Further, any given theory, no matter how complete, is potentially revisable and replaceable by a theory which calls into question one of its basic assumptions, if the second theory is more accurate or comprehensive in its predictions. Our best move here is perhaps to 'bracket' the question, or adopt an agnostic attitude on whether science will ever be completed or able to deliver a full account of the world. There is no point in judging what there is no need to judge. This certainly is science's ambition; however, failing this or if it does not happen, nothing important in the concrete *results* of science will be lost. Everything that science has done for us would still be in place. Such a 'full account' may function as a kind of unrealizable ideal or asymptote, which science is always approaching, but which it may never reach. Still, we are constantly getting better accounts, more powerful and comprehensive theories 'along the way.' Whether or not we reach our ideal makes virtually no difference. Thus in terms of our lived experience, it is immaterial whether we may one day have in our hands a final 'map' of the world; our experience until that (perhaps infinitely distant) point will be the same either way. By the principle of the 'identity of indiscernibles,' the two realities are the same.

A related but distinct point is that basing everything on the inquiring subject as Lonergan does 'saves' everything philosophically that was 'saved' by the classical Greek metaphysics that based itself not so much on an anthropology of the inquiring subject as on an unchanging causal account of the objective world. Whatever insights of classical metaphysics were valid before are still valid now. The new theory can reach or 'generate' all the truths the old one could; it just begins further back, and is oriented towards a different experience, that of experimental science, which was essentially unknown to the classical mind and whose structure and working the major philosophers of the twentieth century are concerned to explore.

Finally, on the topic of the contemporary interest in exploring the interface between philosophy, artificial intelligence, and psychology, the attempt to 'explain' consciousness is to be traced back to the fact that, in the Cartesian understanding of man, (bare) consciousness — not knowing — is the unique trait that distinguishes man from a machine. It is, however, the lowest aspect of human intelligence, the mind 'idling' or running in neutral gear, so to speak; it is completely atypical, in no way distinctive or revelatory of the mind's characteristic activity, which is knowing an independent object. The current interest in 'explaining consciousness,' while perhaps relevant for physiological psychology, is the most recent in a long line of false leads or red herrings — or 'perennial chestnuts' — for philosophy, most of which are variations on the mind-body problem, by which modern philosophy has shunted or distracted itself from what is truly significant or worth explaining — the mind knowing an independent object — and whose success can be traced to the continual modern refrain: "Let's go back to the beginning — Descartes." The debate is over whether or not one can develop or deduce the 'ghost' from the 'machine,' to use Gilbert Ryle's famous terms, rather than doing epistemology proper.<sup>15</sup> Further, this way of posing the project of philosophy is not being true to Dewey; it is giving a test pattern in place of the oppositional traction and muscular engagement with life which for him is characteristic of the human mind.

#### CONCLUSION

In this article I have attempted to describe a trajectory, an internal dialectic, within twentieth-century Anglo-American philosophy. Beginning with a reaction against psychologism which threatened the objectivity of science and appeared to require a retrieval and

<sup>15</sup>The project to 'explain consciousness' is beset by several conceptual difficulties. How would we know when we had 'explained' it? What would such an explanation look like? What model or criteria would we use to distinguish a 'description' from an 'explanation'? In other words, the project transposes to a variation of the 'perennial chestnut,' the mind-body problem, for the project reduces to that of deciding what level of primitive or undefined category we must start from to 'reach' consciousness that will count as an explanation. It seems impossible to escape one or another form of reductionism; indeed, the project is a call to reductionism.

reinstatement of intentionality, philosophy was diverted into linguistics by a methodological behaviorism which pulled up shy of treating anything so private and controversial as the subject. The reaction against foundationalism went in the opposite direction by showing the inadequacy of the foundationalist view of the self as a disembodied mind in immediate contact with a mythological 'given' in the so called 'spectator theory of truth,' and thereby showed the need for philosophy to develop a more dynamic, sophisticated, and flexible model of the self. In the later Wittgenstein and Rorty, however, anti-foundationalism was again thwarted by linguistic behaviorism and the consequently impoverished resource base from which to develop a satisfactory theory of the knowing subject. This self-imposed methodological restriction hamstrung the official project to develop an account able to handle the variety and richness of linguistic activity. An anti-foundationalist theory of the self — not the 'ghost in the machine' of Descartes and the moderns, but an inquisitive, probing, and fallibilistic self as suggested in Dewey's picture of the problematic situation in which every cognitional operation originates, and described more adequately by Lonergan's discrimination of the three phases of inquiry as experience, understanding, and judgment, becomes no longer optional, but is now a mandatory development, once philosophy faces the need to do justice to such significant data as revolutionary science and the 'abnormal discourse' by which the new stages of cultural awareness are reached.

## A WOMAN OF COMMON SENSE ADDRESSES THE HIGH CULTURE

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WHEN I READ Mark Morelli's paper, "Authentication of Common Sense from Below Upwards: Mediating Self-Correcting Folk Psychology,"<sup>1</sup> I had a variety of spontaneous responses. Among them were feelings of delight, questions, a wish for concrete examples of direct mediators in action and for portraits of persons of common sense 'before' and 'after' cognitional self-appropriation, not to mention a smile of surprise at the naming of 'monomorphic bias' among the post-theoretically self-appropriated members of the high culture. It is Morelli's articulate appreciation of the polymorphism of human consciousness that liberates me to attempt this offering to that high culture.

As I understand the Morelli paper, because of the overwhelming influence of the mass media on men and women of common sense and because of the 'hard rain' of sedimentation from an inauthentic high culture in our current lifeworld, there is an urgency for men and women of common sense to achieve transformed practicality, authentic performance of cognitive operations through a pre-theoretic cognitive self-appropriation. The slow process of indirect mediation through sedimentation of the high culture is not an adequate strategy in the situation. Morelli is confident that direct mediation is possible, that it was implied and demonstrated in performance by Bernard Lonergan, that it has been neglected, due, perhaps, to the 'monomorphic bias' or totalizing of the intellectual pattern of experience, and that it may be fostered — in

<sup>1</sup>Mark Morelli, "Authentication of Common Sense from Below Upwards: Mediating Self-Correcting Folk Psychology," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 15 (1997).

education for instance — by the man or woman on the spot. Morelli reminds us that though Lonergan made us aware of the contribution which common sense is capable of making to decline through egotism and disregard for long-term solutions and totalization of practical interests, he also understood that the world's work is done by men and women of common sense and that a transformed common sense, using sound commonsense procedures could contribute to progress — would be willing to wait, to collaborate with effective long-term solutions.

The strategy of 'direct mediation,' according to Morelli, is to assist men and women of common sense in their spontaneous efforts to develop from below upwards an adequate thematization of the transcendental notions at work in their immediate conscious experience. The process of thematization of one's performance as a knower begins with the experience of the conscious operations. It names these operations — and Lonergan's choice of language for cognitional theory makes it possible for men and women of common sense to use these names effectively. It begins again from the experience of the processes, advances to understanding of their dynamic structure and from this experience and understanding, it is possible to advance to a self-authenticating judgment.

Some of the questions the Morelli article evoked in this person of common sense:

- What would the man or woman on the spot, attempting the work of direct mediation, need to have achieved by way of self-appropriation and ability to perform strategically and patiently?
- Is it possible to observe differences in the everyday performance of the person of common sense newly operating in a converted way? Could one notice a difference in such a person's attitudes to various 'high cultures,' perhaps an indication of a struggle to discern which culture might be trusted, deliberately received or patiently waited for and which might be ignored or left to time and/or authentic experts to undermine?
- Would a first step in the transformation of men and women of common sense who remain in the world of common sense be simply a matter of beginning consciously to ask questions, to make a habit of asking probing questions, to entertain seriously the surprising questions

of others, to live with questions, to find answers yet remain eager for fuller answers? Is such a performative transformation best appreciated when it is seen as a step in a larger process? Is it valuable in itself or only in so far as it is heading towards questioning the questioning and naming the performance? If the performance does not go forward to full cognitive self-appropriation, is it worthwhile working to sustain it? Might it lead to such travesties as eclecticism, relativism, and dilettantism? Is such a risk worth taking if it is seen to be part of an essential, patient waiting in hope for curiosity itself to move a person to ask authentically about the operations at work in learning?

- What are the advantages of undertaking the questioning process in a learning community? How does the community setting enhance the heightening of the tension, the performance of the cognitive operations? Does the community assist a person to experience a variety of insights and perspectives and lead the participant to become more tentative in making judgments? By itself, does discussion in a group move one forward in learning about learning or is the process of writing essential for clarification and grounded judgment? Does one take possession of oneself as a learner if one finds out for oneself the answer to that question, whether one was first cajoled into writing, moved through some urgency of questions, or required to do so for instrumental purposes such as getting a credit?

- If the goal of pre-theoretic self-appropriation is towards a beneficial influence on common sense practicality — transformed practicality and authentic performance in the world of common sense — and not towards the explicit metaphysics of post-theoretical cognitive self-appropriation, and if everyone lives in the world of common sense most of the time, how could the reality of the polymorphism of human consciousness be taken into account in an effective way in both modes of self-appropriation in order to head off the pitfalls of both the general bias of common sense and the 'monomorphic bias' of high culture?

In my commonsense consciousness, I want dramatic instances, I want examples, I look for flesh on the bones of theory. It is wonderful when good novelists create characters, which illustrate just what an

authentic, self-appropriated person of common sense — or one at least heading in that direction — would do or think in concrete situations. We have plenty of examples of inauthentic doers! When persons writing in the intellectual pattern do not include examples in their theoretical work, it may be due to their 'monomorphic bias,' or forgetfulness of the needs of readers living in the world of common sense.

Since the only story I can tell is my own, I would like to offer the portion of my intellectual autobiography relevant to the theme of direct mediation. I had the privilege of experiencing skilled mediation through the Thomas More Institute of Montreal (TMI). The example Morelli uses to illustrate that Lonergan demonstrated performatively the possibility of direct mediation is taken from one moment in a forty-year relationship between Bernard Lonergan and the TMI. Morelli contrasts Lonergan's way of communicating his ideas to intelligent men and women of common sense in a lecture given at TMI in 1964, "Philosophical Positions with Regard to Knowing," with an article written for members of the high-cultural audience at about the same time, "Cognitional Structure." Morelli examines the differences in the manner of communication to illustrate that Lonergan seems to affirm the value of self-appropriation for men and women of common sense, at the level of common sense.<sup>2</sup>

The on-going learning and self-appropriating process at TMI and its offshoot, Discovery Theatre, in Toronto, is a long one. A person is invited into it step by step. Not all who come for courses out of a personal curiosity about a particular theme accept the invitation to a further discipline, such as writing an essay. For those few who do take on a more demanding aspect of the process, it is done in freedom and not out of conformity to expectations.

The hard rain which was pelting down on me in the early 1960s was not the sort of reductionism Morelli refers to as he describes the computer model of intelligence in vogue among the materialistic theorists of today.<sup>3</sup> It was, nevertheless, a dismissal of intelligence as having anything to do with salvation, which brought me to a crisis of faith and of intelligence whose urgency made me extremely alert to a TMI course advertised in the

<sup>2</sup>Morelli, "Authentication of Common Sense" 120-122.

<sup>3</sup>Morelli, "Authentication of Common Sense" 135.

Montreal Star in 1961. The course was entitled, "The Christian: Identity, Personality, Vocation." I had already been impressed by the reputation of the Institute and by the quality of speakers at convocation ceremonies I had attended — Marshall McLuhan, Northrop Frye, for instance. I Registered for that first course and discovered, from my own experience, during the very first session, with Charlotte Tansey and Cathleen Going as discussion leaders, that intelligence was indeed a significant part of my humanity; that questions were not the same as doubts; that others were asking more difficult questions than I had even dreamed of; that it was not only acceptable to ask questions but there were many possible ways of asking and answering them; and that it was not merely acceptable but even laudable to refrain from rushing to judgment. It was not a failure in apologetics *savoir-faire*! When essay questions were offered, it seemed urgent for me to struggle with them in order to clarify a few things for myself. I could not have said then what I can say now: that I needed to express in writing some of the many insights I had had in the discussions and to examine them more carefully before coming to a few tentative judgments in a personal statement. I found the essay-writing process at TMI very liberating, in that one was not expected to come up with judgments about everything. It was also exhilarating in that it initiated a deeper level of dialogue with the leaders. Their written commentaries about my essays raised the discussion to new levels, new challenges, fostering learning rather than offering rejection for not having 'gotten it right.' As an illustration of direct mediation, I quote Eric O'Connor's comments at the end of an essay I wrote in a course on the self-appropriation of the knower:

This is an *excellent* exploration. You used the earlier exercise very effectively in making yourself familiar with so many of the suggestive elements of the Koestler book. This was thoroughly rewarding to read. Thank you!

It will be very interesting to ask of Lonergan's *Insight*, how it accords with Koestler and Bruner. Your essay has given me more clarity on Lonergan.

The experience I have been reporting was a major breakthrough for me as a woman of common sense, living in the world of common sense. It made

me realize that my intelligence was a gift and not an obstacle. This was a first step in my journey to pre-theoretic self-appropriation as a knower. It was a heightening of my cognitive operations and it was experienced in excitement and joy.

Perhaps the next phase in my awareness came when I began to wonder about the TMI's method of education. I could feel the benefits of it; I could taste the excitement, the challenges, and the movement. I could not understand *why*, though.

After participating in another course on questions related to theology, I was asked to become a discussion leader. I accepted the invitation to do so and found the tension of questioning even greater. A sense of responsibility to the group became a genuine commitment to the small learning community.

In 1967, Eric O'Connor, President and Director of Studies of TMI at the time, asked me to co-lead a course with him: "The Knower in Process." This was typical of his way of inviting one into a deeper process, assuming one to be capable of thinking and doing beyond one's expectations. I felt I knew nothing about knowing. When he mentioned during the first session that this was a science course, I was sure I was out of my depth and about to sink. However, because of a basic trust I had in Eric and in the learning process, I went along with the adventure. For the duration of the course, I savored his statement about it being a science course, struggling with it, trying to figure out how that could be so, until, finally, I got it!

The course was described in the 1967-68 brochure of the Thomas More Institute in this way:

This course — in learning how to transform oneself by learning — is for adults already engaged in study. Within the context of widely diversified human situations evoked by the readings and discussions, participants will have the opportunity of coming to know in their own experience factors relevant to their own intellectual development.

All human creativity, discovery, and development are dependent upon the process of learning. What one comes to know is quite different from one's expectations, yet the expectations are so much a part of learning that little occurs without them. For this reason possible expectations and attitudes — the heuristic of inquiry — will

frequently occur in the readings, as will also psychological backgrounds and current explorations.

“The Knower in Process” (the title of the course) did not use a single reading by Bernard Lonergan. There were books by Jerome Bruner, Arthur Koestler, Leonardo da Vinci, Carl Jung, Wilder Penfield, Walker Percy, and many others, dealing with questions of attention, creativity, and learning. I was lost for the first several weeks, not sensing what questions might be appropriate. Then after struggling with the Koestler book, *Insight and Outlook*,<sup>4</sup> and attempting to express in writing what I thought his theory was — a little assignment for all of us suggested by Eric — I began to have a clue as to what was going on. As a co-leader of the course I composed a question for the first term essay and offered it to Eric, thinking he might use it along with one of his own. When he used no other question, I knew I was onto something. I wrote the essay myself and received confirmation and further questions from Eric in his written comments. The second term continued to be full of challenges, but I began to feel like a partner in co-leading and questioning.

In order to dramatize more fully the patient strategy of an effective performer of direct mediation, and to illustrate the link between the budding cognitive theorist heading for the high culture and the man or woman of common sense working towards thematization, I quote the second-term essay question that Eric O’Connor posed:

Write your 3,000 word personal statement on *How one’s cognitional activities lead to, and come together in, knowing.*

Various activities have been considered in the readings (and discussions), and various ways of increasing their effectiveness — sometimes from the point of view of the teacher, and sometimes from that of the learner — but it is one’s own activity as a learner, a knower, and an intelligent doer, that is wanted here.

You should try to make explicit mention of a great number of the books read, but should sift the course for the most significant experiences of your own that occurred — referring them (when possible) to the appropriate reading. (A cognitional activity will be

<sup>4</sup>Arthur Koestler, *Insight and Outlook: An Inquiry into the Common Foundations of Science, Art and Social Ethics* (New York: Macmillan, 1949).

best exemplified, not by what one has read about, but by one's own activity that the reading makes one aware of.)

A most helpful analysis will be found in the article "Cognitional Structure" of Bernard Lonergan. This should help you to become aware of and to distinguish your own activities; and a resumé of it should not take the place of your essay.

Typically suggested with detachment, the invitation was tantalizing enough to lure someone like me into working through my total experience of the course — as a knower in process coming to know the process — with the help of Lonergan's naming of the operations and of his analysis of the dynamic relationships among the operations within cognitional structure. Little danger of taking a short cut to simply naming without real appropriation of oneself as a knower!

Another memorable strategy used by the master of direct mediation was his way of setting up lectures. Two of the lecturers included in the course on knowing were scientists from McGill University and Université de Montréal who were friends of Eric. I suspect, though I was never told it was so, that Eric had arranged that the lecturer, in one case, would take a stance in which he remained within his field in all aspects of the event — lecture and question period. His field was psychology and his research was with white mice. Another part of the strategy, whether deliberate or accidental — perhaps Eric *did* have another meeting to attend that evening — was to leave me in charge as chairperson for the session. This exposure to the world of scientific research was bewildering to us, the twenty-five or so participants in the course, when it came to the question period. At the time, I thought it was clever of me to ask how the lecturer's work related to ordinary life. But when I wrote the second essay, I recognized that I had really experienced and understood the difference between the world of theory and the world of common sense and judged that my experience and understanding were correct.

Many years after the experience of the 1967-68 course on knowing, during an interview with Eric at Discovery Theatre in Toronto, my co-interviewer for the occasion, Michael Czerny, engaged Eric in the following dialogue which helps reveal how Eric brought his own post-theoretical self-appropriation to bear on his work in education:

Czerny: I would like to propose a paradox. While Lonergan eventually brings curiosity all the way through to moral responsibility, you don't seem to pursue it to that point. What you do is to take as your starting point, not the unrestricted desire to know, the way he does, but bits or segments of a problem.

O'Connor: Yes.

Czerny: So, on the one hand, you start with what looks like the unrestricted desire to know, or curiosity, being unleashed. On the other hand, you are already proposing to people the various frontiers of liberation that would be possible for them in any one year. I see there a kind of mixture.

O'Connor: That has been so from the beginning. How it has been working out is interesting. We sensed the use of literature and the arts as giving meaning, long before we understood clearly that it was meaning with which we were dealing. Someone who is a student of literature said, 'Look, you're abusing literature,' but we said: 'We are taking it as an enlargement of the possibilities of people's meanings and how they develop.'

We have never stopped people from reading *Insight*. In fact, we have encouraged it. When people become curious and say they would like to buy it, we are glad. But we don't impose it, because they would feel they have to go through all the exploration of mathematics, the physical sciences, relativity and a few other things, before they get to the question of what to do next. They get lost. We try to bring up the full answers of the book over a series of courses, so that persons can some day pick it up and read it.

Czerny: I wonder if in doing that, you have changed the book. In other words, I think you may have a different proposal to make about where curiosity leads than Lonergan does.

O'Connor: It may be, but I think it is the path that is different. We don't feel that most people are ready to take on a theoretical study of their own consciousness until they have some glimmerings

about the need for questions, the waiting for insights, the need of judgments, and are able to ask, finally, how do responsibility and value arise? Unless they have started to see that whole process in a story, or in a lecture or interview, it passes over them... The path should be where people can be really curious, as they are moving ahead. And they can be really curious when they come to the stage of asking about responsibility. If I tell you that you are responsible for something, and you haven't had any glimmering of it, you don't learn. You need to explore it, but you need to explore it with a curiosity.<sup>5</sup>

It was no doubt fortuitous that Eric had invited me into the process of coming to such self-awareness by asking me to lead with him in 1967-68, novice that I was, because just after the course our family moved to Toronto. At the convocation that year, I was presented with a Comprehensive Certificate, always unique in its citation in each candidate's case. Mine was the "Certificate of Comprehensive Study in the Psychic and Religious Ground of Learning within Community." With others, we began making plans to transplant something of the spirit of TMI to Toronto.

When I was asked by Eric to use in Toronto the interview as a technique for the first time, I did it in fear and trepidation. Lonergan had congratulated Eric on his brilliant insight in using interview as a technique. This would seem to be further — though anecdotal — evidence for Lonergan's implied appreciation of direct mediation.

The first course, in which I was involved as leader in Toronto, in 1968, was a TMI course about performance in relation to reality. The phrase, 'performance in relation to reality,' has frequently come into my consciousness when I reflect on our learning process and what grounds it. I wonder if the performance of the questioning can be meaningfully sustained unless there is a core of directors and leaders in the learning community which has managed to achieve either pre-theoretic or post-theoretic cognitive self-appropriation. It is such a temptation to become fascinated with one's own insights and questions rather than concerned with the attempts at formulation of insights and questions among other

<sup>5</sup>*Inquiry and Attunement*, Thomas More Institute Papers 1981, ed Melbourne and Thérèse Mason, 27.

participants in the learning process. It is easy to focus on content as an ultimate goal and ignore the wonder and curiosity that move one to learn. Listening in a loving way, with genuine concern for the learning of another person, waiting with yearning and patient eagerness for the other to embark on the further adventure of learning about the very source and structure of that learning, requires serious grounding and direct mediation.\*

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LONERGAN'S NOTION OF SPECULATIVE  
THEOLOGY IN HIS DISSERTATION ON  
*GRATIA OPERANS*,  
IN COMPARISON WITH THE NOTIONS OF  
METHOD IN *METHOD IN THEOLOGY*

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THE GOAL OF this essay is to present Lonergan's notion of speculative theology as we find it in the first, methodological chapter of his dissertation on "*Gratia Operans. A Study of the Speculative Development in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas.*"<sup>1</sup> We will particularly be interested in the continuity and the difference between the notion of speculative theology in the dissertation and the notion of systematics in Lonergan's mature work, *Method in Theology*.<sup>2</sup> In an abbreviated version of his dissertation, published in a series of articles a couple of years after the

<sup>1</sup>Citations in this study will be made to the recently published critical edition of the dissertation, in Part II of *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, eds. Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, v.1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000) 151-452. An earlier edition of the introduction and first chapter of the dissertation was made by Frederick Crowe in *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 3.2 (October 1985) 9-46. *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. J. Patout Burns, S.J. (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1971) derives from articles published by Lonergan on the basis of his dissertation (*Theological Studies* 2 (1941) 289-324; 3 (1942) 69-88, 375-402, 533-578); but both of these publications are significantly abbreviated versions of the original text of the dissertation; and neither includes the initial methodological section. I wish to thank Doran and the anonymous reviewers of this journal for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper; and I wish to thank the members of Doran's seminar on Lonergan's notion of systematics for their comments in a presentation I made to them on the topic of this paper.

<sup>2</sup>Citations will be made to Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1979).

dissertation, the first chapter was not included. We can only speculate about why the abbreviation did not include the methodological section, though space alone must have been an issue, considering the venue of publication. Lonergan refers to the articles simply as the "*contracta et abbreviata*" account of the dissertation.<sup>3</sup> Significant differences in terminology alone, apart even from differences in thought between the dissertation and Lonergan's mature methodology, would fully explain the continuing absence of the methodological chapter from the later edition of this abbreviation made by J. Patout Burns, in *Grace and Freedom*, published 31 years after the completion of the dissertation. An examination of the continuities and differences between the dissertation and Lonergan's mature methodology, both in terminology and in thought, thus has not only an intrinsic interest but also a certain historical utility. This article concentrates on the beginning and the end of Lonergan's own methodological development, in the dissertation and in *Method*, thus establishing the *terminus a quo* and the *terminus ad quem* of the development.

Lonergan's dissertation is a study of the 'speculative development' in Aquinas's understanding of *gratia operans*. As I will argue in this paper, the meaning of the term 'speculative theology' in the dissertation is in many respects similar to the meaning of 'systematics' in *Method*. The first chapter of the dissertation provides us with a good opportunity to discern what he means by 'speculative theology,' especially as it is opposed to 'dogmatic theology.' But we must pay close attention to the meaning of such terms as 'speculative' and 'systematic' as they occur in the context of the dissertation and in *Method*; in particular, we must be careful not to read back into the dissertation the thought of *Method*. It will, I think, be especially important to be careful about the differences between the following terms, in the course of our investigation: 'speculative,' 'speculative theology,' 'systematic,' 'systematic theology,' and 'systematics.' As we seek to understand Lonergan's early notion of speculative theology, we must be sensitive to the possibility that the meanings of these and related terms in the dissertation are different from the meanings of those terms in *Method*. In fact, one of the main contentions of this paper is that the function played by 'speculative theology' in the dissertation is later

<sup>3</sup>See the editors' preface to the *Collected Works* edition, xxi.

differentiated into the separate functions of 'theological doctrines' and 'systematics,' in *Method*, and is therefore not simply identical to the function of systematics. That is, Lonergan gains greater precision, in his later work on theological method, on the notion of 'speculative theology' that we find in the dissertation.

Yet we notice that the topic of the dissertation is not 'speculative theology;' rather, it is 'speculative development.' Lonergan sets out to understand how Thomas's speculative understanding of *gratia operans* developed, and therefore changed, through the course of Thomas's works. In this first chapter of the dissertation he sets out a general schema of all speculative development that he will apply to Thomas's development. Thus, we will seek to understand Lonergan's early schema for a speculative *development*. But since the topic of this essay is Lonergan's own development in his notion of systematics, it is almost irresistible to wonder how his schema, formulated to assist his study of a development in Thomas on grace, might apply to his own development in understanding systematics.

Perhaps more importantly, we might wonder how Lonergan's later understanding of method would have influenced his idea of a speculative *development*. At one level we can ask how to describe, from the perspective of *Method*, the genetic development in the understanding of a particular doctrine. Further, I will argue that a reflection on Lonergan's dissertation helps us to raise a question about the historical emergence and development of the functional specialties that are described in *Method*. This is a fruitful question because the emergence of the functional specialties is analyzed in *Method* not from an historical perspective but from a methodological perspective. From the standpoint of Lonergan's later notions of method, I will also propose the thesis that *there is a link between the genetic, historical development of the functional specialty of doctrines, as it appropriates systematic meaning, and the historical emergence of an altogether different kind of theology, systematics*. This essay will proceed as a close reading of the Introduction and the first chapter of Lonergan's dissertation.

## INTRODUCTION

In his introduction, besides indicating the purpose for his entire study of the idea of *gratia operans*, Lonergan also indicates his reason for setting out in the first chapter “an *a priori* scheme that is capable of synthesizing any possible set of historical data irrespective of their place and time” (156). It is not that he intends to deduce from an *a priori* perspective the actual content of the doctrine. He will certainly discover the content of Aquinas’s doctrine, and that of his predecessors at various stages, through an inductive study of the appropriate texts. Rather, this ‘*a priori* scheme’ will be used to show the path along which a speculative development must take place, based on the nature of speculative theology. He informs us that, as it turns out, there are seven phases in this speculative development in theology (158).<sup>4</sup> In the first chapter, he will undertake “the exposition and use of a theory of the history of theological speculation” (155), in which he will explain why there are seven phases, and the nature of these seven phases.

Through the use of this scheme, he will be able to situate the place of Thomas’s idea of *gratia operans* in the speculative development of the understanding of grace that leads up to Thomas. And, through the same scheme, he will be able to make a scientific assessment of the nature of the development that appears in Thomas’s own writings on grace. That is, through this *a priori* scheme, Lonergan intends to provide a scientific basis, rather than simply an impressionistic basis, from which to understand the development that leads up to Thomas, but which continues in Thomas as well: “What is required is a point of vantage outside the temporal dialectic, a matrix or system of thought that at once is as pertinent and as indifferent to historical events as is the science of mathematics to quantitative phenomena” (162). He insists that this scheme of development is not a hypothesis, but a demonstrable conclusion (157-158).

Lonergan indicates that the inquiry into Thomas’s views and into the views of his predecessors “cannot but be inductive,” since it is historical (156). Thus the principle of the development does not reside in history

<sup>4</sup>As I will argue below, Lonergan's conclusion in the dissertation is that there are seven phases *in this particular speculative development*. There are not necessarily seven phases in every speculative development.

itself, for history can only be discovered inductively, presumably because it is open-ended. Rather, the "general scheme of the historical process" of a *speculative development* can be constructed because "the human mind is always the human mind" (156). The invariant exigencies of a speculative development are somehow based on the invariant exigencies of the human mind. Historically, there might have been many setbacks, as well as developments. But *so far as a development took place*, it must have followed the path set by the shape of the human mind, as it is applied to speculative theology. There is a superficial resemblance between Lonergan's approach to an historical development in speculative theology and an Hegelian scheme of historical development. But it seems clear to me that at the very least Lonergan has a radically different conception of what the 'human mind' is, from Hegel's conception of 'spirit.'

As we will see, the identical truth is both affirmed in a dogma, in 'dogmatic theology,' and understood in the scientific understanding of the dogma, in 'speculative theology.' Thus, the scientific character of Lonergan's *a priori* scheme does not insert a new content of affirmation or a new judgment of truth. Lonergan's *a priori* is simply an application of the exigencies of the human mind, as it operates scientifically, to the history of a speculative development in the science of theology. In a speculative or scientific development, the science of theology increases its understanding of an already intelligible and meaningful dogma.

Lonergan makes it clear that his primary purpose is not to propose a theory in speculative theology (159-160). That is, he is not offering his own position on *gratia operans*. He makes it clear as well that his only purpose is to understand what someone else meant, when they said what they said about *gratia operans*. Thus, in the terms of *Method in Theology*, Lonergan situates this writing as operating at the level of interpretation, which understands what was understood in the sources of theology. In so far as this is a study of a development in Thomas, the dissertation also operates in the third functional specialty of *Method*, history. Further, he asserts that the thought of Thomas on *gratia operans* is not 'dogmatic,' but 'speculative.' The object of his interpretation is not a development in dogmatic theology, but in speculative theology. This distinction between 'dogmatic' and 'speculative' indicates that Lonergan already distinguished between a judgment about truth, that is the realm of dogmatic theology, and an

understanding of the truth that has already been affirmed, which is the realm of speculative theology. That he has in fact made the distinction on this ground will be confirmed later in the first chapter. There is a clear line of continuity between the *res* of this distinction, and the *res* of the distinction Lonergan makes in *Method* between the functional specialties of doctrines and systematics, even if the terminology shifts. We might say that there is already a significant awareness here of the distinct functions at least of interpretation, history, doctrines, and systematics.

#### THE FORM OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The title of the first chapter of Lonergan's dissertation, "the form of the development," indicates its content. Here he will introduce the basic terms and relations that are the '*a priori*' or the 'form' that he will put to use in his analysis of the historical sources for the development of the doctrine of grace. These terms and relations will not determine the outcome of his inductive historical studies of the development, but will help him to measure the development as it occurs.

The first section of this chapter, which is titled "the content of speculative theology," provides a definition of 'speculative theology' (163-164). The second section lays down the elements of speculative theology, which are named as: theorems, terms, the dialectical position, and technique (164-168). The third section of the chapter, on the "phases in the development of theological speculation," sets out the relations of these elements in the various phases of development (168-181). Thus, the development of theological speculation is understood with reference to: the boundary between pre-speculative theology and speculative theology as such (169-171); developing dialectical positions (171-172); developing technique (172-178); and developing theorems (178-181). Development in each of these elements of speculative theology suggests the path along which theological speculation will develop, which Lonergan outlines at the end of this third section, in seven phases (179-181). The fourth and final section of the chapter is a concise summary of the development of the doctrine of operative grace up to Thomas, and within Thomas himself, expressed according to the elements of speculative theology, and the seven phases that Lonergan has presented (181-192). Clearly, this '*a priori*'

system' is not necessary for or applicable to all of history, but only to the history of a speculative development in theology; and even then it is variable.

#### THE CONTENT OF SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY

As we have already mentioned, the first section of the chapter gives Lonergan's definition of speculative theology. The meaning of 'speculative theology' in Lonergan's dissertation is an important clue to the relation between his early understanding of theological method and his mature view, as it is presented in *Method in Theology*. In this early work, Lonergan primarily understands speculative theology *vis à vis* dogmatic theology. His understanding of the clear distinction between dogma and speculation based on dogma is already fundamental to his thought:

Dogmatic truths are one thing; their speculative correlation and unification is quite another. A perfect expression of dogmatic truth, as when a child repeats his catechism, or an eleventh-century theologian recites the creed, is no evidence of a speculative position. On the other hand, speculative deficiency is no proof of heterodoxy. The two are really distinct, and this work presupposes that distinction (160).

This distinction recalls the distinction made in *Method in Theology*, between doctrines and systematics. There, systematics is the understanding of what has already been judged as true in doctrines. The distinction in *Method* between doctrines and systematics is recalled again when Lonergan asserts the subordinate role of speculation *vis à vis* dogma and the sources of theology in biblical interpretation, and research into patristics, the councils and pontifical pronouncements (163). "Thus the content of speculative theology is the content of a pure form. It is not something by itself but the intelligible arrangement of something else. It is not systematic theology but the system in systematic theology" (163). The content of speculative theology is the form applied to the doctrinal material to discover its organization, without giving it a new content of truth. Rather it reveals the 'unity and cohesion' that already exists: "It reveals the unity and cohesion; but it neither creates nor discovers what has the unity and is shown to hang together" (163).

There is an important correspondence between Lonergan's idea of 'speculative theology' here, and his later understanding of 'systematics.' In the dissertation, 'speculative theology' reveals the intelligibility of a truth that has already been accepted as true by other means than 'speculative theology.' 'Speculative theology' entirely depends on dogma, with respect to the truth that is re-affirmed speculatively. This is exactly the relationship in *Method* between systematics and dogma. Further, in the dissertation there is a whole development of theology that in no way depends on speculation, and in fact precedes it by a number of centuries. Again, systematics can only occur for the later Lonergan, after the 'theoretical differentiation of consciousness' is made available to theology; likewise, in the dissertation, 'speculative theology' is only possible after scientific thought is made available to theology.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, despite this strong correspondence between the early pair, dogmatic theology and speculative theology, and the later pair, doctrines and systematics, there is an important difference as well. I propose that the role played by 'speculative theology' in the dissertation is differentiated into the functions of 'theological doctrines' and 'systematics,' in *Method*, and is not found only in the function of 'systematics.' In order to argue for this thesis, I will have to examine the notion of 'theological doctrines' in *Method*, as I will below. But first we need to analyze more closely the relation between speculative theology and dogmatic theology, as it is conceived in the dissertation. It would be helpful to recall more fully a passage from the dissertation which we have already quoted:

But though speculation enters everywhere, it is also true that everywhere its role is very subordinate. It provides the technical terms with their definitions; it does not provide the objects that are defined. It gives the arrangement and order of the subject; *it does not give what is arranged and put into order. It reveals the unity and cohesion; but it neither creates nor discovers what has the unity and is shown b hang*

<sup>5</sup>J. Michael Stebbins draws the same conclusion concerning the methodological continuity between the early distinction (dogma and speculative theology) and the later distinction (doctrines and systematics). See his *The Divine Initiative: Grace, World-Order, and Human Freedom in the Early Writings of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995) 27-32 and 308-309, nn. 80, 82. Although it is primarily a study of *De ente supernaturali*, this excellent book contains close study of Lonergan's dissertation.

together. It is the work of the human intellect; but what *it works upon* is the Word of God.

Thus the content of speculative theology is the content of a pure form. It is not something by itself but the intelligible arrangement of something else. *It is not systematic theology but the system in systematic theology* (163; my emphases).

The term 'systematic theology' as it is used here might be mistaken for Lonergan's later idea of 'systematics,' and therefore be misleading. It is in fact something quite different here, since it is *speculative* theology, such as we find in Thomas's mature theology of grace, that "reveals the unity and cohesion" and discovers the system in the previous 'systematic theology.' Thus, 'speculative theology' is analogous to what Lonergan will later term 'systematics.' But 'systematic theology,' here, would seem to refer primarily to the body of *dogmatic* theology that 'speculative theology' works on, of which it reveals the existing unity and cohesion. Therefore, in this quote, 'systematic theology' coincides with what he calls 'dogmatic theology' in the dissertation and what he calls 'doctrines' in *Method*, but not with what he calls 'systematics' in *Method*.

I should emphasize that the term 'systematic' does not necessarily imply the seventh functional specialty of 'systematics' even for the later Lonergan. In at least one place in *Method*, Lonergan uses the term 'systematic theology' in a similar way to that we have just noted in the dissertation, to mean something different from his term 'systematics.'<sup>6</sup> In these places, both in the dissertation and in *Method*, Lonergan is simply using the term 'systematic theology' in its received sense of an organized body of *doctrine* or theology, whereas terms such as 'systematic meaning' and 'systematics' gain a distinct technical sense within his later methodology. In its received sense, 'systematic theology' can refer to organized bodies of doctrine or theology as diverse as Lombard's *Sentences*,

<sup>6</sup>The following sentence occurs in the chapter on doctrines, in a paragraph set to describe 'theological doctrines' in particular. In context, then, the 'systematic theology' of this quote refers to theological doctrines. "Research and classification were undertaken in books of sentences. Interpretation in commentaries on the books of the Old and New Testaments and on the works of eminent writers. *Systematic theology* sought to put order and coherence into the mass of materials assembled from scripture and tradition" (*Method* 296-297; my emphasis). At the end of the same paragraph, again referring to the aim of theological doctrines: "there was needed some overall systematic view."

Thomas's *Summa* and Calvin's *Institutes*. Thus, not only in the dissertation, but also in the later usage of *Method*, 'systematic theology' in this sense can describe theology within the functional specialty of doctrines, not of systematics. In *Method*, however, this sense of 'systematic theology' is anomalous; in the chapter on systematics the term 'systematic theology' is taken into the orbit of 'systematics' in its technical sense. Still, it is interesting to note that in *Method*, Lonergan refers to theological doctrines, as opposed to church doctrines, with the tag 'systematic theological doctrine' (306). This illustrates yet another use of the term 'systematic,' in the mature Lonergan, which certainly is not equivalent to 'systematics,' but is rather within the ambit of the sixth functional specialty, doctrines.

In the dissertation, dogmatic theology is 'systematic' in the sense that it inherently possesses unity and cohesion, though it does not advert to the unity and to the cohesion. Perhaps we could also say that it is 'systematic' in the sense that it already is set out with an appropriate kind of organization, such as that which we find in the Biblical kerygma or in the Apostle's Creed, as well as in later dogmatic theology on a larger scale. But 'speculative theology' discovers and reveals the unity, cohesion, or system that is already present in the dogmatic material as intelligible, to which 'dogmatic theology' does not directly advert. Speculative theology brings to light the intelligibility of the already intelligible doctrines. I will seek to confirm this early understanding of the role of speculative theology, in the course of my analysis of the dissertation. Yet, as I will now argue, in Lonergan's later notion of method, it is not only systematics but also theological doctrines that bring to light the intelligibility of the dogmatic material. If I can demonstrate this feature of Lonergan's later notions of method, it will go a long way towards demonstrating my thesis that the term 'speculative theology' in the dissertation governs the functions that are differentiated in *Method* into the functions both of theological doctrines and of systematics.

Towards this purpose, then, we must clarify the later distinctions between doctrines and systematics, and between church doctrines and theological doctrines, as those distinctions are defined in *Method in Theology*. This will require an extended excursus on two important passages in *Method*: one from the chapter on systematics (349), on the difference between doctrines and systematics; and a second from the chapter on

doctrines (311-112), on the difference between church doctrines and theological doctrines.

The basic difference between doctrines and systematics, as these functional specialties are understood in *Method*, is that doctrines operates primarily at the level of judgment and systematics operates primarily at the level of understanding. While doctrines aims at affirming the truth of religious realities, systematics seeks to understand that identical truth.

[S]ystematics aims at an understanding of the religious realities affirmed by doctrines. It wants its understanding to be true, for it is not a pursuit of misunderstanding. At the same time, it is fully aware that its understanding is bound to be imperfect, merely analogous, commonly no more than probable (*Method* 349).

Yet thought takes part in all four of the intentional operations, in each functional specialty. And it is particularly important to see how the operations of judgment and understanding function in each of the specialties, doctrines, and systematics.

Our present concern is with doctrines and systematics. Both aim at understanding the truth, but they do so in different manners. Doctrines aim 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* 349).

Despite the distinction between doctrines and systematics, with systematics operating at the level of understanding and doctrines at the level of judgment, doctrines do seek understanding, as was also claimed especially about theological doctrines in the chapter on doctrines (see *Method* 311). On inspection, the chapter on doctrines, in *Method*, is replete with the language of understanding, even if doctrines operates primarily at the level of judgment. The distinctive character of doctrines is *the application of foundational reality to the data of dialectics, to form a judgment of the truth*; but one must understand at least to some extent the truth that one affirms; and one must express oneself intelligently, which means with understanding, if the affirmed truth is to be understood by one's audience; thus, doctrines is focused on discerning and expressing the truth, but seeks understanding so far as it is necessary for its own purpose;

sometimes this means making use of a systematic category not found in its own sources, but it does so only as it needs to, in the course of its own pursuit.

It is important for my purpose in this paper to stress the role of understanding in doctrines, while remembering of course that doctrines operates primarily at the level of judgment. As we have indicated, "there are, then, in doctrines and systematics two instances of truth and two instances of understanding" (*Method* 349). In the chapter on doctrines, Lonergan stresses the role of intelligibility and understanding in doctrines. In particular he stresses the intelligibility in doctrines that is due to the increasing use of systematic meaning in doctrines:

Now from the middle ages right up to Vatican II the doctrines of the Catholic Church have been deriving from theology a precision, a conciseness, and an organization that in earlier times they did not possess. In general, the meaning of these doctrines is not systematic but, commonly, it is post-systematic (*Method* 311-312).

By inference, doctrines can be systematic, post-systematic, or not systematic. By systematic, Lonergan means here that their language is at the level of the theoretical differentiation of consciousness: the context for this discussion of theological doctrines is a section of the chapter on doctrines called "the ongoing discovery of mind." Lonergan does not actually speak of a properly 'systematic' church doctrine, though in one place he is content to use the label 'systematic theology' to label the work of theological doctrines in organizing the doctrinal material (see *Method* 296-297). On the other hand, the use of post-systematic meaning in doctrines is important. By post-systematic, he means that, like the Nicene and Chalcedonian councils, theology increasingly employs terms developed in the language of theory but in documents that basically operate at the level of common sense: the introduction of post-systematic meaning adds precision and organization to doctrines. Doctrines that are not systematic are framed simply in the language of common sense (as is the case, for example, in the Apostle's Creed). On the other hand, all theology in the seventh functional specialty, systematics, is systematic: it operates with the best tools available for speculation, whether at the level of theoretically differentiated consciousness or of interiorly differentiated

consciousness. Lonergan's use of the term 'systematic' here helps us to understand the way that the operation of understanding functions in doctrines, as well as systematics. Understanding is increased in doctrines as it makes use of systematic meaning: that is, as it makes use of theoretically differentiated consciousness or of interiorly differentiated consciousness.

It is particularly the role of theological doctrines, as opposed to church doctrines, to introduce the use of systematic meaning into the functional specialty, doctrines. Systematic meaning is found in church doctrines from the time of the Greek councils (*Method* 307). But it is particularly the work of theological doctrines to collect and work together previous doctrinal material into some kind of coherent whole, which increasingly demands the assistance of systematic meaning. Thus, in a paragraph devoted to the emergence of theological doctrines, earlier in the chapter on doctrines, Lonergan indicates the wide range of material that was collected into orderly wholes by 'systematic theology,' which means in this context<sup>7</sup> 'theological doctrines':

Research and classification were undertaken in books of sentences. Interpretation in commentaries on the books of the Old and New Testaments and on the works of eminent writers. Systematic theology sought to put order and coherence into the mass of materials assembled from scripture and tradition (*Method* 296-297).

Thus, theological doctrines, operating as 'systematic theology,' explores the whole Christian tradition. Theological doctrines works toward the organization, ordering, and reconciliation of all of the materials from the earlier functional specialties in theology, especially of interpretation, history, and dialectic. The significant difference between church doctrines and theological doctrines, within the same functional specialty of doctrines, shows why theological doctrines make greater use of systematic meaning:

Church doctrines and theological doctrines pertain to different contexts. Church doctrines are the content of the church's witness to Christ; they express the set of meanings and values that inform individual and collective Christian living. Theological doctrines are

<sup>7</sup>See n.6 for an explanation of this use of 'systematic theology.'

part of an academic discipline, concerned to know and understand the Christian tradition and to further its development. *As the two contexts are directed to quite distinct ends, so too they are unequal in extent* (*Method* 311; my emphasis).

Thus, theological doctrines will make greater use of systematic meaning than will church doctrines because of the need to 'know and understand.' When church doctrines make use of systematic meaning it will probably be because that systematic meaning has been confirmed through a development that took place in theological doctrines.

I should stress that in *Method* there certainly is a 'systematic' element in the 'systematic meaning' that is present in doctrines. In an outline that is strikingly similar to the scheme of *speculative* development in the dissertation, Lonergan sketches the story of the increasing use of systematic meaning within *church doctrine*, between 305-314. His outline of this story is given on 305-306: "(1) the reinterpretation of symbolic apprehension, (2) philosophic purification of biblical anthropomorphism, (3) the occasional use of systematic meaning, (4) systematic theological doctrine, (5) church doctrine dependent on systematic theological doctrine ..." Notice the importance of the distinction *within doctrines as a functional specialty*, between 'church doctrine' and 'systematic theological doctrine.' Lonergan's earlier 'systematic theology' has now become 'systematic theological doctrine,' but 'systematic theological doctrine' is *not* the functional specialty of systematics for the later Lonergan any more than 'systematic theology' was the same as 'speculative theology' for the earlier Lonergan. The earlier Lonergan did not, however, worry about distinctions within what he then called dogmatic theology and what he later calls doctrines.

I must also stress, however, that it is not the goal of theological doctrines to reach a maximum of understanding, "at the level of one's times": that is the goal of systematics. Theological doctrines remains within the functional specialty, doctrines. Nevertheless, in theological doctrines the cohesion and intelligibility of the church doctrines and dogmas is explored, and systematic meaning is introduced, as it assists the goal of the intelligent affirmation of the truth discovered in the course of "the whole Christian tradition."

If systematics is different from doctrines because systematics aims at an understanding of what has already been affirmed to be true, still there is a significant parallel between the function of systematics and the function of 'theological doctrines,' as it is described at different places in the chapter on doctrines. Systematics is akin to theological doctrines in the following ways: theological doctrines and systematics both aim to bring Christian truth to a unity and organization; they both seek greater understanding of the truths held in 'church doctrines' or dogmas (311-312); they both advert to issues that are not dealt with in 'church doctrines' (331); they both will use the theoretical and intentional differentiations of consciousness (308-311). Now, all 'doctrines' aim to present an authoritative judgment on the truth; thus, theological *doctrines* aim at making more and less certain judgments on the same truth affirmed with greater certainty in church *doctrines*. Therefore, because systematics and theological *doctrines* differ on account of their basic aims, they also differ in the level of certainty intended in their conclusions: theological doctrines aim at truth in their judgments, but systematics aims at probability in its judgments. Yet while doctrines and systematics differ because of their aims, the method of systematics and *theological doctrines* overlap to a certain extent, because of the necessity of understanding in doctrines alongside the persistent reach for understanding in systematics.

Thus, in the dissertation the content of *speculative theology* is the formal unity, cohesion, system that can be discovered as the intelligibility of dogmatic theology. In *Method*, this content is the concern of *theological doctrines* so far as it brings the intelligibility of the Christian tradition to light in the context of its aim to affirm the truth found in the Christian tradition. Still further however, the disclosure of this content of intelligibility is the sole concern of *systematics*, as it pursues an understanding of the intelligibility of the truth affirmed in doctrines, at the level of one's own time.

In the first chapter of the dissertation, Lonergan argues that the necessary elements of speculative theology require that when a development towards systematic intelligibility occurs, it will occur along a certain path; and he will argue that the speculative theology of operative grace has in fact developed along that path. We will pay special attention to the scientific character of speculative theology as an important clue towards

understanding the status of speculative theology, *vis à vis* Lonergan's later notions of theological method.

#### ELEMENTS IN SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY

The elements of speculative theology indicate the scientific status of speculative theology. Each element promotes an understanding of the unity, coherence and system, which is to say the intelligibility of the truth affirmed in dogmas.

The first element of speculative theology is the theorem. According to the dissertation, theorems are "the difference between a common notion and a scientific concept." Again, "a theorem is the scientific elaboration of a common notion"; or "[the theorem] elaborates [the common notion] by understanding it." In each case, the theorem is an expression of the common notion, at the level of science. The example that Lonergan uses here is the concept of the 'supernatural.' In Peter Lombard, 'supernatural' is a common notion, but it is a scientific notion in Thomas Aquinas. In Thomas, 'supernatural' has a fixed scientific reference; it has "an exact philosophical definition"; and it has an established relation to a whole system of thought. In the later terms of *Method*, Lonergan would say that a theorem is an instance of the theoretical differentiation of consciousness, by which a commonsense notion can be expressed scientifically.

The second element of speculative theology is found in terms. A theologian needs to be aware of "the distinction between the language of dogmatic sources and the language of scientific thought," for terms have a meaning defined by their context. The following contexts for the meaning of terms are distinguished: the language of the dogmatic sources, the scientific language of the historian's own day, and the scientific language of the period treated. Again, this indicates a clear understanding of the data that will lead to Lonergan's idea of a theoretical differentiation of consciousness, though there is no awareness of the data for an interiorly differentiated consciousness.

The third element of speculative theology is the dialectical position. "The 'dialectical position' is the assertion of the negative coherence of non-contradiction but the simultaneous denial of the positive coherence of complete understanding" (166). That is, all theological thought stands in a

dialectical position, with respect to the full meaning of the doctrines of faith. A great deal of what is affirmed by Christians in dogma is beyond the possibility of understanding, and so cannot be understood scientifically. The apex of intelligibility in theology stands beyond the human intellect. While the truths of faith cannot be contradictory, not all of the problems or apparent contradictions in doctrines can be resolved. And so, the dialectical position does not disappear in the transition from dogmatic theology to speculative theology; rather, the dialectical position first appears whenever speculative theology seeks a scientific understanding of a dogmatic truth. Again, this closely reflects the notions of doctrines and of systematics, in *Method*. It also reflects the model of the difference and interaction between understanding and judgment, in knowledge, that we find in the first chapter of the systematic part of *De Deo Trino*.

The fourth element of speculative theology is technique. Technique is the application of philosophy to theology. Philosophy is necessary to theology for three reasons: it supplies a breadth of view; it is the proper arena for an analysis of the natural element in theological problems; and it supplies "a method for the systematic treatment of the question of theology" (167). In each case, the application of philosophy to theology in technique makes possible the scientific status of speculative theology. The three roles that are assigned to philosophy here, as it cooperates with theology, most closely resemble in *Method* the role of philosophy (that is, of theory and intentionality analysis) as it interpenetrates theology in the functional specialty, systematics (see *Method* 337-338). In *Method*, systematics makes use of the 'systematic meaning' available through theory and intentionality analysis, in its drive toward understanding the truths already judged to be true and affirmed in doctrines, but at the level of one's own time. Likewise, in the dissertation speculative theology makes use of philosophy as a 'technique' to clarify the natural side of theological problems so far as that is possible. Nevertheless, it is clear that the dissertation's 'technique' has only reached the horizon of 'theory' and not of 'intentionality,' from the perspective of *Method*. Probably the greatest methodological distance between the dissertation and *Method* is found here, as a result of the later emergence of intentionality as a scientific standpoint for systematics, including but surpassing the horizon of theory as a scientific standpoint.

We should add that philosophy has a contribution to make to doctrines as well, in *Method*. Philosophy, operating as intentionality analysis, reveals the general categories for foundations (*Method* 285-288), while theology supplies its own special categories to foundations (*Method* 288-291); doctrines is defined as the application of these general and special categories (that is, of foundational reality) to the data of dialectic (*Method*, 299). To a certain extent, the role of intentionality analysis in revealing the general categories that doctrines applies to the data of dialectic is paralleled by the role of technique in the dissertation. For technique provides the scientific standpoint for the natural side of speculative problems in theology, as theorems provide the scientific standpoint for the supernatural side of these speculative problems. Admittedly, it is more difficult to see an awareness of the data for the application of foundational reality, in the dissertation, than it is to see an awareness of the data for the use of theory in systematics. Yet it would be worthwhile exploring elsewhere whether the notion of 'speculative theology,' to the extent that governs the function of 'theological doctrines' in *Method*, does not operate in a way analogous to the application of foundational reality to the data of dialectic.

Does technique bring a new content in speculative theology to the truth affirmed in dogmatic theology? That might seem to be the sense of the following quote from the dissertation: "It is to be observed that technique not only gives the form but also influences the content of speculative thought" (167). It is clear however, in Lonergan's elaboration on this assertion, that this new content is not an additional affirmation, added to the affirmation in dogmatic theology, but rather an enrichment in the understanding of the same affirmation. This enrichment could not have occurred, however, without the introduction of philosophy in technique, or without the improvement of technique. In Lonergan's hypothetical example here, a Platonic theologian might conceive of grace as life or intelligence, "on the analogy of his system of theology." But the horizon of the Platonist *Liber de Causis* falls short of a whole range of scientific conceptions that could help to express the theology of grace. Nothing said here contradicts Lonergan's repeated insistence on the distinction in roles between dogmatics and speculative theology. Technique adds a content of understanding, not of judgment.

As we have pointed out, then, all of the elements of theological speculation point to its role as the scientific understanding and expression of what has been affirmed as a dogma. There is no idea of importing the truths of philosophy as a supplement or even as a complement to the truths of dogma. Lonergan's thought here does not transgress the distinction between the roles of judgment and understanding that he will continue to insist on, and will continue to develop throughout his career.

#### PHASES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEOLOGICAL SPECULATION

Lonergan insists at the beginning of this section that his scheme of development, if it is *a priori*, still is not "any *a priori* form of history but mere sets of abstract categories that have a special reference to the historical process" (168). These are the various potential phases through which *theological speculation* might develop: this is not a general theory of history, or even of the development of all the departments of theology. Therefore, it is not a Hegelian historical *a priori*.

It would be useful to reiterate the outline of this section, which was mentioned above. Development results from various correlations of the elements of theological speculation (theorems, terms, dialectical positions, technique), as development occurs in the use of each of these elements. Thus, the development of theological speculation is understood with reference to: the boundary between pre-speculative theology and speculative theology as such, which Lonergan names the *preliminary phase* (169-171); developing dialectical positions, which he calls the *initial and final dialectical positions* (171-172); developing technique, which produces *intermediate phases* that arise from a source external to theology (172-178); and developing theorems, which produce *intermediate phases* that arise from sources internal to theology (178-179). The path of development in each of these elements of speculative theology suggests the path along which theological speculation will develop, which Lonergan outlines at the end of this third section, in seven phases (179-181).

The *preliminary phase* is not yet scientific, and therefore is not yet speculative theology. Yet before speculative theology occurs, its problems begin to surface when different pieces of dogmatic data are set down beside each other, or when someone begins to try to classify the different

dogmatic data that collect around a theme in dogmatic theology. These collections and classifications are "the first movements towards an explanatory unification of the data to be found in the dogmatic sources" (169). Lonergan makes a clear distinction between the exegesis of scripture and this preliminary phase of speculation. In this preliminary phase, passages of scripture are collected to bear on a single point, but that is not exegesis. So the second functional specialty, interpretation, seems to be in view in its own right, as distinct from the dogmatic use of scripture. And he once again preserves a clear distinction between collections of dogmatic material and speculative theology, even when the collections are as programmatic as the *Sentences*, or the *Sic et Non*. In this phase, in works such as the *Sentences*, the problems for speculation are collected in a way that calls for clarification and unification; but speculation has not begun. We are still in the realm of doctrines, but not yet in the realm of speculation, which points to a grasp of the data that will later lead to a distinction between church doctrines and theological doctrines.

The *initial and final positions* define the distance between the beginning of speculation and its furthest reach. Theological speculation always has a dialectical position, but it develops on a continuum from an initial to a final dialectical position. In the initial dialectical position there is the dialectical opposition of two accepted dogmatic truths, between which the resolution is unknown. But a resolution is still possible to a certain extent of the 'human problems' and the 'human element in religious problems.' A complete resolution is impossible, since the dogma affirms a truth that has its apex of intelligibility beyond the reach of human reason. But in the final dialectical position the apparent contradiction has been resolved to the extent possible for the unglorified human intellect, where the residue is the mystery hidden in God that is beyond the reach of the unglorified human intellect. Lonergan never loses this important distinction, which allows one not to collapse theology into philosophy, or to assert that they are isomorphic, and yet to preserve the possibility for a development in understanding that is based on a properly philosophical development.

One set of *intermediate phases* arises from a source external to theology, in the intermediate phases from developing technique. Technique is the application of philosophy to resolve the human element

in theological problems, and to provide the analogy for the theorems that arise within theological speculation. Lonergan mentions three ways in which technique can develop in a way that advances theological speculation. First, theology can take advantage of an advance in philosophy. Philosophy itself can develop; as it develops, it can become more and more useful to theology. Lonergan's example here is the advance that he believes occurs in substituting Platonic philosophy with Aristotelian philosophy. He is probably thinking of the development of philosophy towards theory and towards critical realism, through the introduction of Aristotelian philosophy. From the perspective of Lonergan's later work we note the way that he will later intend, in *Method*, that his philosophical development of interiorly differentiated consciousness will make possible a 'critical metaphysics,' which in turn is of greater assistance to theology (*Method* 343).

Second, developing technique makes an advance possible in theological speculation when the distinction between reason and faith emerges. Technique (the application of philosophy to speculative development) requires a definition of the difference between faith and reason, to effect a complete understanding of the division of labor between philosophy and theology as such. Once this distinction has emerged, theology can make use of philosophy without either collapsing into philosophy, or ignoring it: "speculative development will consist precisely in making possible the coherent use of a philosophic definition of liberty" (174). It is confusing to insist on a purely theological solution to a problem, like that of free will, which admits in its natural element of a philosophical solution. While this distinction between faith and reason is being reached, the boundary of the dialectical position is unclear and is worked out in individual cases, such as the case of the relationship between grace and liberty. In this intermediate phase, the natural or human element is clarified, as it approaches the definition of the difference between faith and reason.

Third, developing technique makes possible a development of the specifically theological theorems. These scientific, but specifically theological theorems necessarily employ analogies. Yet the natural side of these analogies is not clarified from the side of theology, but from the side of philosophy or developing technique: the natural side of "the analogies

necessary for the scientific conception of purely theological data" needs to be developed. In the case of the theology of grace, Lonergan's example is the introduction of the philosophical notion of habit as a clue to assist in a specifically theological problem. The philosophical notion of habit, combined with the theological distinction between natural and supernatural allowed for an analogy of habit that was productive of the thirteenth-century breakthrough on grace. Thus, in attempts to make a theory of grace, "speculators prior to [the development of the idea of the supernatural], the key position to the whole theory of grace, were like men at sea without a compass. Lacking a metaphysical framework in terms of *natura*, they naturally tended to understand grace psychologically." In this intermediate phase, the natural side of the speculative analogy or theorem is clarified, as it approaches a properly metaphysical rather than psychological formulation. A later Lonergan would look for a further improvement of the analogy, in developing technique, in the move from metaphysics to intentionality.

A second set of *intermediate phases* arises from a development internal to theology, in the intermediate phases from developing theorems. Theorems amount to scientifically controlled distinctions in the specifically theological material out of the scriptural and dogmatic sources. Lonergan uses the example of the theorems of the different states of man that has its origin in Augustine and the theorem of the supernatural that has its origin in the thirteenth century. These theorems provide a control or standard, and they supply a set of distinctions that must somehow be accounted for in an adequate theology of grace. A whole set of theorems is necessary for the science of theological speculation to develop in an area.

For the speculative theology of grace this set includes both generic and specific theorems:

In the instance of the necessity of grace, the necessity from the supernatural end is *generic*, for it regards man simply as a creature; on the other hand, the various states of man are *specifically* different initial positions with regard to the attainment of eternal life (179).

The theorem of the supernatural is a generic theorem; the theorems of the states of man are the special theorems of grace. The theorem of the

supernatural effectively doubles the number of distinctions required in a scientific account of grace, since it cuts across each of the states of man.

Loneragan's analysis of the order of the development of the theorems is the backbone of his scheme of a speculative development, to which the other developments in the elements of speculative theology contribute, such as the development of technique. The development of theorems occurs according to an important principle: "The general law is perfectly simple. The mind begins from the particular and works to what is most general; it then returns from the most general through the specific differences to the particular" (179).<sup>8</sup> This principle operates throughout Lonergan's works, at a number of levels. One thinks of the distinction between the two phases of the functional specialties and of the distinction between doctrines and systematics. Here, the principle determines that the development will begin with the discovery and analysis of the specific theorem; the development will progress from the particular to the general as the specific theorem is made to account for all the data of the necessity of grace. When it is recognized that the specific theorem fails to account for the data, the problem leads to the discovery of the generic theorem of the supernatural. Now the speculative development moves from the general to the particular. Thus, the development finds its term in "the rediscovery of the specific theorem in a new setting." The end of the development accomplishes "the synthesis of the generic and specific theorems" (180).

Loneragan plots his seven phases of a speculative development along this line of development in theorems: from the particular to the general, in the first four phases; and from the general to the particular, in the movement from the fourth to the seventh phase. The final section of his chapter analyzes the history of the speculative development of operative grace according to these seven phases. It seems fairly certain that his scheme of development occurred to him as a result of this particular historical study:

<sup>8</sup>Craig S. Boly overlooks the very significant operation of this principle in the dissertation when he claims that "Loneragan does not write anything in his doctoral dissertation, *Gratia Operans*, about the twofold ordering of ideas." See *The Road to Lonergan's Method in Theology: The Ordering of Theological Ideas* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1991) 18.

he has used this historical study as an opportunity to discern the principles that operate in a speculative development.

#### ANTECEDENTS OF ST THOMAS'S DOCTRINE ON OPERATIVE GRACE

We should note that the *a priori* scheme of development, the scientific viewpoint that Lonergan has argued towards, does not require that every speculative development have seven phases. The *a priori* scheme of development requires the following principles for a speculative development: the elements of a speculative development; the development of each element along the backbone of a development in theological theorems; and the general law of development, based on the operation of the human mind in knowledge, that causes a movement from the particular to the general, and a return from the general to the particular. These are the invariant principles of speculative development. The seven phases of development here are exigently necessary in the doctrine of grace, which requires a synthesis of specific and generic theorems. Lonergan explicitly notes that a speculative development could be "vastly [more] complicated," if "there is one or more intermediate species" (181). Perhaps it would also be possible for a development to occur in fewer phases. At any rate, what is central in his '*a priori* scheme of development' is not the number of phases, but the principles of the development that we have just outlined.

In the introduction to this section, Lonergan tersely sets out the history of the speculative development of the doctrine of grace, according to the terms of his scheme (181-182). In the rest of this section, he lays down the history in a slightly expanded way, but in reverse order (182-191). This is the conceptual heart or goal of Lonergan's chapter. Because he has helped us to understand the *a priori* scheme of speculative development, he can now scientifically present the development that took place in the doctrine of grace. Nevertheless, because our purpose here is to understand Lonergan's notion of method, rather than to understand the development in the doctrine of grace, we will confine our attention to method rather than elaborate in any detail on the doctrine of grace.

At the term of the speculative development of the doctrine of grace, in the seventh phase, Thomas accomplishes a synthesis of the generic and

specific theorems on the necessity of grace. Here, Lonergan quotes from the final phase of development of the doctrine of grace in Thomas himself, from the last paragraph of the *respondeo* of question 109, article 2 of the *Summa theologiae*, III. Lonergan seems to conceive of this stage of the development as the final possible phase: that is, as the real term of the development. One wonders what difference there would be if he approached the idea of a speculative development from his mature position. His later cognitional theory rejects an understanding of science in terms of necessity, in favor of an understanding of science or knowledge in terms of the invariant method of intentional operations. This later approach can more easily conceive of an indefinitely extended development in understanding. A later Lonergan would probably adopt the very principles of development outlined above, without closing off the possibility of further development (see *Method* 310-311).

#### CONCLUSION

We do not need, for our purposes here, to explicate the history of development that Lonergan outlines in its seven phases. But a general observation about this last section of the chapter is quite important for my thesis that the role played by 'speculative theology' in the dissertation is found in the two functions of 'theological doctrines' and 'systematics,' in *Method*, and not only in the function of systematics. My observation is elementary. In the later categories of *Method in Theology*, systematics requires the application to theology of a theoretically or interiorly differentiated consciousness. Historically, for the later Lonergan, systematics only begins in the thirteenth century, with the full appropriation of a theoretical differentiation of consciousness, as it is found in Aristotle's philosophy. By contrast, the development of the speculative theology of grace, in at least its first three phases, occurs outside of systematics, in Augustine, Abelard, Peter Lombard, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Anselm. Up to Thomas himself, in the sixth and seven phases, the development occurs at best in semi-systematic contexts, in the work of Philip the Chancellor, William of Auxerre, Alexander of Hales, and Albert the Great. We conclude that the meaning of 'speculative theology,' while it overlaps

to a certain extent with the meaning of 'systematics,' is not identical with 'systematics.'

In fact, what Lonergan has in view with his term, 'speculative theology,' in the dissertation, includes what he later calls 'theological doctrines': the problem is that Lonergan does not yet have the idea of 'theological doctrines' clearly distinguished either from what he will later call church doctrines or from systematics. Nevertheless, that distinction is not far away. For he has a clear sense of the difference between dogma and the understanding of dogma. Therefore he has the principle that will later distinguish between doctrines and systematics, which also operates to a certain extent in the distinction between church doctrines and theological doctrines. And he recognizes a development in understanding that occurs outside of a fully systematic context, which will later allow for a recognition of theological doctrines, as opposed to systematics. In the language of *Method*, we may say that what Lonergan calls 'speculative development' in this writing occurs primarily at the level of theological doctrines in the functional specialty, doctrines, as it makes increasing use of categories that are systematic or post-systematic. But at the term of this development, the possibility of systematics as such begins to emerge, as it in fact does in Thomas. In a reformulated version of this writing, we might say that theological doctrines appear in a genetic account as the incubator for systematics.

I am not claiming that Lonergan would somehow conceive of doctrines as a partial systematics. He would not. Both the early and the late Lonergan insist on the difference between seeking to affirm a truth and seeking to understand the same truth. But where the early Lonergan showed that a 'speculative development' can occur wherever the unity, cohesion, system, or intelligibility of a dogma is adverted to, the later Lonergan noticed that 'systematic meaning' is incorporated both into 'doctrines' and 'systematics' as they each seek the intelligibility of Christian teaching, within the context of their separate ends. We might say that the drive toward systematic meaning in 'doctrines' takes on a life of its own, and is completed for a different purpose within 'systematics.'

It has been interesting to note lines of continuity between the earlier and the later work. And by adverting to the differences between the earlier and later notions of method, the later notions are brought into a

sharper relief. But there may be an additional way in which the earlier work enriches the later notions, by pointing to the need for a genetic account of the emergence of the functional specialties, and in particular of the functional specialty, systematics.

If we were to recast the thesis of the dissertation's first chapter into the terms of *Method in Theology*, we would say that the speculative development that Lonergan points to in *Gratia Operans* is a development essentially within doctrines. The chapter on doctrines in *Method* presents a narrative of the increasing need to appropriate systematic meaning, within theological doctrines (or 'systematic theology'), in order to express the unity and coherence of doctrines (305-312). Yet we have noticed that the end of the development of the doctrine of grace, as it was described in the dissertation, was in the context of a work in systematics. Thomas's *Summa* resolves problems of theological doctrines within the scope of his wider project of systematics, to use the terminology of *Method* again. We could postulate that as the functional specialty of doctrines appropriates elements of systematic meaning, the need becomes more apparent for a fully systematic, unified and coherent theological expression at the level of the functional specialty of systematics. Perhaps we would add, based on the evidence of Thomas on grace, that a work of systematics, which aims both higher and further than doctrines in its drive toward understanding, might sometimes discover solutions to problems that were intractable within the scope of theological doctrines alone. So, on this account, advances in theological doctrines can emerge out of systematics. Thus, we could postulate in addition that once systematics has emerged as a distinct specialty, the method of theological doctrines especially is able to improve. For it used systematic meaning even before systematics had emerged as a distinct specialty.

Thus, an important methodological contribution of the dissertation on *Gratia Operans* (or of *De Deo Trino*), is to provide historical evidence of the genetic development of the functional specialty of doctrines and of the emergence of a new breed altogether, systematics. Lonergan does use the evidence discovered there repeatedly in his later works.<sup>9</sup> But he uses the

<sup>9</sup>For two examples of his later use of the historical material on grace, uncovered in the dissertation, see *Method* 165-166, 309-310.

evidence primarily to indicate developments within functional specialties. It seems to me that there is room to investigate the genetic development that provides for the *historical* emergence of each of the later functional specialties, as a complement to the treatment of *Method*, which adverts primarily to the *methodological* emergence of each functional specialty. In *Method*, the emergence of the functional specialties is accounted for in a methodological order from the first to the eighth specialties. Yet, from the standpoint of time, the specialties did not emerge in methodological order. For systematics, foundations, dialectics, and history would seem to emerge last of the functional specialties, in an historical account. So it would be worth asking, for instance, how an earlier theology bridged scripture with doctrine and communications; and it would be worth asking in a historically genetic account what were the motivating forces in the emergence of the new functional specialties.

It should be recognized that there is a difference between performing a functional specialty and reflectively being aware of what you are doing when you perform the functional specialty. Performing a functional specialty requires only a direction towards one of the limited range of goals that are available to human intelligence as it operates on the sources of theology. Reflective awareness of what you are doing requires knowledge of the intentional operations, of the sources of theology, the sources of meaning, the division of the intentional operations into two phases, and so on. One function of *Method in Theology* is to provide a proposal for the future of theology, so it can operate with an awareness of its own method. But twenty centuries of theology have been performed without the benefit of having read *Method*. If *Method in Theology* is normative in the way it is intended, it should be successful not only as a proposal for the future, but also as an account of theology in the past, and of the genetic development of theology into the full range of functional specialties.

It is worth noting the fate of the term 'speculation,' in *Method*, before we close our comparison of the notions of 'theological speculation' and 'systematics.' As we have argued, 'theological speculation' in the dissertation pertains to understanding dogmas; it is used with quite positive connotations. Roughly, it means appropriating systematic meaning in theology. By the time of *Method*, however, the term 'speculative' has gained negative connotations (see 350). Lonergan responds to the

accusation that systematics is "speculative, irreligious, fruitless, elitist, irrelevant." He agrees that "systematic theology can be speculative, as is clear from German idealism," but disassociates his own notion of systematics from this approach. Here, 'speculative' seems to mean a theology detached from the life of the faith. But this is an example of a discontinuity of terminology that masks a basic continuity of thought: 'speculative theology' in the dissertation is not at all conceived as detached from the life of faith, since it is set to understand the very affirmations of faith.

While we have concentrated on method, we have not been able to reflect on the doctrine of grace that was the occasion of Lonergan's chapter on method, in his dissertation. So perhaps it would be appropriate to conclude with a reflection on that doctrine. It seems to me that Lonergan's frequent reference to the "gift of the Holy Spirit he has given us (Rom. 5.5)," in *Method*, is made with full awareness both of the biblical teaching and of its sublation into the theological doctrine of grace of which Lonergan shows the speculative development in his dissertation. In particular, his use of this passage points to the systematic understanding of the doctrine of grace that found its first full flowering in Thomas. What is more, it reflects Lonergan's own appropriation of Thomas's doctrine of sanctifying grace as actual and habitual, operative and cooperative; and it reflects his appropriation of Thomas's teaching that God's assistance is the preparation necessary for the reception of sanctifying grace. But now that doctrine is understood not only at the level of metaphysics, as it was in Thomas and in Lonergan's dissertation, but also at the level of interiority. This is a rich instance of the fruit of the speculative development that we have examined here, as it moves beyond the apparent boundary of a merely theoretical and metaphysical conception, into a deeper appropriation of the same mystery that was always hidden in God, and believed by the church.



## LONERGAN AND TAYLOR: A CRITICAL INTEGRATION

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THERE ARE STRIKING affinities between Lonergan's transcendental method and Charles Taylor's philosophical anthropology whose considerable significance for contemporary debates regarding authenticity, subjectivism, hermeneutics, and representationalism has recently been introduced.<sup>1</sup> My aim in this article is to take these introductory explorations a step further to a critical integration of Lonergan and Taylor.<sup>2</sup> Doing so is necessary in order to further advance a debate which both lies at the heart of the topics already mentioned and is likely of interest to many Lonergan scholars — the ongoing debate between Charles Taylor and Richard Rorty over the "corpse of epistemology."<sup>3</sup> Not only have the

<sup>1</sup>See, for example, Jim Kanaris, "Engaged Agency and the Notion of the Subject," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 14 (1996) 183-200, Michael McCarthy, "Towards a New Critical Center," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 15 (1997) 111-134, and Brian Braman, "The Drama of Human Existence: Bernard Lonergan's Notion of Authenticity" (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston College, 1996).

<sup>2</sup>The following is a revised version of the fourth chapter of my doctoral dissertation, "From the Disengaged Subject to the Subject as Subject in Taylor and Lonergan" (Saint Louis University, 2000). The differences between Lonergan and Taylor are as striking as their affinities, and are thus a crucial component of the critical integration I propose. And this article is only the first step of such a critical integration — bringing Lonergan's epistemological insights to bear on Taylor's philosophical anthropology. The second step necessarily requires bringing Taylor's anthropological insights to bear on Lonergan's transcendental method of self-appropriation, a task better left to a subsequent article.

<sup>3</sup>Charles Taylor, "Overcoming Epistemology," *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995) 19. Although Taylor and Rorty's respective positions within this debate run throughout their numerous publications, their views are best evidenced in Taylor, "Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition," *Reading Rorty*, ed. Alan Malachowski (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990) 257-275, and Richard Rorty, "Charles Taylor on Truth,"

parallels between Lonergan and Rorty also been introduced within Lonergan studies,<sup>4</sup> but Rorty's claim that he and Taylor pride themselves on "having escaped from the collapsed circus tent of epistemology — those acres of canvas under which many of our colleagues still thrash aimlessly about"<sup>5</sup> is enough to rouse even the most lapidary Lonerganian. And if, as Taylor claims, epistemology is the Hydra whose "serpentine heads wreak havoc throughout the intellectual culture of modernity," then one of the heads on the corpse he and Rorty are struggling over is Lonergan's.<sup>6</sup> A critical integration of Lonergan and Taylor is necessary, too, because the introduction to the Lonergan/Taylor encounter I will concern myself with in this article — Kanaris' — is, I believe, in need of clarification. More specifically, Kanaris' claim that "Lonergan's cognitional theory ... reflects the role of representation Taylor deems authentic" must be reconsidered.<sup>7</sup> For not only is the role representationalism plays in Taylor's philosophical anthropology more nuanced than Kanaris claims, but it is not one which transcendental method reflects.

#### ENTERING THE DEBATE

Although Taylor and Rorty both pride themselves on having escaped the collapsed circus tent of epistemology, each thinks that "the other is other is still, so to speak, stumbling about among the tangled guy ropes rather than having escaped altogether."<sup>8</sup> Whereas Taylor argues that getting free of the mainstream epistemological tradition from Descartes to Kant is a matter of coming to the 'uncompromising realism' he outlines, Rorty thinks doing so is a matter of maintaining what Taylor terms his 'non-realism,' or Rorty's sustained opposition to the idea that inquiry is a matter of finding out the

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*Philosophical Papers*, vol. 3, *Truth and Progress* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 84-97.

<sup>4</sup>Joseph Fitzpatrick, "'Town Criers of Inwardness' or Reflections on Rorty," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13 (1995) 1-33.

<sup>5</sup>Rorty, "Charles Taylor on Truth" 93.

<sup>6</sup>Taylor, *Philosophical Arguments* vii.

<sup>7</sup>Kanaris, "Engaged Agency" 197.

<sup>8</sup>Rorty, "Charles Taylor on Truth" 93.

nature of something that lies outside, or even within, the web of beliefs and desires that is the human self.<sup>9</sup> In short, Rorty is an anti-essentialist who would have us take a leap into anti-realism and thereby free ourselves of a whole host of questions Taylor thinks have been, and continue to be, central to philosophy. Taylor has responded by claiming that Rorty's anti-realism is itself one of the currently generated *a priori* of the tradition Rorty condemns. Thus Taylor argues that Rorty's attempt to escape the epistemological tradition by simply leaving it behind paradoxically brings him closer to it. "Just trying to walk away from the old epistemology, without working out an alternative conception, seems paradoxically a formula for remaining trapped in it to some degree."<sup>10</sup> Rather than make this same mistake himself, Taylor outlines an uncompromising realism — a realism which both informs his philosophical anthropology and serves as the alternative conception of knowledge he prescribes.

The sense in which Taylor's realism is uncompromising according to Rorty, however, is simply that Taylor never fully lets go of representationalism, and thus of the correspondence theory of truth. Like Lonergan, Rorty believes the epistemological tradition has been held captive by ocular metaphors and argues that we must overcome the epistemological confusion that human knowledge is a re-presentation, or picture, of what is "out there." Knowledge, according to Rorty, has as little to do with pictures, or any sort of re-presentation, as it does with correspondence.<sup>11</sup> Whereas Taylor believes Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty help us overcome epistemology, Rorty thinks both sustain it insofar as they allow a place, however derivative, for pictures, and so for representationalism and correspondence.<sup>12</sup> Rorty argues that Taylor's uncompromising realism is uncompromising because the convictions which inform it, ones which can be traced to Heidegger in particular, are themselves distorted by ocular metaphors. As long as Taylor is held captive by such metaphors, whether directly or indirectly, Rorty concludes, Taylor will be unable to overcome epistemology. Thus according

<sup>9</sup>Taylor, "Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition" 258. Taylor outlines his uncompromising realism, at least in part, in his "Overcoming Epistemology."

<sup>10</sup>Taylor, "Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition" 273.

<sup>11</sup>See also Rorty, "Charles Taylor on Truth" 96.

<sup>12</sup>Rorty, "Charles Taylor on Truth" 95.

to Rorty, Taylor's claim that when we get out from under epistemology we come to an uncompromising realism is as mistaken as Taylor's related claim that his philosophical anthropology helps us do so.

Although I find Taylor's philosophical anthropology, like the uncompromising realism that informs it, ultimately more persuasive than Rorty's anti-realism, I believe Taylor is nonetheless susceptible to Rorty's critique. An advocate of Lonergan's transcendental method, I believe Rorty is correct to criticize Taylor for being led astray by the cognitional myth that human knowing is analogous to looking. Taylor's uncompromising realism and philosophical anthropology are directly and indirectly misled by ocular metaphors. His realism is directly informed by the view that our ideas are akin to pictures and his anthropology is indirectly informed by Heidegger's theory of truth as contextualized disclosure. Taylor's continued commitment to representationalism is as mistaken as his failure to realize that Heidegger allows a derivative place for pictures in his theory of truth. I believe Lonergan's cognitional theory, precisely because it does *not* reflect the role of representation Taylor deems authentic, avoids both of the mistakes Taylor makes, however. When they are critically integrated, transcendental method transforms Taylor's uncompromising realism into a critical realism, and so renders the philosophical anthropology which it informs immune to Rorty's critique. Taylor's anthropological insights must therefore be critically integrated with Lonergan's epistemological ones if Taylor is to plausibly maintain his position in his ongoing debate with Rorty.

Before entering this debate by making a much-needed Lonerganian contribution to it, though, it is important to reiterate that the affinities between Lonergan and Taylor must not be allowed to overshadow their crucial differences. To be sure, what Taylor means by overcoming epistemology is by no means equivalent to Rorty's preferred means of escape. Taylor does not recommend that we *abandon* representationalism, but rather that we both reject and retain it. This retention, however, is a crucial difference between Lonergan and Taylor, one which makes it necessary to reconsider Kanaris' introduction to their encounter. Kanaris locates Lonergan's contributions within the critique of subjectivism Taylor has so cogently advanced, and rightly points out that Taylor makes the case against disengaged subjectivity in a way that "allows for the emergence of authentic,

engaged subjectivity.”<sup>13</sup> Kanaris even argues, quite correctly I believe, that Lonergan’s “continued emphasis on the centrality to the knower makes him vulnerable to charges of subjectivism ...”<sup>14</sup> But Kanaris also makes the mistake of minimizing the differences between the two in order to reconcile the fact that Lonergan’s critique of picture-thinking undermines Taylor’s uncompromising realism. Kanaris does so most clearly when he concludes that transcendental method can accommodate Taylor’s representationalism. So despite the fact that representationalism is the pivotal issue that divides the two, and thus accounts for why Lonergan is a critical, whereas Taylor is an uncompromising, realist, Kanaris closes the door to their critical integration. By distorting transcendental method to accommodate Taylor’s philosophical anthropology in this manner, Kanaris precludes the insights that are gained when the differences between them are explored. Doing so is necessary if Lonergan’s critical realism is to enter its significant contribution to the debate over the corpse of epistemology.

#### TAYLOR’S TARGET

Taylor’s main target is the mainstream epistemological tradition from Descartes through Kant due to what he refers to as the “structural idealism” of the epistemological age: “defining their ontology, their view of what is, on the basis of a prior doctrine of what we can know.”<sup>15</sup> “The great vice of the tradition is that it allows epistemology to command ontology.”<sup>16</sup> More specifically, Taylor thinks the epistemological tradition has distorted our ontology of the human subject by commanding that a specific ontology of the subject reign supreme — the disengaged subject. According to Taylor, this ontology is the direct result of the way in which the representational model of knowledge led this tradition to answer the methodological question of how objective knowledge is to be secured. Having defined knowledge as the correct representation of independent reality, representationalism

<sup>13</sup>Kanaris, “Engaged Agency” 199.

<sup>14</sup>Kanaris, “Engaged Agency” 192.

<sup>15</sup>Taylor, *Philosophical Arguments* vii.

<sup>16</sup>Taylor, “Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition” 264.

encourages us to adopt a certain stance towards human subjectivity.<sup>17</sup> In order for human subjects to account for objects of scientific inquiry as they are independently of subjective descriptions and interpretations, we must disengage, or otherwise detach, from our subjectivity. We must disengage from the background that frames our subjective experience of independent objects so as to describe and account for such objects objectively.<sup>18</sup> Disengagement thereby attains the status of an ideal in modern consciousness.<sup>19</sup> And the modern ideal of disengagement is itself powered by the aspiration to objectivity. For this aspiration leads us to detach from our lived encounter with experiencing, describing, and interpreting the world as human subjects to a disengaged perspective over and above independent reality — the very perspective which affords objectivity. The reason the resulting picture of the human subject remains so persuasive today is because it is informed by the representational model of knowledge which purports to provide us with access to the true nature of reality.

What makes Taylor Lonergan's ally rather than Rorty's, however, is the fact that Taylor is opposed to neither the ideal of disengagement nor to the aspiration to objectivity which drives it. He argues that if we restate the two more modestly as "the goal of disengaging from those features of our pre-reflective outlook that we come to discover are distortive of reality, then it is not only unexceptionable, but an indispensable condition of pursuing, say, modern physics."<sup>20</sup> Taylor makes this claim due to his commitment to

<sup>17</sup>Although Taylor advances this claim in several places, he does so in greater detail in *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989) 143-176.

<sup>18</sup>Taylor argues that the seventeenth-century distinction between primary and secondary qualities reflects this disengaged perspective. Secondary qualities such as color which are properties things have only insofar as they are objects of experience of human subjects were thought to be secondary because they are subjective, or subject-related, properties. Independent objects only have such properties in our experience of them and are therefore secondary to the quantitative primary qualities through which the true nature of reality was thought to be known. Thus secondary qualities could not be integrated into a science of nature, and disengaging from our subjectivity in order to account for objects of scientific inquiry became a methodological requirement. See also Charles Taylor, "Understanding and Human Science," *Review of Metaphysics* 34 (September 1980) 30-32.

<sup>19</sup>See also Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Papers*, vol. 1, *Human Agency and Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 3-5.

<sup>20</sup>Charles Taylor, "Engaged Agency and Background in Heidegger," *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Charles Guignon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 322.

realism; a commitment that separates him from Rorty and unites him with Lonergan. Taylor believes that there are truths-of-the-matter regarding the objective reality independent of human subjects, and thinks we can account for independent objects as they really are on their own. It is possible for human subjects to account for such objects independently of our interpretations of them because it is possible for us to transcend our subjectivity authentically, thereby incarnating objectivity.

What sense, then, are we to make of Taylor's claim that the great vice of the epistemological tradition is that it allows epistemology to command ontology? Isn't this vice what is given free reign when we allow the ideal of disengagement and aspiration to objectivity to command our account of reality — our account of what *is* and *is not* the case with regard to objects in the world? By ontology, however, Taylor means our account of what is the case with regard to the human subject who accounts for these objects. His primary concern is the ontology of the human subject: our account of what *is* and *is not* the case with regard to the reality that is the human subject. The tradition falls prey to the vice Taylor challenges, neither by establishing disengagement as an ideal nor by aspiring to objectivity but, rather, by taking the fateful step of "ontologizing" the disengaged perspective. "What were seen as the proper procedures of rational thought were read into the very constitution of the mind and made part of its very structure."<sup>21</sup> The way in which the tradition commands ontology is by ontologizing the disengaged perspective and thereby transforming the human subject into a disengaged subject. The engaged human subject actually *becomes* a disengaged subject during the modern period because the disengaged perspective is not just a temporary requirement in order for subjects to aspire to objectivity, but actually informs the modern ontology of the human subject. "The disengaged perspective, which might better have been conceived as a rare and regional achievement of a knowing agent whose normal stance was engaged, was read into the very nature of mind."<sup>22</sup> The modern ideal of disengagement encourages us to adopt an ontology commanded, and for Taylor, distorted, by the epistemological tradition — the ontology of the disengaged subject.

<sup>21</sup>Charles Taylor, "Engaged Agency" 317-318.

<sup>22</sup>Charles Taylor, "Engaged Agency" 323.

It is crucial to recognize, however, that Taylor's response to this anthropological distortion is multi-faceted. It has long-been Taylor's position that a strict division be maintained between the natural and human sciences.<sup>23</sup> In maintaining this division, Taylor reminds us that ontology is not limited to the objects that are independent of the human subjects who understand them but also includes human subjects themselves. The human sciences are those which have human subjects, or human subjectivity itself, as their focus. Intellectual inquiry is not limited to natural science any more than inquiry into the reality that is the human subject is limited to the subject as disengaged. The human sciences are the proper province for inquiry into the human subject *qua* subject, a province whose boundaries must be respected by the natural sciences whose methods and procedures are often mistakenly overextended beyond their limit. Rather than abandoning natural science and taking the leap into anti-realism Rorty advocates, then, Taylor simply highlights the grave mistake of extending the canons of the natural sciences beyond their appropriate range. Taylor's conclusion is that human subjectivity is but one dimension of ontology; a dimension which will remain unexplored, though, as long as we fail to offer an ontology of the human subject *qua* subject. The ontology of the human subject he offers reflects this crucial division between the natural and human sciences by operating on more than one level. Taylor's philosophical anthropology is both an attempt to re-engage the disengaged subject in the process whereby independent reality is understood *and* an attempt to articulate how we might achieve truth in human self-understanding once we have contextualized the human subject within the background of engaged agency. Overlooking the nuance of this multi-leveled response to the disengaged subject is therefore tantamount to overlooking Taylor's unique contribution to the contemporary philosophical landscape.

<sup>23</sup>Taylor, "Understanding in Human Science," 30-32, where he distinguishes between 'human understanding' and that informed by the 'requirement of absoluteness.' The latter can and must be made of natural science but is, Taylor maintains, inapplicable to human science. It is interesting to note that what Taylor means by human understanding is an understanding of the human subject 'in the life of the subject,' or *qua* subject, a notion that nicely parallels Lonergan's subject *as* subject. See also Taylor, *Human Agency and Language* 54-60.

## UNCOMPROMISING REALISM

Taylor's ontology of the human subject *qua* subject is a hermeneutic ontology in that he proceeds by contextualizing the disengaged subject within the background of engaged agency.<sup>24</sup> He believes the disengaged subject is an inaccurate picture of the human subject because it fails to recognize a crucial feature of human subjectivity. "One way of getting at this feature is in terms of the notion of self-interpretation. A fully competent human agent not only has some understanding (which may be also more or less a *misunderstanding*) of himself, but is partly constituted by this understanding."<sup>25</sup> It is crucially important for any ontology of the human subject to reflect the hermeneutic insight that we are self-interpreting beings, according to Taylor, because our self-interpretations themselves partly constitute our subjectivity *qua* subjects. The resulting hermeneutic picture of the human subject "is a picture in which interpretation plays no secondary, optional role, but is essential to human existence. This is the view, I believe, which was adumbrated by Heidegger, and which has justly been immensely influential in contemporary thought."<sup>26</sup> Following Heidegger, Taylor re-engages the disengaged subject within the background of engaged human agency — the background partly formed by our self-interpretations. As such, the human subject is an engaged agent, a subject, that is, who exists in the space of subjective experience, descriptions, and self-interpretations. Rather than become more like the independent objects we seek to understand, human subjects "become" what we always already are — engaged agents who cannot exist independently of the subjective interpretations that partly constitute us as human subjects. Thus we are what we are within a specific context — the background of engaged human agency within which we always already constitute ourselves.

<sup>24</sup>It is important to note Taylor's use of the terms, 'agent' and 'agency,' rather than 'subject' and 'subjectivity.' He uses these terms to emphasize the fact that we are always already engaged in our lived subjectivity, and to thereby distance himself from the modern picture of the disengaged subject. His point is that even if we think of ourselves as subjects, we are engaged agents, not disengaged subjects. Because my use of the term, 'human subject,' and Lonergan's use of the term, 'subject *as* subject,' like Taylor's own 'subject *qua* subject,' reflect this important amendment, I will continue to use all of these terms interchangeably.

<sup>25</sup>Taylor, *Human Agency and Language* 3, emphasis his.

<sup>26</sup>Taylor, *Human Agency and Language* 76.

Like Heidegger, Taylor realizes that because we necessarily disengage from the background of engaged agency in order to adopt the disengaged perspective in the first place, the former, not the latter, is the primordial reality whose true nature must be revealed. Taylor thinks Heidegger's analysis shows that "the condition of our forming disengaged representations of reality is that we must already be engaged in coping with our world, dealing with the things in it, at grips with them."<sup>27</sup> We are always already engaged agents rather than disengaged subjects precisely because if we were not, it would be impossible for us to ever disengage from our subjectivity and form disengaged representations of the independent objects we endeavor to understand. Thus our engagement in the background of engaged human agency is itself what makes disengagement possible. "Disengaged description is a special possibility of, realizable only intermittently, of a being (*Dasein*) who is always 'in' the world in another way, as an agent engaged in realizing a certain form of life."<sup>28</sup> And the fact that human agents are so engaged means that the background we are engaged in is not, and cannot, itself be a representation. Because our understanding of ourselves as engaged agents is not itself a representation, but rather a background understanding made possible by our being engaged in the context wherein we constitute ourselves, we should not put this background on the same level as a representation. As a *background*, it is more primordial than the representations we form from within in. The attempt to ground objective knowledge in disengaged representations is definitively undermined, therefore, because "what you get underlying our representations of the world ... is not further representation but rather a certain grasp of the world we have as agents in it."<sup>29</sup>

The first facet of Taylor's response to the disengaged subject, then, is his claim that we must incorporate this background understanding, or the grasp of the world we have as agents in it, into our account of how we understand independent objects. We must take this hermeneutic insight seriously, in his view, because any account of human understanding that fails to do so is

<sup>27</sup>Taylor, "Overcoming Epistemology" 11.

<sup>28</sup>Taylor, "Overcoming Epistemology" 11; emphasis his.

<sup>29</sup>Taylor, "Overcoming Epistemology" 12.

hermeneutically naive. It would be hermeneutically naive of us, Taylor concludes, to not contextualize the human subject who can, and does, understand independent objects.

Incorporating the background understanding we have as engaged agents into our account of how we understand independent reality does not mean abandoning representationalism according to Taylor, however. Our background understanding is not itself a representation of our position in the world, "it is that against the background of which I frame all my representations, and that in virtue of which I know that these are true or false because of the way things are."<sup>30</sup> So Taylor challenges the modern view that representations constitute our entire understanding and thus are our only way to gain access to reality, but at the same time believes we should continue to think in terms of representations which are true or false on the basis of whether they accurately correspond to reality. "Our entire framework understanding of our place in this world construes our representations of it as true or false by correspondence."<sup>31</sup> He argues that we must not turn the background of engaged agency within which our representations are framed into a representation, but does so without abandoning the modern notion that our ideas represent independent objects. Our ideas are not disengaged representations; they are rather *framed* representations — representations that are framed by the background of engaged agency. Rather than abandoning representations, Taylor contextualizes them within engaged human agency — the background against which human thought is always already framed. He then concludes that just because this "entire framework understanding of our place in this world construes our representations of it as true or false by correspondence ... there is no further problem with the proposition that the reality independent of my representations makes them true or false."<sup>32</sup>

Taylor's response to the disengaged subject is unique, therefore, in that it leads to neither hermeneutic naivete nor anti-realism. If we remain in the old epistemology where our representations constitute our entire framework

<sup>30</sup>Taylor, "Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition" 270.

<sup>31</sup>Taylor, "Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition" 270.

<sup>32</sup>Taylor, "Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition" 270.

understanding and are our only route of access to the outside world, we retain a realism which is hermeneutically naive. On the other hand, our response to such naive realism, like Rorty's, might be to insist that overcoming the epistemological tradition requires rejecting the view that there even is a reality independent of our representations. Taylor embraces neither option, however. He encourages us to realize that rather than simply corresponding to what is "out there" or not corresponding to anything at all, our representations of independent objects are framed. Thus overcoming epistemology does not require maintaining a naive realism nor taking a giant leap into anti-realism, but rather involves coming to an *uncompromising* realism. If we are to break free from the epistemological tradition, Taylor insists, we must refuse to compromise the realist conviction that there are truths we can gain regarding independent reality at the same time that we take the hermeneutic turn. More specifically, he would have us adopt the *post-epistemological, intra-framework notion of truth as correspondence* that supports his realism.<sup>33</sup> To remain a naive realist or become an anti-realist is to legitimize mistaken responses to the disengaged subject that can be avoided by maintaining the uncompromising realism Taylor outlines.

Taylor's criticism of the representational model of knowledge, and thus of the mainstream epistemological tradition, is largely an anthropological, as opposed to an epistemological, one, therefore. He has little *epistemological* quarrel with the representational definition of what human knowledge *is*—the correct representation of independent reality. His claim that epistemology must be overcome is not made on an epistemological basis. He believes the representational model of knowledge is bound up with some influential notions about the nature of human agency which are as distorted as they have been influential, and argues that epistemology must be overcome on this basis. Rather than divert attention from the *anthropological* distortions he sees as being the real problem with the representational model, Taylor actually retains this model of knowledge, thereby leaving the view that knowledge is the correct representation of independent reality largely intact. His true quarrel is an anthropological one concerning *how* accurate representation of independent reality is to be

<sup>33</sup>Taylor, "Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition" 271.

secured. Such is the case because this methodological question is answered by invoking the ontology of the disengaged subject — the anthropological notion Taylor believes has so distorted contemporary self-understanding. Thus Taylor retains the representational definition of what knowledge is while rejecting its response to the question of how it is to be secured. Knowledge is always already secured, he insists, from within the background of engaged human agency which, when properly combined with representationalism, presents no further problem for the realist proposition that the reality independent of our representations makes them true or false on the basis of correspondence.

#### HERMENEUTIC ARTICULATION AND DISCLOSURE

Taylor's post-epistemological, intra-framework notion of truth as correspondence is only the first facet of what is a multi-leveled response to the disengaged subject, however. For this notion of truth applies to objects in the world that are *independent* of our representations. Engaged agency itself — the reality that we ourselves *are* as human subjects — is not independent of us and so requires Taylor to add another level to his philosophical anthropology.

Taylor's notion of truth as correspondence is not the only one he advocates because this truth contrasts with the truth of self-understanding.<sup>34</sup> There is a truth to human self-understanding just as there is to understanding independent reality, and Taylor attempts to lay out an alternative model of truth that is meant to apply in the former domain. He introduces this model by claiming that our concept of rationality is richer than we often think. In addition to logical consistency, Taylor believes rational understanding is also linked to articulation. "This offers a possible interpretation of 'rational' which we might see as very important in our tradition: we have a rational grasp of something when we can *articulate* it, that means distinguish and lay out the different features of the matter in perspicuous order."<sup>35</sup> According to rationality conceived of as articulation, then, the best

<sup>34</sup>See also Taylor, "Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition" 271.

<sup>35</sup>Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Papers*, vol. 2, *Philosophy and the Human Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 137, emphasis his.

articulation of something is the one which lays it out in the most perspicuous order. Thus rationality is more than a simple matter of avoiding inconsistency by securing representations that accurately correspond to the way things really are in the world — it is also a matter of *perspicuous articulation*. By definition, a *perspicuous* articulation is one that is transparent because of clarity and precision of presentation. Reason, Taylor concludes, must therefore be conceived of differently “as including — alongside the familiar forms of the Enlightenment — a new department, whose excellence consists in our being able to articulate the background of our lives perspicuously.”<sup>36</sup> Taylor’s philosophical anthropology is multi-leveled, therefore, in that it is both a defense of uncompromising realism and an inauguration of reason understood as perspicuous articulation.

Having defined the task of reason with regard to human self-understanding as the perspicuous articulation of the background of engaged agency, Taylor presents the alternative model of truth he believes pertains to this domain. “We can use the word ‘disclosure’ for this, following Heidegger.”<sup>37</sup> Contextualized disclosure is the alternative model that applies to the perspicuous articulation which takes place within the background. “To say that an assertion ‘*is true*’ signifies that it uncovers the entity as it is in itself. Such assertion asserts, points out, ‘lets’ the entity ‘be seen’ in its uncoveredness. The *Being-true (truth)* of the assertion must be understood as *Being-uncovering*.”<sup>38</sup> Truth is a matter of *disclosure*, that is, of uncovering human subjectivity primordially, or as it is in and of itself, thereby letting it be seen. Because operating within the hermeneutic circle is what enables us to do so, entering into, and remaining within, this circle is the condition for the possibility of disclosing the primordial nature of human subjectivity. When we remain within the background of engaged agency, Taylor argues, we can uncover our form of agency, thereby disclosing the truth about our nature as human subjects. Thus understanding human agency is a matter of perspicuously articulating the background in which we are always engaged, and truth in human self-understanding consists in the

<sup>36</sup>Taylor, “Overcoming Epistemology” 15.

<sup>37</sup>Taylor, “Overcoming Epistemology” 15.

<sup>38</sup>Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) 261, emphasis his.

primordial disclosure made possible by perspicuous articulations. Heidegger, along with Taylor, argues that, "only with Dasein's *disclosedness* is the *most primordial* phenomenon of truth attained."<sup>39</sup> Like Heidegger, Taylor recognizes that once we are within the hermeneutic circle of engaged human agency, there can be no external criterion of judgment for our articulations to correspond to, whether accurately or otherwise. For any attempt to establish such correspondence is a naive attempt to escape the circle we are always already engaged in — the very circle that confers intelligibility upon our interpretations and without which our articulations cannot be perspicuous. The condition for the possibility of any perspicuous articulation is that it be offered internally, from within the background of engaged agency. The trick, Heidegger and Taylor conclude, "is not to get out of [this] circle but to come into it in the right way," because within the circle itself "is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing."<sup>40</sup>

This primordial kind of knowing (perspicuous articulation) by no means involves truth conceived of as correspondence to independent reality, therefore, because we cannot escape the hermeneutic circle in such a way as to establish any independent, external criterion to adjudicate between which of our articulations are perspicuous and which are not. And the fact that there can be no external standard of judgment for these articulations of the background to correspond to therefore leads Heidegger, along with Taylor, to abandon the correspondence theory of truth as hermeneutically naive.<sup>41</sup> The primordial truth revealed by the uncovering that occurs in the circle is truth as the direct result of primordial knowing, that is, truth as contextualized disclosure. So in opposition to what is traditionally thought to be the locus of truth — assertion (judgment) — Heidegger, like Taylor, claims that disclosure is the more primordial basis for truth. "Assertion is not the primary locus of truth. *On the contrary*, ... assertion is grounded in Dasein's uncovering, or rather in its *disclosedness*."<sup>42</sup> The assertions we make, like the judgments that support them, themselves presuppose a more primordial

<sup>39</sup>Heidegger, *Being and Time* 263, emphasis his.

<sup>40</sup>Heidegger, *Being and Time* 195.

<sup>41</sup>See also Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 188-194.

<sup>42</sup>Heidegger, *Being and Time* 269, emphasis his.

knowing, and thus a more primordial theory of truth; both of which only occur within the hermeneutic circle, and so are a function of articulation rather than consistency and of disclosure rather than correspondence.

#### LONERGAN AND HERMENEUTICS

No less than Taylor, Lonergan recognizes the impoverishing distortions that result when the methods and procedures of the natural sciences are mistakenly overextended to inform those of the human sciences. "The human sciences become exact by ceasing to treat of man as he is."<sup>43</sup> Because meaning is a fundamental category in the pursuit of human science, interpretation (hermeneutics) emerges as its fundamental task. Unlike Taylor, who responds to reductionism by relying on the hermeneutic tradition, however, Lonergan identifies another potential distortion in so doing. "On the other hand, when human scientists reject such reductionism, and many do, not only does the exactitude of the natural sciences vanish but also the human sciences risk becoming captives of some philosophy."<sup>44</sup> The risk in Taylor's case is becoming a captive of what Lonergan terms the *problem of interpretation*, and, more specifically, of a particular response to one of the complicating factors that Lonergan believes heightens this problem: "the confusion that reigns in cognitional theory and epistemology: interpretation is just a particular case of knowing, namely knowing what is meant; it follows that confusion about knowing leads to confusion about interpreting."<sup>45</sup> Because interpretation is but a particular case of human knowing, it is vulnerable to the same confusions that cognitional theory and epistemology are themselves vulnerable to. According to Lonergan, the specific confusion about knowing that besets the hermeneutic tradition involves the issue of understanding (*Verstehen*).

Like Taylor's multi-levelled response to the disengaged subject, Lonergan overcomes this confusion on two levels. "First, our use of the terms, insight, understanding, both is more precise and has a broader range than

<sup>43</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Theology and Man's Future," *A Second Collection*, ed. William Ryan and Bernard Tyrell (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974) 143.

<sup>44</sup>"Theology and Man's Future."

<sup>45</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971) 154.

the connotation and denotation of *Verstehen*."<sup>46</sup> By conveying his insight into insight, thus providing us with a precise account of the critical difference between *Verstehen* and insight, as well as between insights and pictures, Lonergan renders his transcendental method relevant to a broader range of knowledge than human science alone.

Insight occurs in all human knowledge, in mathematics, natural science, common sense, philosophy, human science, history, theology. Secondly, experience and understanding taken together yield not knowledge but only thought. To advance from thinking to knowing there must be added a reflective grasp of the virtually unconditioned and its rational consequent, judgment. There is an insufficient awareness of this third level of cognitional activity in the authors we have been mentioning and a resultant failure to break away cleanly from both empiricism and idealism.<sup>47</sup>

By drawing his critical distinction between the unconditioned and the virtually unconditioned, thereby explaining why human judgment need not be hermeneutically naive, Lonergan emphasizes the necessity of reflective understanding for knowledge. In short, confusion will reign in epistemology unless one's cognitional theory includes the personal commitment of *judgment*, as well as the act of *insight*. What informs this multi-faceted response to the confusion surrounding *Verstehen* is Lonergan's opposition to picture-thinking, that is, his tireless endeavor to overcome the mistaken analogy that cognitional events are to be conceived on the analogy of ocular vision. A critical integration of Lonergan and Taylor necessarily requires, therefore, that Lonergan's enrichment of the hermeneutic tradition be integrated into Taylor's philosophical anthropology.

#### FROM REPRESENTATION TO INSIGHT

Although he transforms representationalism so as to overcome its ensuing anthropological distortions, Taylor retains this conception of knowledge and thereby fails to adequately address the epistemological confusions that inform it. He is explicitly critical of the modern version of how we are to

<sup>46</sup>*Method in Theology* 212.

<sup>47</sup>*Method in Theology* 213.

secure accurate representations (via disengagement) at the same time that he implicitly accepts the modern definition of what knowledge is (correct representation of independent reality). Insofar as Taylor implicitly accepts the modern definition of what knowledge is, however, he mistakenly assumes that human knowing is analogous to looking, and so is held captive by an epistemological confusion that compromises his uncompromising realism.

Lonergan, like Rorty, claims that representationalism is a theory of knowledge dominated by picture-thinking, "the original sin of epistemology."<sup>48</sup> Human understanding, this theory tells us, is analogous to looking inasmuch as our ideas are analogous to "mental pictures." Our ideas are like mental pictures that *re-present* the various independent objects outside our minds. Just as we see independent objects with our eyes, we form mental pictures of these objects with our minds — pictures that enable us to "see," or understand. The ideas we have are these pictures and so human understanding is picture-thinking. Knowing is a matter of looking because understanding is a matter of re-presenting to our minds the independent objects we see with our eyes. What is crucial to this theory of knowledge, according to Lonergan and Rorty alike, is this ocular metaphor which makes it possible for us to equate our understanding with looking, or picture-thinking, and our ideas with re-presentations, or mental pictures. We think in pictures which, because they so vividly re-present the objects we see, can seem as self-evidently valid, or objective, as the objects they represent. Thus the persuasiveness of representationalism lies in the belief that ocular vision is a perfect symbol for knowing. "One can be absolutely convinced that a cognitional act can be cognitional only if it resembles ocular vision. Of course, if it is like ocular vision, it does not need explanation but is self-evident."<sup>49</sup> This analogy of ocular vision, with its mistaken, yet captivating,

<sup>48</sup>Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979) 60. Like Lonergan's *Insight, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* is an extended attempt to undermine this mistaken analogy between cognitional events and ocular vision. Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) esp. 3-35.

<sup>49</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Consciousness and the Trinity," *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, vol. 6, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert Croken, Frederick Crowe, and Robert Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 130.

appeal to self-evidence, is what representationalism ultimately relies on for its persuasiveness as a theory of knowledge.

Lonergan undermines this analogy, not by taking the giant leap into anti-realism that Rorty champions, but by making the lived experience of having an insight central to his transcendental method and thereby inaugurating critical realism as the critical alternative to representationalism. Because having an insight is not a matter of taking a good look, the contents of direct acts of human understanding can in no way be analogous to pictures. The content of an insight is not like a picture because human understanding is not seeing. "Insights are not like seeing. They differ from it very much, and if someone tries to think of them on the analogy of seeing he will come up with a notion of something that is not like understanding or insight at all."<sup>50</sup> Insights, rather, are direct acts of understanding through which we grasp an intelligible order within the data our senses make available to us. Insights are into that which we see, but they themselves are not a matter of seeing. Insights are into the concrete world of sense and imagination, but they *add* an intelligible order to this world that no amount of looking could ever proffer. Insights are enriching in the sense that what is known by insight is that which human understanding adds to sensible data — an intelligent grasp of the intelligible order within data. To say, therefore, that insights re-present anything is fundamentally mistaken. Insights are cognitional events that often begin with pictures and other images we see, but are never a matter of looking, or picture-thinking, because we never *see* an intelligible order. We gain insight into such patterns; we do not, and cannot, see them. If an insight were a re-presentation its content would merely, as well as pointlessly, re-present the data we experience via our senses. If ideas were mere re-presentations we would simply see intelligible patterns, never adding an intelligible order to the presentations of sensation, and so never having an insight. "My seeing may be perfect as ocular vision yet I may be without a glimmer of understanding."<sup>51</sup> We do not see intelligibility because an intelligible order is a meaningful pattern we gain insight into only when human understanding is

<sup>50</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Philosophical Positions With Regard to Knowing," *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, 217.

<sup>51</sup>"Philosophical Positions With Regard to Knowing" 217.

added to sensation. Re-presentation, then, is a pointless duplication of the data we seek to understand — the very same data we understand when we have an insight. Insight is the active exercise of human intelligence, and, as such, is the cognitive event that clarifies the epistemological confusion representationalism fosters.

Taylor's susceptibility to the captivating analogy of picture-thinking becomes even more apparent when we consider his version of the correspondence theory of truth. The correspondence theory purports to tell us how we can know whether our ideas re-present independent objects as they really are. We know, it tells us, when we compare our ideas about these objects to objects as they really exist in the world. If our ideas correspond to these objects, that is, if they accurately re-present these objects as they really are, then our ideas are true. The crucial question we must ask of our representations, then, is whether they accurately correspond to reality. Taylor confirms his acceptance of this understanding of the correspondence theory when he claims that the reality independent of these mental pictures makes them true or false on the basis of correspondence.<sup>52</sup> And at first, this theory seems just as captivatingly persuasive as the representational model of knowledge it is joined to. The confusion begins, of course, when we realize that rather than answering the question of how we gain access to reality, the correspondence theory proceeds by assuming that we already have such access. For how can we possibly determine whether our ideas correspond to independent objects *as they really are*, unless we already have access to reality? The truth is that Taylor thinks the reality independent of our representations makes them true or false on the basis of correspondence because he mistakenly assumes we already have access to objects as they really are. Taylor assumes the very access his version of the correspondence theory is meant to explain because he presumes that reality is "out there" to be seen via mental re-presentations.

What is definitive about this version of the correspondence theory, then, is that Taylor becomes its captive as a result of his uncompromising commitment to what is an uncritical realism. If we already have access to reality as Taylor assumes, then determining whether our ideas accurately

<sup>52</sup>See also Taylor, "Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition" 270.

correspond to independent objects as they really are is not problematic. Because the question of how we gain such access is precisely what is at issue, however, such an assumption is as uncritical as it is mistaken. The problem is that unless we uncritically assume we have access to reality prior to assessing the accuracy of our mental re-presentations, we have no way to critically account for how we access objects as they really are. Such access is necessarily gained prior to, and so is provided by some means other than, the process Taylor outlines, but what these means are must be critically articulated rather than uncritically assumed. And no matter what these means are, our ideas are not mental re-presentations because we do not gain access to reality via picture-thinking, whether it is contextualized or not, any more than we do by just looking at what is "out there." For Taylor to insist that there is no problem with the claim that the reality independent of our representations makes them true or false on the basis of correspondence, therefore, even when these representations are framed, is mistaken. Even when our representations are contextualized within the framework of engaged agency, we must still assume some sort of prior access to reality in order for any subsequent account of correspondence to be plausible, and any such assumption is as implausible as picture-thinking itself. Taylor's implicit acceptance of representationalism therefore amounts to an uncritical acceptance of an epistemological confusion which compromises his uncompromising realism. Even if Taylor is right to argue that we must not compromise the realist conviction that there are truths we can gain regarding independent reality, the way to do so is not by advocating an uncritical realism informed by the epistemological confusion of picture-thinking.

As Rorty suggests and Lonergan helps us understand, Taylor's realism is uncompromising by virtue of its refusal to let go of representationalism, and thus of picture-thinking. Just because Taylor's uncompromising realism is uncompromising, it remains naive with regard to the crucial question of how we gain access to reality, a question whose answer must be articulated rather than assumed if realism is to remain a viable alternative to Rorty's anti-realism. Taylor retains a contextualized form of representationalism at the same time he rejects the disengaged picture of the human subject because as suspicious as he is of the modern epistemological tradition, he does not want to take Rorty's leap into anti-realism. So Taylor is unwilling to

compromise his commitment to realism even though he strongly believes epistemology must be overcome in order to avoid the anthropological distortions this tradition generates. By refusing to do so, however, Taylor ironically remains wedded to a conception of knowledge that is plagued by the epistemological confusion of picture-thinking, a confusion that unfortunately undermines his philosophical anthropology.

Lonergan is a crucial figure who helps resolve the dilemma Taylor faces, however. Unlike Taylor's *uncompromising* realism, Lonergan's *critical* realism is not compromised by any such commitment to picture-thinking. Lonergan is the crucial figure who helps us realize that we do not need to retain representationalism in order to maintain the realist position that there are truths-of-the-matter with regard to independent reality. Lonergan's critical realism is every bit as uncompromising with regard to anti-realism as Taylor himself is. What is crucial is that Lonergan's critical realism is as critical of the picture-thinking which informs representationalism as it is of the anti-realism that results when picture-thinking is uncritically abandoned. Lonergan is proof-positive that Taylor is as mistaken to retain representationalism as Rorty is to embrace anti-realism. Both are mistaken because even though picture-thinking is an epistemological confusion, the cognitive event of insight is an epistemological breakthrough. When Taylor and Rorty assume there is no viable alternative to representationalism, then, they both do so mistakenly. This mistaken assumption leads them in the radically different directions of an anti-, and an uncompromising, realism, but both make the same assumption. Lonergan helps us realize, though, that because the contents of insights are not pictures, reality is not "out there" to be seen. We need not embrace anti-realism nor retain representationalism, therefore. A third alternative exists. Critical realism is this critical alternative.

#### FROM INTERPRETATION TO JUDGMENT<sup>53</sup>

Reality, according to critical realism, is that which is rationally affirmed in judgment as well as intelligently understood via insight, however, and so

<sup>53</sup>My reflections in the remaining sections are deeply informed by Jerome Miller's recent article, "Insight, Judgment, World: Rethinking the Ontology of *Being and Time*," *Philosophy in the Contemporary World* 5 no. 2-3 (1998) 45-53.

judgment must be added to insight if we are to advance from thinking to knowing. Neither Heidegger nor Taylor believe that judgment is the locus of truth, though, because both think that truth is accessible prior to judgment via *perspicuous* articulations. Against the traditional view that assertion (judgment) is the locus of truth and the agreement (correspondence) of judgment with its object the essence of truth, Heidegger abandons judgment. He does so when he claims that assertion itself presupposes the process of disclosure that occurs within the hermeneutic circle. Taylor follows Heidegger's lead and turns to interpretation as the sole cognitional event which affords us access to the reality of human subjectivity. From Lonergan's perspective, however, Taylor merely follows Heidegger in making the same mistake the hermeneutic tradition as a whole is guilty of: being insufficiently aware of judgment — the crucial third level of cognitional activity.

Judgment must be dispensed with, according to Taylor and Heidegger before him, because of its strong association with the correspondence theory of truth, a theory which no longer applies once we contextualize human understanding within the hermeneutic circle that is engaged agency. Having done so, the true nature of this background is disclosed by the articulations we offer from within it. The only articulations that reveal the true nature of this background, however, are *perspicuous* ones — articulations which are transparent, or *easily seen*.<sup>54</sup> Articulations that disclose the background in such a way that it reveals itself to us clearly are the only ones that manifest the primordial nature of human subjectivity. When *perspicuous*, our various articulations uncover the background of engaged agency and allow it to reveal itself in an immediate manner that is directly true. According to Taylor, then, inquiry culminates not in the cognitional event of judgment whereby we adjudicate between competing interpretations, but rather in a revelation by virtue of which the true nature background directly manifests itself to us.

Taylor is careful to emphasize that the background of engaged agency does not manifest itself in this way unless we are operating *within* the hermeneutic circle it forms, and thereby contextualizes the revelations by

<sup>54</sup> *Perspicuous* is also defined as *perspicacious*, itself defined as "seeing clearly." *Perspicuity*, meanwhile, is defined as "distinctness to the sight." *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, ed. Lesley Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

virtue of which we understand its true nature. But these articulations are no less direct as a result of his doing so. As long as our articulations of it are perspicuous, we have direct access to the true nature of the background — access that is secured prior to judgment and which thus reveals its primordial nature. Such access has been framed within the context of engaged agency, but it remains as direct as it is primordial. And because this process of disclosure provides us such primordial access, there is no need to compare our articulations with the background, as the correspondence theory of truth, and thus the cognitional event of judgment, would have us do. Because disclosure is itself what provides us with primordial, as well as direct, access to the background, there is no need to judge whether or not our articulations correspond to the reality of human subjectivity. Apart from perspicuity, then, there is no criterion that disclosure must satisfy, no standard according to which its truth can be articulated. Although it has been contextualized, the true nature of the background of engaged human agency is, when perspicuously articulated, self-evident, and therefore self-validating.

That our perspicuous articulations disclose the truth of this background in a manner which is self-evidently valid becomes even more apparent when we consider Taylor's description of the transcendental arguments he often uses to support such articulations.<sup>55</sup> "Once they are formulated properly, we can *see* at once that they are valid. The thing is self-evident."<sup>56</sup> The truths disclosed by such arguments, and more particularly by the articulations supported by such arguments, are directly self-evident, and thus self-validating. Like the perspicuous articulations they support, transcendental

<sup>55</sup>Although not strictly identical because they often pertain to a more basic level of human agency than specific aspects of the background, and so *support* specific articulations more than they do *constitute* them, transcendental arguments are a crucial aspect of articulation as Taylor conceives of it. Taylor uses them to support his articulations because such arguments reveal the conditions for the possibility of the lived experiences the background confers intelligibility upon. Taylor's use of such arguments is evidenced within his argument against utilitarianism in *Sources of the Self*, 25-52.

<sup>56</sup>Charles Taylor, "The Validity of Transcendental Arguments," *Philosophical Arguments*, 32, emphasis mine. Like Kant, Taylor concludes of such arguments that there "remains an ultimate ontological question they can't foreclose" (33). Unlike Lonergan, then, Taylor has yet to distinguish between the formally and virtually unconditioned, and, subsequently, between reality as already-out-there-now versus as known in and through insight and judgment.

arguments must, Taylor argues, be properly formulated. But once they are, such arguments, like the articulations they support, enable the background to disclose its true nature to us in a self-evidently valid manner.

Surprisingly enough, however, Taylor's account of human self-understanding still remains ambiguous with regard to truth. He believes that even though transcendental arguments and the articulations they support are self-evident when formulated correctly, it is quite difficult to get to this point and that substantive interpretive debate often remains once we have done so. "For although a correct formulation will be self-evidently valid, the question may arise whether we have formulated things correctly."<sup>57</sup> Despite the fact that we can just directly, or self-evidently, *see* that a correctly formulated articulation is valid, the question of whether our articulation is really true may still remain. He thinks transcendental arguments are paradoxical, then, in that they are both apodictic and yet open to endless interpretive debate. Such arguments can and do indeed disclose the background of engaged agency, but because it is so difficult to formulate this background properly, they remain open to interpretive debate. "A valid transcendental argument is indubitable, yet it is hard to know when you have one."<sup>58</sup> Even though Taylor's account of truth in human self-understanding is positive in the sense that it delivers self-evident truths about the background of engaged agency, it is unable to foreclose the interpretive debates that result when questions arise regarding whether or not our articulations have been formulated correctly. Thus Taylor is caught halfway: he believes that our articulations reveal the true nature of the background, but also admits that these same articulations are often open to endless interpretive debate. Taylor is well-aware, however, that such debates render his attempt to lay out an alternative to the correspondence model of truth to apply in the domain of human self-understanding a work in progress. Thinking of the fact that our articulations remain open to interpretive debate, he admits, "and yet, I want to say, as we all do when we're not in the grip of a philosophical theory, that one of these views can be truer, more insightful, less self-deluding than the other."<sup>59</sup> The ambiguity of Taylor's account of human self-understanding

<sup>57</sup>Taylor, "The Validity of Transcendental Arguments" 32.

<sup>58</sup>Taylor, "The Validity of Transcendental Arguments" 33.

<sup>59</sup>Taylor, "Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition" 272.

thus rests upon the fact that he has yet to offer a detailed response to the dilemma that he himself articulates.

Lonergan's critical realism helps us recognize that it is Taylor's abandonment of judgment as a cognitional event which brings about the dilemma he finds himself in. Although insights are like perspicuous articulations in that the former, like the latter, are *interpretations* of what we experience, insights are not immediately direct in that they are always mediated by human intelligence. As such, insights are not self-evident, and are therefore not self-validating. According to Lonergan, human knowing culminates not in insight, but rather in judgment, because insights are not self-evidently true, as they would need to be so as to validate themselves. Insights, rather, are *possible* explanations of our lived experience which *suggest* an intelligible order that *may* account for such experience. If, while operating within a given hermeneutic circle, we have an insight, our insight provides us with a possible explanation which may provide us with access to the true nature of this background. In order to determine whether such is the case, however, we must critically assess the truth of our insight by making a critical judgment. According to Lonergan, the same exigence that leads to insight necessitates the further hermeneutical act of judging which of our articulations, if any, are true. The very fact that our insights are not pictures, and thus are not self-evident, is what leads Lonergan to insist that a cognitional event beyond understanding is required in order for us to validate the insights we have. This event is judgment — the critical act of personal commitment that, together with insight, distinguishes Lonergan's critical, from Taylor's uncompromising, realism.

Like Heidegger, though, Taylor associates judgment with the hermeneutically naive correspondence theory of truth, and so retreats to Lonergan's first level, rather than moving forward to his third, in order to account for how we validate our articulations. Taylor believes the true nature of the background is accessible to us prior to judgment, via articulations that are self-validating. Because the background provides us with a self-validating revelation of its primordial nature once we uncover it via articulation, we can offer an interpretation and know that it is true at one and the same time. The truth of what we understand at the second level is validated by its immediacy at the first level. That Taylor thinks such is the

case is evidenced by: (1) his use of another ocular metaphor (perspicuity) to account for which of our articulations are true, and (2) his related claim that the transcendental arguments which often support such interpretations are themselves as self-evident, and thus as self-validating, as our perspicuous articulations themselves. Taylor thinks we can *see* at once that a given transcendental argument is valid because he believes that truth is accessible prior to human judgment via self-validating, or perspicuous, articulations. In order to portray perspicuous articulation as self-validating, however, he has to conceive of it as self-evident, and thus on the basis of perspicuity (distinctness to sight), yet another mistaken ocular metaphor. Perspicuous articulations are self-evidently valid revelations that do not require the mediation of judgment because they are more akin to pictures than they are to insights. Taylor retreats from the second level to the first in order to bypass the third. Thus insight and judgment are abandoned by Taylor. In so doing, however, he once again becomes a captive of the epistemological confusion of picture-thinking. Taylor allows a derivative place for pictures in his hermeneutics by advocating what Miller refers to as a *hermeneutically contextualized picture theory of truth* — a theory that results from his abandonment of insight and judgment as the cognitional events that provide us access to reality.<sup>60</sup>

#### FROM JUDGMENT TO REALITY

The process of inquiry that occurs within the hermeneutic circle requires, however, that our various, and often conflicting, interpretations be critically assessed. Doing so is just what judgment, Lonergan's third level of cognitional activity, involves. His rejection of the traditional views on judgment helps us realize, moreover, that the process of judgment need not be hermeneutically naive. Judgment necessarily requires us to adjudicate between the various interpretations we form from within the background of engaged agency, so as to determine which ones best explains our lived experience as human subjects.

Judgment is the most definitive moment in the hermeneutic process according to Lonergan, therefore. It is definitive because we cannot justify

<sup>60</sup>See also Miller, "Insight, Judgment, World" 51.

the judgments we make, either by disengaging from our subjectivity (escaping the circle so as to compare our judgments with what is "out there") or by disclosing the primordial nature of the background via perspicuous articulations (bypassing judgment and insight for the sake of direct revelations of truth which are self-evidently valid). Our inability to justify our judgments in either of these ways does not mean, however, that human judgment cannot be rigorous. We can critically assess the interpretations we form within the circle. Doing so involves posing the critical question for reflection: Which of insights best explains our lived experience as engaged human subjects? In short, judgment requires us to answer the question for reflection we raise whenever we have an insight: Is it so? Thus prior to judgment, there is no way for us to know whether or not our insights are true. "There is no insurance policy we can fall back on to guarantee the judiciousness of our critical assessment; *no magical access to the world is available that would enable us to know, independently of our judgments, that our judgments are true.*"<sup>61</sup> We have no way to gain access to the true nature of the background of engaged human agency other than through judgment itself. Such is the case precisely because, as Miller argues, judgment is the cognitional event that provides us with access to reality.<sup>62</sup> Reality, whether it is independent of us or that which we ourselves are, is only known in and through the judgments we make regarding the insights we have. Lonergan's realism is a *critical* realism because judgment, above and beyond insight, is need in order for us to understand the true nature of reality. Human science culminates in the affirmation that as a result of our own critical assessment, a given insight best explains a specific aspect of the background within which we constitute ourselves as engaged human subjects. Far from requiring us to abandon the hermeneutic circle, then, judgment actually finalizes this circle. We complete the hermeneutic circle of human subjectivity by making a judgment regarding what the true nature of this background is. This personal commitment is an affirmation that the true nature of human subjectivity is only known by remaining within this background and completing it from within via judgments of truth, and thus of reality.<sup>63</sup> Miller

<sup>61</sup>See also Miller, "Insight, Judgment, World" 51.

<sup>62</sup>See also Miller, "Insight, Judgment, World" 52.

<sup>63</sup>See also Miller, "Insight, Judgment, World" 52.

concludes, therefore, that a true judgment is an originary breakthrough to reality.<sup>64</sup>

How, then, is the truth of judgment to be explained if not in terms of the correspondence theory as traditionally conceived? Having dismissed reality conceived of as either "out there" for us to compare our representations with, or as that which is disclosed via perspicuous articulations, we would seem to lack a criterion of judgment that would enable us to affirm any critical assessment as true. Neither independent objects nor the background of human subjectivity provide us with such a criterion. We nevertheless have a criterion for judgment according to Lonergan's theory of truth: authentic human subjectivity as realized in self-transcendence. For authentic subjectivity precludes both the modern ideal of disengagement and the hermeneutically contextualized picture-theory of truth. We must authentically respond to questions on every level of consciousness as Lonergan outlines it if we are to achieve self-transcendence, and thus authenticity.<sup>65</sup> The criterion of authentic human subjectivity is always already operative in this *throe of wonder*.<sup>66</sup> Although true judgments provide us with our only access to reality, we have no way of knowing that our judgments are true except by authentically surrendering to the normative transcendental precepts that govern this throe: Be Attentive, Be Intelligent, Be reasonable, and Be Responsible. So the proximate criterion of truth is the reflective grasp of the virtually unconditioned and its remote criterion is the authentic unfolding of the throe of wonder, which itself culminates in this participatory *ecstasis*. The condition for the possibility of such participatory ecstasy is authentic human subjectivity as realized in self-transcendence. Neither the modern ideal of disengagement that informs representationalism, nor any naive formulation of the correspondence theory of truth, nor hermeneutically contextualized picture-theories such as perspicuous articulation can account for this engaged reality. For like all reality, authentic

<sup>64</sup>See also Miller, "Insight, Judgment, World" 52.

<sup>65</sup>See also Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 104.

<sup>66</sup>See also Jerome Miller, *In The Throe of Wonder: Intimations of the Sacred in a Post-Modern World* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), and "All Love is Self-Surrender: [Reflections on Lonergan after Post-modernism]," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13 (1995) 53-81.

subjectivity is known in and through insight and judgment alone. Such is the case precisely because, as Lonergan concludes, “visual images are incapable of suggesting the normative exigencies of intelligence and reasonableness and, much less, their power to effect the intentional self-transcendence of the subject.”<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *The Subject* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995) 16.



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