

METHOD

Journal of Lonergan Studies



VOLUME 20

NUMBER 1

SPRING 2002

METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies aims, first, at furthering interpretive, historical, and critical study of the philosophical, theological, economic, and methodological writings of Bernard Lonergan. Second, it aims at promoting original research into the methodological foundations of the sciences and disciplines.

METHOD is published twice yearly, in April and October, by The Lonergan Institute at Boston College.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE 2002: \$16.00 yearly for individuals, \$28.00 yearly for institutions (U.S. currency).

SUBSCRIPTION ORDERS must be prepaid in U.S. funds and should be addressed to the Business Manager, *METHOD*, Lonergan Center, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167-3806. Changes of address and other correspondence related to subscriptions and advertising should be sent to the same address. To order on-line, visit www.bc.edu/lonergan.

MANUSCRIPTS should be sent to Patrick Byrne, *METHOD*, Department of Philosophy, Carney Hall 216, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167-3806. In order to facilitate an early decision, authors should send *three* copies of each manuscript, double-spaced throughout, including footnotes. Submissions should be accompanied by a short biographical note. They can be returned only if adequate postage is included.

Accepted articles must follow *A Manual of Style* (University of Chicago Press) and should be submitted in this form. References to any of Lonergan's writings that have appeared in Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan must cite that edition, but may also cite older editions.

BOOKS FOR REVIEW should be sent to Charles Hefling, *METHOD*, Department of Theology, Carney Hall 417, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167-3806.

BACK ISSUES of most numbers in volumes 1 through 9 may be ordered from *METHOD*, Department of Philosophy, Loyola Marymount University, Loyola Blvd. at W. 80th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90045; for later volumes, from *METHOD*, Department of Philosophy, Carney Hall 216, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167-3806.

COPYRIGHT of articles, dialogues, notes, and book reviews is retained by their respective authors. Materials published in *METHOD* may be reproduced for purposes of research, personal reference, and classroom use without formal permission or fee. Permission for copying in the case of general distribution, collected works, or anthologies must be obtained directly from the author.

Selected articles appearing in *METHOD* are indexed in the *Philosopher's Index*.

ISSN: 076-7392.

METHOD

Journal of Lonergan Studies

Volume 20

Number 1

Spring 2002

PATRICK H. BYRNE

Editor

CHARLES C. HEFLING, JR.

Editor

MARK D. MORELLI

Editor

KERRY CRONIN

Business Manager

REGINA G. KNOX

Editorial Manager

CONTENTS

*Rosemary Juel Bertocci and
Francis H. Rohlfs*

- 1 A Lonerganian *Kritik* of the Evolutionary
Sciences and Religious Consciousness: The
Isomorphism of Structures, Activities, and
Analysis

Patrick H. Byrne

- 21 Research: An Illustration from Galileo Studies

Robert M. Doran, S.J.

- 33 The Truth of Theological Understanding in
Divinarum Personarum and *De Deo Trino, Pars
Systematica*

Gordon Rixon, S.J.

- 77 Bernard Lonergan to Thomas O'Malley

Paul St. Amour

- 87 Kierkegaard's Retrieval of the Existential Subject

- 115 Book Review
-

METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies

is published by

The Lonergan Institute at Boston College

www.bc.edu/lonergan

A LONERGANIAN *KRITIK* OF THE EVOLUTIONARY SCIENCES AND RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS: THE ISOMORPHISM OF STRUCTURES, ACTIVITIES, AND ANALYSIS

Rosemary Juel Bertocci
Francis H. Rohlf

Saint Francis University
Loretto, PA

A fourteen-year-old prostitute in Rio de Janeiro tithes at a rate of 50 percent. A Catholic priest offers himself for execution by Nazis in place of a Jewish father whom he does not know. Nations and organizations divest of stocks that support economic endeavors in a land of apartheid. Someone invests in an eco-friendly stock that promises a lower yield. These decisions and acts evidence the values of the agents and are difficult to reduce to activities that promote one's survival, reproductive capacity, or inclusive fitness.

In this article, we intend to show the relationship between evolutionary drives with their attendant evolved mechanisms and high-level values and, specifically, religious values. The thesis we propose is that high-level and religious values are analogous to, and sublations of, vital concerns. Further, the processes of high-level and religious reasoning are isomorphic¹ to human vital activities. The evolution of large brains in

¹"Two sets of terms, say A, B, C ... and P, Q, R ... are said to be isomorphic if the relation of A to B is similar to the relation of P to Q, the relation of A to C is similar to the relation of P to R, the relation of B to C is similar to the relation of Q to R, etc., etc. Isomorphism, then, supposes different sets of terms; it neither affirms nor denies similarity between the terms of one set and those of other sets; but it does assert that the network of relations in one set of terms is similar to the networks of relations in other

modern humans that enables us to analyze and create solutions to complex problems also, as by-product, allows us to consider questions of meaning and value that go beyond the vital and social concerns for the sake of survival and reproduction. Rather than being mere justifications of vital activities or concealing our vital drives, ethical and religious deliberations, convictions, and judgments can go beyond vital concerns, while neither denying their value nor contravening the functioning of vital, adapted mechanisms and processes.

Construing high-level and religious values as merely self-aggrandizing interpretations of activities in support of adapted mechanisms evidences an obdurate reductionism. While it is true that many so-called ethical and religious acts are, in fact, social extensions of evolutionary drives, there still exist those significant moments when people choose the good because it is good and reject self-serving opportunities because they are judged to be wrong.

By contrast, explaining religious consciousness exclusively as high-level thinking presaging high-level activity serves to obfuscate the *sine qua non* of authentic² religious consciousness, obscuring the vital, evolutionary, adaptive mechanisms and biological processes that ground this and all forms of conscious activity.³ This is so because religious

sets" (Bernard Lonergan, "Isomorphism of Thomist and Scientific Thought," in *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 4 [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993], 133).

²According to Lonergan, "authentic realization is a self-transcending realization. When we seriously affirm that something really and truly is so, we are making the claim that we have got beyond ourselves in some absolute fashion, somehow have got hold of something that is independent of ourselves, somehow have reached beyond, transcended ourselves" (Bernard Lonergan, "The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell [London: Dartman, Longman & Todd, 1974; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996], 166-67). Further, Lonergan wrote, "Authentic religious development has a twofold character. There is the minor authenticity of the human subject with respect to the tradition that nourishes him. There is the major authenticity that justifies or condemns the tradition itself. The former leads to a human judgment on subjects. The latter invites the judgement of history upon traditions" (Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J., "First Lecture: Religious Experience," in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe [New York: Paulist Press, 1985], 120).

³Lonergan's Generalized Empirical Method offers a key to unified science: Scientists and authentic theologians follow the same pattern of cognition – experiencing, questioning, direct insight, conceiving or formulating, reflective questioning, reflective insight, judging

consciousness arises in brains/minds that were evolutionarily formed for the survival and replication of genes.⁴ Each person – including one with religious consciousness – engages in vital reactions at levels prior to consciousness; each responds preconsciously⁵ to the fitness of oneself and one's genetic relatives.⁶ It is these calculi, a veritable mechanistic

(with ongoing revision of judgments). See William J. Danaher, "Lonergan and the Philosophy of Science," in *Australian Lonergan Workshop*, ed. William Danaher (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993).

⁴ "By the mid-1970s, it was dawning on many evolutionary biologists, especially those interested in behaviour, that evolution by natural selection was not much about competition between species, not much about competition between groups, not even mostly about competition between individuals, but was about competition between genes using individuals and occasionally societies as their temporary vehicles. For instance, given the choice between safe, comfortable and long life for the individual or a risky, tiring and dangerous attempt to breed, virtually all animals (indeed plants) choose the latter. They choose to shorten their odds of death in order to have offspring. Indeed, their bodies are designed with planned obsolescence called aging that causes them to decay after they reach breeding age – or, in the case of squid or Pacific salmon, to die at once. None of this makes any sense unless you view the body as a vehicle for the genes, as a tool used by genes in their competition to perpetuate themselves. The body's survival is secondary to the goal of getting another generation started. If genes are 'selfish replicators' and bodies are their disposable 'vehicles' (in Richard Dawkin's controversial terminology), then it should not be much of a surprise to find some genes that achieve their replication without building their own bodies. Nor should it be a surprise to find that genomes, like bodies, are habitats replete with their own version of ecological competition and co-operation" (Matt Ridley, *Genome: The Autobiography of a Species in 23 Chapters* [New York: HarperCollins, 1999], 128).

⁵By "preconscious," we do not mean any "subconscious" or "unconscious" mental activities vis-à-vis certain psychological systems but, rather, those mental activities for which the brain is wired by evolutionary adaptation, which occur without our taking the time necessary for conscious evaluation and choice. These preconscious activities – like facial expressions – are often *indeliberate* and *inadvertent* in the literal sense.

⁶The principle insights to grasp in this regard from the inclusive fitness theory are the following: (1) Inclusive fitness is not a property of an individual or an organism but rather a property of its *actions* or *effects*; (2) Inclusive fitness can be viewed as the sum of an individual's own reproductive success (classical fitness) *plus the effects* the individual's actions have on the reproductive success of his or her genetic relatives; (3) The effects on relatives must be weighted by the appropriate degree of genetic relatedness to the target organism: (a) .50 for brothers and sisters (because they are genetically related by 50% with the target organism); (b) .25 for grandparents and grandchildren (25% genetic relatedness); (c) .25 for uncles/aunts and nieces/nephews (25% genetic relatedness); (d) .125 for first cousins (12.5% genetic relatedness); (e) .0625 for second cousins (6.25% genetic relatedness). See David M. Buss, *Evolutionary Psychology: The New Science of the Mind* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1999), 12-14.

substratum,⁷ that ground all forms of consciousness and subsequent differentiations – cultural, scientific, scholarly, modern philosophic, religious, and, most notably, compound differentiations.⁸

Religious consciousness is neither a vital, adaptive mechanism nor an activity absolutely independent of vital adaptations. Religious questioning concerning ultimacy seems to be a ubiquitous activity of modern humans. As the eminent anthropologist, Ian Tattersall, suggests, “[R]eligion in some sense is one of the earliest special proclivities that we are able to detect in the archaeological record of modern humans.”⁹

Further, religious questioning seems to be a connatural tendency that grows out of our natural, vital adaptations. If human activities are geared

⁷Steven Pinker writes, “The mind is a system of organs of computation, designed by natural selection to solve the kinds of problems our ancestors faced in their foraging way of life, in particular, understanding and outmaneuvering objects, animals, plants, and other people. The summary can be unpacked into several claims. The mind is what the brain does; specifically, the brain processes information, and thinking is a kind of computation. The mind is organized into modules or mental organs, each with a specialized design that makes it an expert in one arena of interaction with the world. The modules’ basic logic is specified by our genetic program. Their operation was shaped by natural selection to solve the problems of the hunting and gathering life led by our ancestors in most of our evolutionary history. The various problems for our ancestors were subtasks of one big problem for their genes, maximizing the number of copies that made it into the next generation” (Steven Pinker, *How the Mind Works* [New York: W.W. Norton, 1997], 21).

⁸Lonergan wrote that there are various types of combinatorial differentiation; some combine scientific, religious, scholarly, and the modern philosophic differentiation, others, twofold and threefold differentiation. There is also the possibility of simply undifferentiated consciousness, which is at home only in the realm of common sense (Bernard Lonergan, “Unity and Plurality: The Coherence of Christian Truth,” in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe [New York: Paulist Press, 1985], 243).

⁹Further, Tattersall writes: “[F]or even if we do not understand precisely what the artistic productions of the Cro-Magnons represented to the people who made them, it’s nonetheless clear that this art reflected a view of these peoples’ place in the world and a body of mythology that explained that place. Along with a deep desire to deny the finality of death and a curious reluctance to accept inevitable limitations of mundane human experience, the provision of such explanation is today, and almost certainly always has been, one of the major functions of religious belief. And it’s precisely because the art of the Cro-Magnons so clearly goes well beyond pure representation, to embody a broadly religious symbolism, that we are able to identify so closely with these long-vanished people (Ian Tattersall, *Becoming Human: Evolution and Human Uniqueness* [San Diego: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1998], 201).

to the promotion of oneself and/or genetic relatives or are directed toward the enhancement of one's reputation (a resource), then one's religious consciousness, particularly the ethical sensibilities that follow from it, can be argued to have emerged through evolution. Steven Pinker speculates on the relationship between religious consciousness and evolutionary adaptation: Religion, like the other "arts," especially philosophy, is "in part the application of mental tools to problems they were not designed to solve."¹⁰ Just as we have developed modules for answering questions about how objects and human beings work, we have developed modules for answering questions such as "where the universe came from, how physical flesh can give rise to sentient minds, why bad things happen to good people, what happens to our thoughts and feelings when we die."¹¹ Religion and philosophy are resultant upon "nonadaptive by-products"¹² of reasoning modules.

Those adaptive mechanisms of the human brain that enable us to evaluate and judge strategies for survival and reproduction have, as by-products, endowed us with the mental architecture for asking questions of deeper meaning and making judgments of value beyond evolved drives. We can judge beyond inclusive fitness: we can evaluate the right and good as well as the necessary and useful; we can entertain possibilities of harmony beyond understanding and strategies for advantage. Bernard Lonergan called these possibilities of deliberation on the right and good a "further dimension of self-transcendence," the basis for authenticity beyond knowledge. He wrote the following:

¹⁰Pinker, *How the Mind Works* (525). Further, he says that each type of art is an example of a technology "designed to defeat the locks that safeguard our pleasure buttons and to press the buttons in various combinations" (526).

¹¹Pinker, *How the Mind Works*, 525.

¹²See Pinker, *How the Mind Works*, 525. David M. Buss explains nonadaptive by-products as "[c]haracteristics that do not solve adaptive problems and do not have functional design; they are 'carried along' with characteristics that do have functional design because they happen to be coupled with those adaptations" (Buss, *Evolutionary Psychology*, 37). Further, Buss writes, "The hypothesis that something is a by-product of an adaptation requires identifying the adaptation of which it is a by-product and the reason why its existence is associated with that adaptation" (38). See J. Barkow, L. Cosmides, and J. Tooby, *The Adapted Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

There remains action. Beyond questions for intelligence – what? why? how? what for? – there are questions for reflection – is that so? But beyond both there are questions for deliberation. Beyond the pleasures we enjoy and the pains we dread, there are the values to which we may respond with the whole of our being. On the topmost level of human consciousness the subject deliberates, evaluates, decides, controls, acts. At once he is practical and existential: practical inasmuch as he is concerned with concrete courses of action; existential inasmuch as control includes self-control, and the possibility of self-control involves responsibility for the effects of his actions on others and, more basically, on himself. The topmost level of human consciousness is conscience.¹³

Lonergan claimed that such ethical action flows from authentic realization, a self-transcending realization, that is, conscience.

Here there is a distinction between the connatural ethical, philosophical, and religious questions concerning meaning and ultimacy that arise as by-products of adaptive mental activities¹⁴ and the religious authenticity that is conscience. To differentiate more adequately the religious consciousness that emerges from natural evolutionary functioning and the religious consciousness that arises in “conscience” requires an examination of the natural processes of valuation, and then a methodology for differentiating these processes from higher-level types of valuation. An examination of how natural and authentic religious consciousness emerge follows.

All intelligent processes of valuation are grounded in evolutionary processes. Clearly, the evolutionary adaptations of intelligence – “the ability to attain goals in the face of obstacles by means of decisions based on rational (truth obeying) rules”¹⁵ – and, particularly, the development

¹³Lonergan, “The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World,” 168.

¹⁴Pinker writes, “[T]he theory of a module-packed mind allows both for innate motives that lead to evil acts and for innate motives that can avert them. Not that this is a unique discovery of evolutionary psychology; all the major religions observe that mental life is often a struggle between desire and conscience” (*How the Mind Works*, 51). Notably, for Pinker “conscience” is a vital mechanism that functions when one has been discovered to be a cheater; Pinker ascribes to H. L. Mencken’s definition of “conscience as ‘the inner voice which warns us that someone might be looking’” (404).

¹⁵Pinker, *How the Mind Works*, 62.

of language with syntax¹⁶ enabled humans to survive as a species and to meet the challenges of life¹⁷ – to predict, calculate, and convey strategies for confronting dangers. Human intelligence¹⁸ and language¹⁹ made possible: (1) the unification of conscious experiences into meaningful presentations, (2) intelligent understanding of the possible implications of the experiences, and (3) judgment concerning the validity of the speculative understandings. Unlike forest primates, humans (1) began to develop modules for *attending to* social exchange. Beyond this, intelligence and language acquisition enabled us to (2) speculate on possible meanings (for example, who cheated whom). Further, it made it possible to (3) judge whether specific persons were engaging in equitable exchange. In effect, humans developed the capacity for making judgments as to tit-for-tat²⁰ relationships; survival depended upon predicting,

¹⁶See William H. Calvin and Derek Bickerton, *Lingua ex Machina: Reconciling Darwin and Chomsky with the Human Brain* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 169-178. Here Bickerton explains his thesis that “the frequent use of Darwin Machines in the frontal lobe (mostly for ballistic movement planning) leads finally to the achievement of corticocortical coherence in the arcuate fasciculus and a spatiotemporal code common across the cortex, so that, in throwing-free moments, embedded phrases and clauses can be handled in other Darwin Machines at some cortical distance from one for the symphonic sentence, fully assembled” (169).

¹⁷Bickerton argues that “reciprocal altruism” is the predecessor of argument structure.

¹⁸ “[I]ntelligence does not come from a special kind of spirit or matter or energy but from a different commodity, *information*. Information is a correlation between two things that is produced by lawful process. ... Correlation is a mathematical and logical concept; it is not defined in terms of the stuff that the correlated entities are made of. Information itself is nothing special; it is found wherever causes leave effects. What is special is information *processing*” (Pinker, *How the Mind Works*, 65-66).

¹⁹In *Lingua ex Machina*, Bickerton writes, “The needs of throwing (where throwing twice as far or twice as fast is always significantly better for, literally, bringing home the bacon) may have driven the evolutionary changes in recruiting helpers, but other uses of the throwing planner might also benefit from them: language, planning for tomorrow, even music” (165). Further, Mark Turner, in *The Literary Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 20, writes, “Narrative imagining is our fundamental form of predicting”; “Narrative imagining is also our fundamental form of evaluating”; “Narrative imagining is our fundamental cognitive instrument for planning”; “Narrative imagining is our fundamental cognitive instrument for explanation” (cited in *Lingua ex Machina*, 179).

²⁰ “[Robert] Trivers proposed that the emotions making up the moral sense could evolve when parties interacted repeatedly and could reward cooperation now with cooperation later and punish defection now with defection later. Robert Axelrod and

probability estimating, and other such social calculi. Humans are social animals. While we each have the adaptive mechanisms for intelligence, we further adapted language for communication and social structures (like other primates) for group survival in support of the vital drives of survival and reproduction. Alongside the vital values, social values developed into cultures. The deliberative, ethical level of intelligence that language facilitated bears on our cultural values and social activities. Thus, intelligent abilities are clearly in service of the primal drive to survive and reproduce.

In the above analysis, one can discern the general process of coming to judgment. In service of vital drives, humans can (1) unify and differentiate the experiences presented by the senses, (2) come to an understanding of the possible meanings of the experience, and (3) judge the accuracy of the speculations of understanding. Thus, three levels of conscious activity are present: (1) experience mediated by meaning, (2) understanding of the experience, and (3) judgment concerning the reality of human understanding. Functionally speaking, the development of intelligence, particularly of language, is an evolutionary adaptation that enhances human survival and reproduction.

Educated powers of observation and attention to the details of experience, developed powers of understanding the meanings inherent in the observed phenomena and incisive speculation as to their implications, and, par excellence, reasonable judgments as to the accuracy of speculations enhance chances of survival and reproduction. Each level of conscious activity leads to the next and calls for competence in order for its successor to have adequate data. If one is inattentive, understanding

William Hamilton confirmed the conjecture in a round-robin computer tournament that pitted different strategies for playing a repeated Prisoner's Dilemma game against each other. They stripped the dilemma to its essentials and awarded points to a strategy for the equivalent of minimizing jail time. A simple strategy called tit-for tat – cooperate on the first move, and then do what your partner did on the move before – beat sixty two other strategies. Then they ran an artificial life simulation in which each strategy 'reproduced' in proportion to its winnings and a new round-robin took place among the copies of the strategies. They repeated the process for many generations and found that the Tit for Tat strategy took over the population. Cooperativeness can evolve when the parties interact repeatedly, remember each other's behavior and reciprocate it" (Pinker, *How the Mind Works*, 503-504).

will be negligible and thus one's judgment will be wrong. If one is unintelligent, understanding will be wildly speculative and one's judgment therefore inapplicable to the real situation. Finally, if one is unreasonable, even attention and clear understanding of meaning will not lead to true judgments concerning implications. Thus, one may name the necessary ingredients in good judgments – attention, intelligence, and reasonableness. To clarify methodologically the proper way an earlier activity of experience leads to its successor, understanding, and, further how understanding is to be transcended in judgment, Lonergan proffered three "transcendental precepts" for activity: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable.²¹

The three conscious levels (which Lonergan explicated as experience mediated by meaning, understanding of experience and its possible implications, and judgment) make possible thought about matters that are not so transparently tied to survival and reproduction.²² Humans have developed scientific theories to make sense of physical and social phenomena, mathematics to calculate and understand quantities,²³ philosophies to unify human experience and the many fields of knowledge.

Moreover, humans have developed ethics concerning the good of human life and activities. Just as experience leads to understanding and understanding to judgment, judgment has led to questions of value, of the good. Here we encounter a fourth level of human activity – responsibility. Like the three levels discussed above, this level of values sublates the vital level, that of the primal drives to survive and reproduce.

²¹Bernard Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 7.

²²In *How the Mind Works*, 425ff, Steven Pinker cites other scientists to present a number of theories not only on the origin of "family values," but also on art, music, philosophy, ethics, religion, and so forth.

²³See Steven Pinker (*How the Mind Works*, 338–43) for an explanation of the relationship between "mental representations of quantity" and "formal mathematics." Pinker, following the mathematician Saunders MacLane, asserts that "basic human activities were the inspiration for every branch of mathematics," that is, measuring as the basis of calculus and analysis, forming (as in architecture) as the foundation of symmetry and group theory, et cetera.

While modifying the vital, attentive, intelligent, and reasonable levels, the level of values denies the virtue of none of them. Without them, humans cannot deliberate; the deliberative level has no other data from which to work.

Dependent upon the lower levels for data and utilizing understanding and reasonableness for judgment concerning what is good, the level of deliberation both presupposes the lower levels and transmutes them. Transmutation here is true sublation for the level of responsible valuation, and ethical action rejects none of the accomplishments of the lower levels nor denies their proper activities. However, at this level, one weighs values and determines the hierarchy of values. There is no rejection here of the vital values of survival and reproduction. There is, however, judgment of responsible ways of fulfilling these vital propensities. At the deliberative level, one weighs the relative good of vital and cultural values against other values affirmed by reasonable and responsible judgment. The “transcendent precept” operative here is – Be responsible.

There is, according to Lonergan, a fifth conscious level of which humans are capable, a religious level. At this level, one’s experience of absolute transcendence – of a reality going beyond all phenomenal experience – transforms all the lower levels and enables an openness to all reality in light of the totality of the absolutely transcendent experience.²⁴ One’s personal and reasoned values are transformed by this ultimate reality. Further, one’s judgments, understandings, phenomenal experiences, and relation to vital drives are taken up into a transmuted perspective. Again, however, one does not discover in religious experience any denial of the value of each of the lower levels. Survival and reproduction are not rejected; attention, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility are affirmed. However, each is reassessed, realigned, and transcended by the transformation of the person inherent in religious experience. As the deliberative level reconfigures vital values by affirming

²⁴The evolved intelligence that augmented the survival of the human species enabled humans to go beyond the vital values which intelligence promoted. That is, we are able at the deliberative level to seek the good of community and at the religious level to recognize and choose values that transcend the vital drives to survive and reproduce and the social value of the good of community.

other values, the authentic religious level of consciousness relativizes all other values in light of ultimate values. This is the level of conscience.

For Lonergan, conscience is a further level of consciousness. He differentiates natural religious consciousness and authentic religious consciousness:

[T]he gift of God's love is on the topmost level. It is not the sensitive type of consciousness that emerged with sensing, feeling, moving. It is not the intellectual type that is added when we inquire, understand, think. It is not the rational type that emerges when we reflect, weigh the evidence, judge. It is the type of consciousness that also is conscience, that deliberates, evaluates, decides, controls, acts. But it is this type of consciousness at its root, as brought to fulfilment, as having undergone conversion, as possessing a basis that may be broadened and deepened and heightened and enriched but not superseded, as ever more ready to deliberate and evaluate and decide and act with the easy freedom of those that do all good because they are in love. The gift of God's love takes over the ground and root of the fourth and highest level of man's waking consciousness. It takes over the peak of the soul, the *apex animae*.²⁵

By asserting that there is a "type of consciousness that also is conscience," Lonergan, in effect, makes a claim for a different process occurring. The "love" that is the "root" of this type of consciousness is not the same type that scientists speak about.²⁶ The "love" that grounds conscience is the gift of Transcendence and leads to performance of "terminal values."²⁷ It

²⁵Lonergan, "The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World," 173.

²⁶Pinker writes: "Natural selection does not forbid cooperation and generosity; it just makes them difficult engineering problems, like stereoscopic vision. The difficulty of building an organism to see in stereo has not prevented natural selection from installing stereo vision in humans, but we would never have come to understand stereo if we thought it just came free with having two eyes and failed to look for the sophisticated neural programs that accomplish it. Similarly, the difficulty of building an organism to cooperate and be generous has not prevented natural selection from installing cooperation and generosity in humans, but we will never understand these capacities if we think they just come free with living in groups. The on-board computers of social organisms, especially humans, should run sophisticated programs that assess the opportunities and risks at hand and compete or cooperate accordingly" (*How the Mind Works*, 428).

²⁷See Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Minneapolis: The Seabury Press, 1979), 50-52: "Terminal values are the values that are chosen; true instances of the

underlies love for our enemies consisting “in bearing the pain of the sin committed by the other in carrying out a hostile action, and in repaying him with goodness.”²⁸ This “love” does not yield to reputation: “We can be sure that a man is a true religious and has the spirit of God if his lower nature does not give way to pride when God accomplishes some good through him, and if he seems all the more worthless and inferior to others in his own eyes.”²⁹ In effect, this “love” consists of peace, humility, and mercy for “these are the only things that pass with us beyond death.”³⁰

The formation of such a conscience, which we assert is the primary point of divergence for authentic religious consciousness, provides a unique way of sublating, that is, transcending without denying personal and primordial activities. While personal aspects of individual existence (for example, dramatic, artistic, technical, social, and so forth) are ways of working out primordial drives and proclivities, authentic religious consciousness creates methods for sublation that are not emergent like other forms of consciousness. Though it depends, foundationally, on the same mechanisms, it takes a different form; arising through conversion, an authentic religious consciousness establishes a different substratum, allowing the subject to realize higher levels of valuation.

In this section, we have established the relationship between natural religion – the search for meaning and ultimacy concomitant with evolved, adaptive mechanisms – and authentic religious consciousness, born from the conscious level of deliberation and religious experience of

particular good, a true good of order, a true scale of preferences regarding values and satisfactions” (51). Lonergan assembles “the various components that enter into the human good.” He explicates the interconnection, and distinction of levels of values: (1) capacity, need, operation, cooperation, particular good; (2) plasticity, perfectibility, development, skill, institution, role, task, the good of order; and (3) liberty (self-determination), orientation, conversion, personal relations, and terminal values. Lonergan argues that one promotes progress by being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible in all one’s cognitional operations and actions. He asserts that a religion that promotes self-transcendence to the point, not merely of justice, but of self-sacrificing love, will have a redemptive role in human society inasmuch as such love can undo the mischief of decline and restore the cumulative process of progress (see 27, 51, 55).

²⁸Raoul Manselli, *St. Francis of Assisi* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1985), 305.

²⁹Manselli, *St. Francis of Assisi*, 306.

³⁰Manselli, *St. Francis of Assisi*, 298.

ultimacy. Further, we demonstrated the sublation of lower levels by higher levels of conscious experience, delineating the growth from the vital level of survival to sensation, from understanding of sensational experience to judgment, from judgment to the level of deliberation and high-level values, and the transforming effect of authentic religious experience upon all the lower levels.

In the next section, we will propose an explanatory, protracted analogy on the way each level of human experience with its attendant activities is related to the other levels. We will show the isomorphic³¹ relations among the vital, cultural, ethical, and authentic religious levels. We will further suggest that scientific study of evolved mechanisms and adaptive strategies (in neuroscience, evolutionary psychology, and behavioral genetics³²), sociological and psychological study of social structures, philosophical study of ethical issues, and religious and theological study of high-level values are complementary.

THE ISOMORPHISM OF HUMAN LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE AND ACTIVITY

There is an isomorphism³³ among the levels of operation made possible by our adaptive mechanisms and the activities that follow upon their

³¹Discernment of particular isomorphic relations requires insight into processes.

³²"Evolutionary psychology is a new and remarkably successful discipline that has brought sweeping new insights to the study of human behaviour in many fields. Behaviour genetics ... aims at roughly the same goal. But the approach to the subject is so different that behaviour genetics and evolutionary psychology are embarked on a collision course. The problem is this: behaviour genetics seeks variation between individuals and seeks to link that variation to genes. Evolutionary psychology seeks common human behaviour — human universals, features found in every one of us — and seeks to understand how and why such behaviour must have become partly instinctive. It therefore assumes no individual differences exist, at least for important behaviours. This is because natural selection consumes variation: that is its job. If one version is better than another, then the better version will soon be universal to the species and the worse version will soon be extinct. Therefore, evolutionary psychology concludes that if behaviour geneticists find a gene with common variation in it, then it may not be a very important gene, merely an auxiliary. Behaviour geneticists retort that every human gene yet investigated turns out to have variants, so there must be something wrong with the argument from evolutionary psychology" (*Genome*, 105).

³³In "Isomorphism of Thomist and Scientific Thought," Lonergan argues for an isomorphism between Thomist and scientific thought with the qualification that "by scientific thought is meant the thinking of the scientist as a scientist and not all the

operations. Just as the drive to survive and reproduce leads to the adaptive mechanisms of fight or flee, sexual display, tit-for-tat strategies, reciprocal altruism, incest aversion, quasi-pair bonding, attraction for and protection of genetic near-relatives, so the social value of the good of community has led to the development of culture, of group identification, interrelationships and responsibilities, laws, miscreant punishments, courtesies, group defenses and war, education, rituals, and marriage strategies – polygamy, polyandry, and monogamy. Similarly, at the ethical level of deliberation, higher-level values like distributive and commutative justice, justice within law and punishments, just-war theories, charity, altruism, and other virtues are affirmed and vices repudiated. These ethical values are likewise transformed at their roots by the transcendent value recognized in religious experience and authentic religious consciousness. Thus, each level sublates those prior to it, taking them up in a higher synthesis of values. Cultural, ethical, and religious levels do not deny the vital values of survival and reproduction. The ethical and religious levels do not deny the social and cultural value of the good of community nor the vital values; rather, ethics seeks to adjudicate competing values and seeks their proper ordering. Religious value rejects nothing that is good, even at the vital level, but transforms all values because of the transcendent good one has experienced.

While religious valuation presupposes vital mechanisms and propensities and, in going beyond them – in authentic religious consciousness – affirms their necessity and value, it takes another form when one engages in the conscious, conscience-forming activity of noting isomorphic relations between the vital-biological and religious levels of consciousness. That is, if one is engaged in the quest for discovering higher-level values, explicating the relationship between the different

excursions of scientists into philosophy.” Lonergan points to the potential for isomorphism: (1) Scientists and theologians begin from questions or problems concerning sensible data. (2) Their inquiries issue in abstract definitions or invariantly expressed hypotheses that respectively stand in need of judgment or verification because of the absolute significance of fact. (3) They are modest in their claims to definitive knowledge. (4) They anticipate similar structures in what is to be known through affirmed definitions and verified hypotheses. (5) They know that certainty regards not the changing content of theories but the permanent structure of method (133).

levels of values ascribed to by scientists and theologians can be a way of forming one's conscience.

Although there is profound value in noting variant differentiations of consciousness that establish the personal character of individuals, the myriad aspects of human personality must be viewed more broadly, as "sublations," modulations of the primary natural drives to survive and reproduce. The appeal is for theologians to take up the task of scientific differentiation in order to experience, understand, and judge not only the relationship between vital proclivities and natural religious consciousness, but also to differentiate natural and authentic religious consciousness. While preeminent aspects of personality carry impulses to survive and reproduce into higher conscious activities,³⁴ one's hierarchy of values can be based on sublation, a transformation directed toward the good of the other, even "the enemy."

The table illustrates particular vital-level values (the focal concern of scientists) in isomorphic relation to cultural, ethical, personal and religious values (the focal concerns of theologians).³⁵

³⁴Human achievements neither deny nor destroy vital processes but rather take them up and carry them forward into conscious, interpersonal relationships and activities.

³⁵This table demonstrates the analogous relations between evolved mechanisms and goal-centered activities and values for the vital, social, ethical, and religious levels; there is no attempt here to enumerate all human values that arise from evolved mechanisms, which would include (among others) intellectual, scientific, aesthetic, and interpersonal-dramatic values.

The Vital Level**A — Mechanisms [Evolved Mental Architecture]:**

- ▶ Large brain having both primitive organs (e.g., amygdala) and modern human organs (frontal cortex).
- ▶ Structures for affect regulation.³⁶
- ▶ Adaptation for language, both proto-language and syntax.
- ▶ Individual development by “bootstrapping” neural networks.

B — Aims [Drives]:

- ▶ Survival/reproduction according to “inclusive fitness” (goods/justice for “me and mine”) and “natural selection” – reproductive bias favoring some genes or genotypes over others.

C — Specialized Mechanisms:

- ▶ Language acquisition.
- ▶ Sexual jealousy; parent-offspring conflict.
- ▶ Mother-infant emotion communication signals.
- ▶ Cheater detector and tit-for-tat.
- ▶ Cooperation and “reciprocal altruism.”

D — Strategies and Activities:

- ▶ Assessment of genetic favorableness in prospective mates.
- ▶ Quasi-pair bonding and sequential monogamy.
- ▶ Resource acquisition according to “inclusive fitness.”
- ▶ Social cooperation and reciprocity.
- ▶ Cheater detection.

Explanatory Methods:

- ▶ Scientific Method.³⁷
- ▶ Evolution by Natural Selection (Inclusive Fitness Theory).
- ▶ Neuro-biology, Evolutionary Psychology, Genetic Behaviorism.

The Cultural Level**A — Mechanisms:**

- ▶ Evolved mental architecture of the vital level.
- ▶ Adaptation for cooperative alliances.

B — Aims:

- ▶ The good of the individual in conjunction with the good of the group (often according to “inclusive fitness”).
- ▶ Survival of the group and reproduction.

C — Specialized Mechanisms:

- ▶ Cheater detector and tit-for-tat.
- ▶ Cooperation and “reciprocal altruism.”

D — Strategies and Activities:

- ▶ Laws and punishments.
- ▶ Marriage conventions.
- ▶ Cooperation against outsiders (warfare, slavery, prejudice, etc.).

Explanatory Methods:

- ▶ Sociology, economics, jurisprudence.
- ▶ Evolutionary psychology grounds cognitive, social, personal, developmental, clinical, cultural psychology.

The Ethical Level**A — Mechanism:**

- ▶ Evolved ability to reason (a module-packed mind for moral reasoning) as non-adaptive evolutionary byproduct.

B — Aims:

- ▶ The “good” life.
- ▶ Discovery of high-level values, “oughts” and the right.
- ▶ Analysis of complex personal and social situations.

C — Specialized Procedures:

- ▶ Reasoning from principles to conclusions.

D — Strategies and Activities:

- ▶ Seeking understanding of the good life.
- ▶ Assessment of situations and right action.
- ▶ Doing the obligatory and the right; avoiding wrong.

Explanatory Method:

- ▶ Philosophical reasoning.

The Authentic Religious Level**A — Mechanism (and by-product):**

- ▶ Evolved ability to reason
- ▶ Concomitant fulfillment of self-transcendence in attention, intelligence, reasonableness, responsibility, love.

B — Aims:

- ▶ Self-Appropriation of personal and religious values.
- ▶ Authenticity and self-transcendence to the good.
- ▶ To do good and avoid evil.
- ▶ To overcome bias, personal sin, concupiscence (the tendency to choose the apparently good over the truly good).
- ▶ To live in consonance with the Transcendent that “grasps” one (Tillich).

C — Specialized Procedures:

- ▶ Theology – reasoning from experienced ultimacy and doctrine to concrete acts.

D — Strategies and Activities:

- ▶ Seeking understanding of the Good and the True in light of one’s faith tradition and religious experience.
- ▶ Assessments of concrete situations in relation to religious values.
- ▶ Praxis – the interplay of concrete good acts with experience and knowledge of ultimacy.
- ▶ Perform “terminal values.”

Explanatory Method:

- ▶ Theological reasoning.

³⁶See Allan N. Schore, *Affect Regulation and the Origin of the Self: The Neurobiology of Emotional Development* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1994); Daniel J. Siegel, M.D., *The Developing Mind: Toward a Neurobiology of Interpersonal Experience* (New York: Guilford Press, 1999).

³⁷See note 3 on Lonergan’s generalized empirical method.

At each level, strategies emerge and develop, and activities are implemented (in light of one's aims), grounded upon evolved mental architecture and specialized mechanisms or procedures. It shows as well the isomorphic relations among evolved specialized mechanisms or procedures at the vital and cultural levels, the reasoning dependent upon nonadaptive by-products at the ethical and religious levels, aims, and activities and strategies. The clarifying lists for each category are meant to be illustrative and extensive but not exhaustive. We demonstrate that each person has certain proclivities at the vital level: the goals – survival and reproduction – are sought, usually preconsciously, through adaptive strategies. At the cultural level, these same goals are delimited within communities. At the ethical level, these goals are judged against strategies for their attainment regarding justifiability and rightness. At the level of personal and religious values, the goal – to do good and avoid evil – is consciously pursued by being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible.

When one recognizes the analogical relationships among the different levels of value – vital, cultural, ethical, personal and religious – and the sublation of the lower by the higher, one can view them as complementary rather than assuming high-level values are obfuscations of vital-level values or as in competition *simpliciter*. Our adapted tendencies for social relationships and cultural structures for delimiting vital values and, further, our ability (as an evolved by-product) to consider rationally and responsibly high-level values in ethics and religion are both results of an evolved mental architecture. The schema developed above and the table display the isomorphic relationships between the values and the activities of each of the four levels of values. The recognition of this isomorphism among levels of values allows for the following assertions:

1. This isomorphism provides a multileveled, explanatory framework for values.³⁸ Rather than ascribing to an either/or approach, which would

³⁸Because “value” is not a univocal term, values must be differentiated: Vital and social values are facts of nature; human beings, like all other living creatures, engage in value-laden, evolutionary strategies. While these values must be acknowledged, sublation of values is possible through ascription to personal and religious values (See Bernard

disregard vital values or personal and religious values, scientists and theologians who acknowledge the isomorphic relations can rationally consider not only the *meaning* and *impact* of evolutionary mechanisms but also the consequences of sublating vital-level values.

2. The relationship among value levels gives a framework for considering concrete problems and concrete solutions. If vital-level values are foundational to human life – never to be dismissed out of hand – choosing an ethical or a personal or religious value in a concrete situation sublates rather than denies the vital and cultural levels and concerns excellence and is, perhaps, valorous.

3. There should be an honest dialogue concerning intelligent and reasonable solutions to concrete problems. While it is common for theologians to assert, unequivocally, that it is better to “love one’s enemy” or practice “nonviolence” (*ahimsa*) than to engage in a tit-for-tat strategy, evolutionary science – particularly evidenced through computer models³⁹ – explicates strategies for pursuing cooperation and justice. Tit-for-tat strategies may apply particularly well to sustainability and development issues.

4. There is the possibility of defensible criteria for responsible assertions from authentic science and theology. The recognized isomorphism among the four levels of values supports Steven Jay Gould’s notion of two magisteria.⁴⁰ Scientists would be preempted from reducing religion to metaphoric presentations⁴¹ or an emotionally centered

Lonergan, “Mission and the Spirit,” in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe [New York: Paulist Press, 1985], 23-34).

³⁹See Matt Ridley, *The Origins of Virtue: Human Instincts and the Evolution of Cooperation* [1996] (New York: Penguin Books, 1998).

⁴⁰See Steven Jay Gould, *Rock of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life* (New York: Ballantine, 1999), 215-20.

⁴¹Consider, for example, Edward O. Wilson’s analysis of “the serpent” in *Consilience*, chapter 11 (Edward O. Wilson, *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge* [1998] [New York: Vintage Books, 1999]). One expects of such a careful thinker well-researched theories and is not disappointed whenever Wilson explicates the scientific components of the issues of making responsible decisions about water (including tapping aquifers), resources, DNA tinkering (see *Consilience*, 291-326). Wilson – biologist and Pellegrino University Research Professor at Harvard – argues that on-going human existence depends upon a *consilience* of knowledge applied to global issues, particularly the population issue.

experience; theologians would be precluded from disregarding issues associated with vitality. Responsible assertions would require that scientists consult ethicists and theologians and vice versa for verification. In this way scholars would prescind from answering questions where they lack expertise; moreover, scientists and theologians would avoid analyses that appeal to inflammatory rhetoric and mislead the public.

Only with an attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible approach to the relationship between the evolutionary sciences and religion/theology will we, as a global community, be able to address concrete global challenges. Because the good is always concrete, values must correspond to reasonable solutions in specific environments. The fourfold differentiation among levels of values outlined above, including the isomorphic relations among the sciences, philosophy, and theology, gives scientists and theologians a way to distinguish levels of value and to enhance respectful and responsible dialogue in our quest for the human good.

Wilson developed the theory of consilience from William Whewell's synthesis in *The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences* (originally published in 1840; 3rd ed. London: Cass, 1867): "The consilience of induction takes place when an induction, obtained from one class of facts, coincides with an induction, obtained from another different class. This consilience is a test of the truth of the theory in which it occurs" (9). Further, when Wilson theorizes about religion, his position on the origin of the serpent – an evolutionary proclivity for avoiding harmful animals – is insightful. However, Wilson seems to reduce the meaning of the religious text to a vital-level value. More disconcerting are the facile arguments that link, in simplistic ways, theories from physics and biology with religious concepts. While often portrayed as a "reductionist," Wilson rejects this categorization, declaring, "I am an empiricist. On religion I lean toward deism but consider its proof largely a problem of astrophysics" (*Consilience*, 263), thus, a cosmological issue.

RESEARCH: AN ILLUSTRATION FROM GALILEO STUDIES

Patrick H. Byrne

Department of Philosophy
Boston College

The term “research” is used widely and in various ways in our contemporary world, especially in university contexts. In this undifferentiated sense, research covers a vast range of very different activities: conducting laboratory experiments in the natural sciences, searching for information in libraries or on the internet, performing statistical analyses of data in the social sciences, discovering new theoretical principles, devising new proofs of problematic theorems, constructing theoretical models, deconstructing literary texts, and constructing critical historical accounts. On the other hand, Bernard Lonergan restricted his use of the term Research to a very technical sense in *Method in Theology*.¹ There Research refers strictly to the activities involved in one of his eight functional specialties.

Lonergan’s chapter devoted to Research is terse – it is by far the shortest chapter in *Method in Theology*. He offers an explanation for his extreme brevity, if not the cryptic quality, of his treatment of Research:

[T]he reader may be expecting to find a set of precise instructions on the way to do research. But, perhaps unfortunately, research is an enormously diversified category and doing research is much more a matter of practice than of theory ... one must find out who and where are the masters in the area in which one wishes to work. To them one must go and with them one must work until one is familiar

¹In this article I will capitalize the names of functional specialties – for example, Research – whenever I am using them in Lonergan’s technical sense of a functional specialty.

with all the tools they employ and has come to understand precisely why they make their each and every move.²

Lonergan goes on to remark that the methods of research are grounded in forms of self-correcting, practical intelligence akin to common sense. In other words, no general prescriptions can substitute for the acquisition of the common sense of this or that way of doing research.

All this may be so, but it is little help to readers who have not submitted themselves to some such prolonged period of apprenticeship and gained thereby one of these specialized forms of common sense. Lonergan's remarks are likely to leave most readers a bit perplexed as to why Research should be made into a functional specialty. Perhaps for the nonspecialist, one profitable way of better understanding the significance of the functional specialty Research is in terms of its functional relations to the other seven functional specialties. Maybe this is the deeper reason why Lonergan says so little about the functional specialty, Research – because it is best known as what is related in a determinate fashion to the other functional specialties. After briefly developing this point in general terms, I will offer an illustration from the history of the studies of Galileo's life and works.

Lonergan offers a bit more insight into the nature of Research in the brief paragraph devoted to it in his chapter, "Functional Specialties." The objective of Research, he says, is to "make available the data." The rest of the paragraph is largely devoted to offering a series of examples: excavating and mapping ancient sites, reproducing inscriptions, and preparing "critical editions of texts."³ So it seems at first that the functional specialty Research is related to the other functional specialties by providing the data for Interpretation and History, which in turn provide results for the operations of subsequent functional specialties.

Given this characterization – make the data available – Research sounds like a pretty pedestrian affair rather than some sort of specialization. Research sounds like a mere subdivision of Lonergan's first transcendental precept, "Be attentive." Just go to the library or museum

²Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 149.

³*Method in Theology*, 127.

and open your eyes (or unplug your ears). Not much more seems demanded of a Researcher than to "put it on the shelf" or "put it in the display case." Who needs to apprentice with a master for that? Yet Lonergan insisted that all eight functional specialties require all four levels of acts of consciousness, and he explicitly chose to illustrate his point by referring to an example of Research:

But in a scientific investigation the ends proper to particular levels become the objective sought by operations on all four levels. So the textual critic will select the method (level of decision) that he feels will lead to the discovery (level of understanding) of what one may reasonably affirm (level of judgment) was written in the original text.⁴

Why the complexities? We get a first hint if we ask ourselves how we know the credibility of what we are looking at or hearing when we visit the library or museum. If we interpret what we find there, to what does our interpretation refer? The status of the interpretation depends upon the authenticity of the data. If someone speaks words to us about a distant aunt, our interpretation of those words form the basis for our attitudes toward her; but what if the words spoken are not true of her? This begins to suggest that more is involved in Research than appears at first glance.

To provide a somewhat fuller sense of the methodological significance of Research, I turn now to a narrative illustration drawn from the history of the history of science. More specifically, I will examine the events leading to the preparation of the *Edizione Nazionale* of the works of Galileo by Antonio Favaro between 1890 and 1909.

In a recent, masterful essay Michael Segre has traced the origin and historical unfolding of the portrayals of Galileo.⁵ The first such portrayal appears in the very first biography of Galileo, written by Vincenzo Viviani, Galileo's student and disciple, who cared for him in his last years

⁴*Method in Theology*, 134.

⁵Michael Segre, "The Never-ending Galileo Story," in Peter Machamer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Galileo* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 388-416.

until his death. Viviani dedicated the rest of his life to the preservation and rehabilitation of Galileo's legacy.⁶ As Segre notes,

Viviani made an effort to seek out sources and was certainly more conscientious a historian than many of his contemporaries. Yet in order to achieve his ideal, he had to embellish historical facts — a common practice at the time — and his biography is of course not very reliable for the purposes of modern historians of science.⁷

Viviani's "ideal" was to cast Galileo in the exact mold of Michelangelo: "In one sentence, Viviani's *Life of Galileo* is closely copied from Vasari's *Life of Giotto*. Viviani's particular ideal was, naturally, Michelangelo."⁸ This is quite understandable, given the task that lay before Viviani. Pope Urban VIII had a special antipathy toward Galileo (he believed that Galileo had deceived him and betrayed his friendship). Even Galileo's death did not temper the pope's ire, as he continued to say that Galileo had caused the Church "such universal scandal."⁹ He set in motion an institutional hostility toward Galileo and a prolonged disposition to safeguard the "decorum" and the "good name" of the Roman Catholic Church that long outlived the pontiff.¹⁰ Viviani's comparison of Galileo to a heroic Michelangelo, no doubt deriving from his affection and sorrow for Galileo, can also be understood as an effort to counter this atmosphere of denigration.¹¹

The *Life of Galileo* was

one of the most authoritative texts on Galileo's life until the twentieth century, if not to date. The reason is obvious: Despite its shortcomings, this kind of embellishment in Viviani's essay is altogether both a good piece of contemporary "hagiographical"

⁶See Dava Sobel, *Galileo's Daughter* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 357-66, and Paolo Galluzzi, "The Sepulchers of Galileo: The 'Living' Remains of a Hero of Science," in Machamer, *Companion to Galileo*, 417-47.

⁷Segre, "The Never-ending Galileo Story," 391.

⁸Segre, "The Never-ending Galileo Story," 391.

⁹Annibale Fantoli, *Galileo: For Copernicanism and for the Church: Studi Galileiani*, vol. 3, trans. George V. Coyne (Vatican: Vatican Observatory Foundation, 1994), 468.

¹⁰Fantoli, *Galileo*, 473, 481, 483, 496-97.

¹¹Galluzzi, "The Sepulchers of Galileo," 420-23.

literature, and (considering his time) a relatively accurate history of science.¹²

In Lonergan's terms, Viviani's *Life of Galileo* functioned for many and for a very long time as one of the few sources that made the data available, although the data it provided came along with his interpretation and was undifferentiated from that interpretation. Among other things, the *Life of Galileo* also records anecdotes that Galileo told to Viviani in his old age. While it is the source of some legends now regarded as historically inaccurate (for example, watching the swinging of a lamp in the cathedral and the dropping of weights from the Tower of Pisa before a sizable audience), Viviani's biography does preserve these stories as data.

However, by the time *Life of Galileo* was published, the portrayal of Galileo as martyr of science was well underway in the writings of Enlightenment authors. (Segre attributes the first quasi-Enlightenment portrayal of Galileo as martyr to John Milton in 1644.¹³ The *Life of Galileo* was not published until 1717, fourteen years after Viviani's death.) Thus, in part, these Enlightenment interpretations and histories arose in a vacuum of data. Once his biography did appear, Viviani's use of the rhetoric of heroism allowed Enlightenment writers to draw upon the *Life of Galileo* quite selectively in order to reinforce their perspectives, although Viviani's writing itself is quite balanced. Segre mentions in particular a 1793 work by Giovanni Battista Clemente de'Nelli, which was the most detailed biography to that time: "what [Nelli] did was mainly to amplify Viviani's biography" in a way that "reflects fashion rather than documentary evidence."¹⁴

Thus the question of the availability of documentary sources plays an important role in the history of the interpretations of Galileo's life and works. Even after Viviani's biography became public, most of the data on Galileo and his conflict with the Roman Catholic Church remained inaccessible. Two of Galileo's works and several of those of his contemporaries had been placed on the Index of forbidden books.

¹²Segre, "The Never-ending Galileo Story," 391.

¹³Segre, "The Never-ending Galileo Story," 393.

¹⁴Segre, "The Never-ending Galileo Story," 395.

Therefore, the versions and translations available outside the jurisdiction of Roman Catholic authorities could not be checked against the originals, which were located within Church jurisdiction. Most of the records of the proceedings of the Congregation of the Holy Office concerning Galileo were virtually sealed until the nineteenth century. Given this lack of documentary evidence, the histories constructed were highly susceptible to unrestrained ideological dispositions.

Roman Catholic Church authorization of the first complete edition of the works of Galileo was given almost a century after Galileo's death; the four volumes appeared in 1744. However, its editor, Abbot Giuseppe Toaldo, had to conform to the instructions of an Inquisitor of the Congregation of the Holy Office. As he wrote in his preface, "For that reason we have removed or reduced to a hypothetical format the marginal annotations, which were not or did not appear to be indeterminate."¹⁵ Hence even this first complete edition could not be regarded as reliably making available all of the data, even of Galileo's own originally published words. Toaldo can hardly be faulted; he made available more textual data for study than had been accessible for over a century. But which words on the page were really Galileo's originals, and which were not? Much to his credit, Toaldo did manage to incorporate comments by Galileo, written on his printed copy, and to identify them as such by using a different typeset. This must have been something of a risk on Toaldo's part, for some of those written comments clearly indicated that Galileo held as true (not just hypothetically) the Copernican propositions. Toaldo covered himself by a remark in the preface, but he did not alter the hand-written comments as he had been required to do with the printed marginal annotations. In other words, some weighty decisions were demanded of him in his work of Research.

With regard to the records of Galileo's appearances before the Congregation of the Holy Office, their history makes their Research especially challenging. These records were virtually inaccessible to scholarly study until the nineteenth century. However, when Napoleon

¹⁵Quoted in Fantoli, *Galileo*, 471. The "Copernican propositions" regarding the earth's motion and the sun's immobility were condemned because they had been advanced, especially by Galileo, as *more* than hypothetical, and as such were held to contradict Scripture.

conquered the Papal States he had those records, along with other pontifical archives, transported to Paris in 1810. Apparently Napoleon, inspired by the spirit of the Enlightenment, planned an edition of the Galileo archives. Some of the captured documents were destroyed or lost. Although the other remaining documents were returned shortly after the defeat of Napoleon, the volume on Galileo's trial was not returned until 1843.¹⁶ Shortly thereafter, amidst the tumult of the revolutionary movements of 1848-1849, Giacomo Manzoni and Silvestro Gherardi entered the Archives of the Holy Office and "hurriedly compiled copies of documents which interested them."¹⁷ These copies became the sources for Gherardi's 1870 book on Galileo's trial. Historian Annibale Fantoli remarks that "Given the haste with which he had to copy the documents Gherardi was not able to check his copies against the originals," nor was he allowed to do so once pontifical sovereignty was restored. Thus his book "came out full of errors, in addition to being vitiated by the anticlerical spirit of the epoch."¹⁸ In anticipation of this negative outcome, the archives were cautiously made accessible to trusted historians, and there appeared publications by the Prefect of the [then] Secret Vatican Archives, Marino Marini, and historians Henri de L'Espinou and Domenico Berti, all of which were either highly selective or contained numerous miscopied citations. Considerable improvements were made in 1877 editions of greater scientific and critical rigor by both L'Espinou (his second try) and Karl von Gebler.¹⁹ Fantoli concludes his narration of this sequence of efforts in the following terms:

A more effective liberalizing program began only in 1880-1881 with the opening of the Secret Vatican Archives decreed by the new Pope Leo XIII. The most conspicuous fruit of this program, as to Galileo studies, was the complete edition of all of the documents concerning Galileo's trial, which are contained in volume XIX of the National

¹⁶Fantoli, *Galileo*, 499, although he says they were returned in 1844 on p. 496.

¹⁷Fantoli, *Galileo*, 477.

¹⁸Fantoli, *Galileo*, 499.

¹⁹Fantoli, *Galileo*, 477-78.

Edition of the Works of Galileo, edited between 1890 and 1909 by Antonio Favaro.²⁰

Fantoli goes on to indicate the extensive interpretive and historical studies that have poured forth since this critical edition and more open access to the archives has become available.²¹

If we step back from this narrative, we can begin to appreciate some of what is involved in the work of Favaro (and indeed also his predecessors) in making this vast field of data available in his twenty-volume *Edizione Nazionale*. On the fourth level, there had to be value judgments by a host of scholars from Viviani to Favaro about the worth of making the exact documents available, in order to sustain long years of work and to overcome frustrations and frequent ecclesiastical oppositions. There had to be the judgments of fact that went into the centuries of criticisms of the interpretations and histories—not *as* interpretation and histories, but as fabricating, miscopying, or misquoting alleged sources. There had to be insights into how to improve methods of copying, reproducing, transferring from hand-written to printed text, and disseminating original sources. There had to be insights into ways to avoid the miscopying and misquoting errors of their predecessors. There had to be insights and judgments into how to determine whether the violations of Napoleon and Manzoni (or some earlier, unknown intruder) had compromised the authenticity of the documents. There had to be value judgments that it would be good to put these new methodological insights into practice. Finally, there had to be decisions to carry out those value judgments. In the case of Toaldo, there were also perhaps subtle and prudential insights and courageous decisions about what to risk and what not to risk. All these operations, performed imperfectly at first, but with increasing sophistication aimed at no more than making the data available in, I might add, the best condition possible for the sake of the other functional specialties.

There is one other episode from this history of making the Galileo data available that sheds some light on another comment by Lonergan,

²⁰Fantoli, *Galileo*, 479.

²¹See especially Fantoli, *Galileo*, 485 and 500-505.

one that complicates the sense of how Research is related to the other seven functional specialties. Lonergan remarks:

Finally, of course, the method is not a one-way street. The various specialties interact. If in doctrines a theologian changes his mind about the areas relevant to theological research, he will be led also to change his practice in research.²²

This seems to muddy the waters. If Doctrines depends upon the products of the functional specialties that precede it, and if all of these, in turn, ultimately rest upon the foundation of the data made available by Research, this is a very disturbing "anti-foundationalist" sort of statement by Lonergan. But it is perhaps no less anti-foundationalist than his "extrinsic" definition of experience in *Insight*.²³ And indeed the history of Galileo studies provides a marvelous illustration of exactly how this sort of thing happens (though not exactly proceeding from Doctrines). Pietro Redondi has recently discovered a document requesting an opinion on Galileo's book *The Assayer*, whose positive reception no doubt encouraged Galileo to undertake the writing of his ill-fated *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*. Regarding this discovery and its significance, Fantoli writes:

The discovery of the document used by Redondi seems to be particularly instructive. Without the specific interest of a researcher [i.e., Historian] such as Redondi himself and a precise request formulated by him it is improbable that the now famous "anonymous opinion on *The Assayer* of Galileo" would not have been found, or, even if found, could not have been evaluated in its true importance. I repeat that the research work of an archivist, even the most diligent and capable, has need, in this field of Galilean studies as in others, of assistance from the "clinical eye" of experts in the subject.²⁴

²²*Method in Theology*, 151.

²³See Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 407.

²⁴Fantoli, *Galileo*, 509.

Although there is no reason to believe that Fantoli was familiar with Lonergan's remark, it would be hard to find a better illustration.

It would of course be naïve to suggest that the greatly expanded access to documentary data eliminated all interpretive and ideological differences. Fantoli notes how an "apologetic" horizon tended to dominate some of the earliest of these twentieth-century studies.²⁵ Segre indicates how a certain anti-Galilean sentiment animates even Alexandre Koyré's highly regarded studies, while a pro-Galilean attitude informed the interpretations set forth by Koyré's critics. In a sense, one could see these as dialectically transformed versions of the positions of Urban VIII and Viviani, respectively. Resolution of diverging interpretive and historical accounts would require scholars to engage in the complex, ongoing interplay of Dialectic, Foundations, Interpretations, and History, at the very least. Newly available data alone have not eliminated the conflict of these horizons, but the new data have required significant modifications within the horizons.

For example, Galileo presented the judgments of Copernicus (and himself) as being based strictly upon "geometrical demonstrations, founded primarily upon sense experiences and very exact observations."²⁶ This remark informed Enlightenment characterizations of the faith-science opposition. By their careful attention to the data of Galileo's own texts, notebooks, and other sources of his time, Koyré, William Shea, and William A. Wallace, among others, have shown this to be a very oversimplified and misleading account of Galileo's actual scientific reasoning. Once this simplified account of scientific reasoning has been discredited, the question of "what was going forward" (or backwards) in the Galileo-Church conflict has to be rethought. The story of closed religious prejudice and dogmatism versus open rational investigation won't do any more.²⁷ Instead, one might profitably regard this historical process, drawing upon Lonergan's Foundations, as a complex of newly

²⁵Fantoli, *Galileo*, 480-83, 500-509.

²⁶*Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo* (translation with introduction and notes), ed. Stillman Drake (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957), 179.

²⁷A major contribution to this rethinking, especially the difficulties involved in distinguishing the purely physical from "faith and morals." See Richard J. Blackwell, *Galileo, Bellarmine, and the Bible* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991).

emerging, intertwined problems, requiring as yet nonexistent differentiations of consciousness, as well as intellectual conversion by all parties, and the smooth integration of these differentiations and intellectual conversion by means of a highly developed level of self-appropriation.

Do my observations in this note pertain to method in *theology*, or do they merely illustrate the benefit of Lonergan's functional specialties for the broader field of "human studies"?²⁸ That it pertains to the general field of human studies is perhaps obvious. But insofar as History itself is a properly theological enterprise (what was going forward – and backwards – in the realization of God's meaning and will), I would suggest that the study of Galileo is indeed an area of theological concern. To mediate the meaning of the Galileo era, the work of scholars operating in all eight functional specialties are required.²⁹ But at least a quasi-heuristic specification of the theological goal to be attained by functionally specialized investigation of Galileo, his works, life, and times, is suggested by the words of Fantoli:

350 years after the death of Galileo when the Pope of that time, Urban VIII, had declared, as we have already seen, that Galileo had made himself guilty of an "opinion very false and very erroneous and which had given scandal to the whole Christian world", his modern successor [John Paul II] recognizes not only [Galileo's] greatness on the scientific level but also the role which that drama played in the "more correct understanding of the authority of the Church" and that drama's function of "teaching" the Church.³⁰

²⁸*Method in Theology*, 150.

²⁹I do not mean to imply that no scholarship to date has made contributions to this goal. To the contrary, as I understand the development of Lonergan's thought on hermeneutics from *Insight* to *Method in Theology*, the point has been to increasingly include the contributions of scholars operating without any explicit awareness of Lonergan's methodology into a larger scholarly enterprise. The striking proliferation of twentieth-century Galileo studies must be regarded in this light. Indeed, it has been partly my intent to show how scholars from Viviani to Favaro have been contributing to Research without having read Lonergan.

³⁰Fantoli, *Galileo*, 487, referring to Pope John Paul II's address to the Pontifical Academy of the Sciences, October 31, 1992.

From this perspective, I would suggest, Research in the field of Galileo studies (as well as the related Interpretation and History) becomes properly theological.

THE TRUTH OF THEOLOGICAL
UNDERSTANDING
IN *DIVINARUM PERSONARUM*
AND *DE DEO TRINO, PARS SYSTEMATICA*

Robert M. Doran

The Lonergan Research Institute
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1P9

This article follows on two earlier contributions to this journal.¹ I am trying to interpret the differences that appear in the two versions of the first chapter of Lonergan's systematic treatment of the Trinity.² In the first article I stated a hypothesis that, if correct, would go a long way toward explaining these differences. In the second I presented evidence to support the hypothesis, and commented especially on Lonergan's understanding of the intellectual virtues of *sapientia*, *intelligentia*, and *scientia* (wisdom, understanding, and knowledge) in section 3 of the later version. I suggested that the understanding of these intellectual virtues that appears in that section was influenced by his efforts to clarify the relation between his thoughts on method and the demands and ideals of contemporary symbolic or mathematical logic. Those efforts are expressed in the first five chapters of *Phenomenology*

¹Robert M. Doran, "The First Chapter of *De Deo Trino, Pars Systematica*: The Issues," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 18 (2000): 27-48; "Intelligentia Fidei in *De Deo Trino, Pars Systematica*: A Commentary on the First Three Sections of Chapter One," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 19 (2001): 35-83.

²The earlier version is found in *Divinarum Personarum Conceptionem Analogicam Evolvit B. Lonergan* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1957, 1959). The later version is found in *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964).

and *Logic*,³ and their influence on Lonergan's thought on theological method at this time is particularly clear in the first part of his 1959 course "De intellectu et methodo," in which he is clearly wrestling with this question. The notes on "De intellectu et methodo" are evidence not only that the treatment presented there of the relation of systematic theology to logic influenced the changes in the chapter under consideration but also, and ultimately more importantly, that confronting this problem was a very important factor in the later breakthrough to functional specialization and to a new notion of foundations. The emerging notion of foundations is clearer in "De intellectu et methodo" than in *De Deo Trino, Pars Systematica*, in which logical considerations seem to prevail in a way that is unusual in Lonergan's writings.

The present article moves to section 4 of the later version, comparing it with the corresponding section 3 of the earlier version. The differences between the two versions of this section are intimately related to the same efforts to relate method to logic. This is particularly true of the most significant difference. There is mention in the earlier version of the promise of a new, more concrete, and more comprehensive theological synthesis than we have known to date, a synthesis that owes its concreteness and comprehensive character to an advance in understanding. The understanding of what Christians hold to be true can go beyond what systematic theology has traditionally achieved. There is emerging a theology that exhibits a synthetic appropriation of the concrete results of modern and contemporary exegesis and history. The new synthesis becomes possible as theologians grow more familiar with the genuine systematic achievements of the past, through a kind of *ressourcement*.⁴ But more than *ressourcement* is required: scholarly efforts are inviting synthetic thinking to advance to a new level of achievement where it can take the results of scholarly investigation into

³Bernard Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic: The Boston College Lectures on Mathematical Logic and Existentialism*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 18, ed. Philip J. McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

⁴Lonergan does not use this term, but it is not impossible that in *Divinarum Personarum* he was subtly trying to acknowledge the contributions of *la nouvelle théologie*, while at the same time pointing those contributions forward to a new kind of systematics.

account *in the very development of systematic thought*. The work of exegetes and historians is portrayed as standing to a future comprehensive and concrete theological synthesis much as the collections of "sentences" stood to the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas: as data for a new form of comprehensive, synthetic understanding.

That fascinating programmatic suggestion has always seemed to me to be something that *must* be right, *must* be on target, even if we are still struggling to understand how what it proposes can be achieved. Still, it is dropped entirely from the later version. Moreover, a few related changes occur in subsequent sections of the revised chapter, and in these changes, which will be studied in detail in a later article and which might appear to be slight but are actually quite significant, the place of history in the theological enterprise is devalued in comparison with the position that it held in the earlier version.

The displacement of history because of concerns with logic was, I believe, a very short-lived phenomenon in Lonergan's development. It was quickly rectified. The tension is obvious in "De intellectu et methodo," more than in the chapter that we are studying here. And it seems that this displacement may have been necessary: the position of *Method in Theology* on the place of history in theology may not have emerged had this step not taken place. History *does* have a different role in the entire theological enterprise from the one that Lonergan assigned it to in the earlier version of the chapter under investigation, and that role may not have become clear had Lonergan not originally shifted the place and function of the *via historica* under the press of logical concerns.

Nonetheless, with the emergence of the logical concerns the more concrete and comprehensive synthesis that historical scholarship makes possible is eclipsed, at least temporarily. Key questions in Lonergan studies and scholarship are, What happens to this vision? Does the conviction resurface in *Method in Theology*, and if so where? What is its relation to the vision of systematics presented in *Method in Theology*? Is that vision another throwback to an earlier conception?

So much for a general statement of the hypothesis of the present article and of the way in which this hypothesis points forward to other problems that have to be studied later.

1 TEXTUAL ISSUES

First I must say a bit more about textual matters. The third section of the 1964 version of this chapter ("De quaestione seu problemate"), which was the principal focus of the previous article in this series, does not appear at all in the earlier version. It is reasonable to assume that its addition to the 1964 version provides the key element in interpreting most if not all of the differences between the two texts. The third section of the earlier version is entitled "Ulteriora quaedam de eodem actu," that is, further considerations regarding the act of understanding as that act reaches some imperfect and analogical grasp of the mysteries of faith. This section considers matters that in 1964 are treated in section 4. The principal topic of the section in both versions (the "ulteriora" of the earlier version) has to do with the relation of theological understanding to truth, and this is reflected in the new subheading that the section is given in the later version: "De veritate intelligentiae," "On the Truth of the [Theological] Understanding."

In 1964 the issue of theological truth is treated under three questions: (1) Is systematic theological understanding true in itself or on its own (*secundum se*)? (2) Is what is understood true? (3) Is the understanding of the true itself true?⁵ The earlier version does not divide its treatment into these three questions. In a somewhat less organized fashion it addresses in ten points the question of the truth of theological understanding. Still, the first four of these points correspond exactly, word for word, to the four considerations offered in 1964 in response to the first question, Is systematic theological understanding true *secundum se*? Only after that do the significant differences between the two texts appear, and the critical point about these differences is that the 1964 division of the issue into three main questions leaves no room for the fascinating questions that Lonergan raised in the tenth point of the earlier version. Those questions do not fit the framework of the three main questions of the later version, and so the material found in the tenth point of the earlier version of this section — material that has to do with the more concrete and more

⁵In Latin, "(1) *utrum secundum se vera sit*, (2) *utrum verum sit quod intelligatur*, et (3) *utrum vera sit veri intelligentia*." Lonergan, *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica*, 19.

comprehensive synthesis rendered possible by modern and contemporary exegesis and history — is not mentioned at all in 1964.

2 IS THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING TRUE IN ITSELF (*SECUNDUM SE*)?

"Theological understanding" (*intelligentia theologica*) is the term that Lonergan uses to name the objective of speculative or systematic theology — that is, of what later would be the functional specialty, "systematics." That objective is an analogical, imperfect, obscure, gradually developing, but highly fruitful understanding of the mysteries of faith. It is centered on those mysteries that are expressed in the dogmatic formulations of the church, and it proceeds from an antecedent affirmation of the truth of those doctrines. The truth of the doctrines and the truth of theological understanding are two quite different matters, however, and the latter truth is the issue addressed both in the third section of the first chapter of *Divinarum Personarum* and in the fourth section of the first chapter of *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica*. As in the later relationship between the functional specialties of "Doctrines" and "Systematics," the truth of doctrines is affirmed prior to attempts at systematic theological understanding, whereas the truth of theological understanding itself is consequent upon the understanding.⁶ The questions of what are here called antecedent and consequent truth are quite distinct: antecedent truth is the truth of what is to be understood, while consequent truth is the truth of that understanding itself.

As I have already mentioned, in 1964 (as contrasted with the earlier version) the question, "Is theological understanding true in itself?" constitutes the first of three questions used to structure the section, and the four points under which that question is answered are exactly the same as the first four of the ten points in which Lonergan faces the entire issue in the earlier version. Thus the material covered in this section of the present article is identically the same in the two versions.

In summary the four points are these: (1) in itself theological understanding is neither true nor false; (2) the inner word in which this

⁶In fact, the truth of theological understanding receives scant mention in *Method in Theology*.

understanding is expressed is neither true nor false; (3) the outer words expressing theological understanding are in themselves neither true nor false; and (4) as theological understanding itself is imperfect, analogical, obscure, and gradually developing, so the consequent inner word and outer words are imperfectly, analogically, and obscurely understood.⁷ We will treat each point in some detail.

First, the understanding reached in systematic theology is in itself neither true nor false. In Aristotelian terms, it pertains to the "first operation" of the mind. In Lonergan's own terms, it occurs at the "level" of understanding, in response to a question for intelligence. Truth and falsity, on the other hand, are found formally only in the "second operation," at the "level" of judgment, in response to questions for reflection. As long as any proposed answer to a question for intelligence (What? Why? and so on) is considered simply at the level of understanding, it cannot be called true or false. It might be designated complete or incomplete, proportionate or analogical, clear or obscure, but to say whether it is true or false involves a subsequent set of operations, where "Is" questions are asked, where evidence is pondered, and where judgment is proffered. This is not to say, of course, that one will not move to that distinct level of operations while doing systematic theology; but it does mean that distinct criteria have to be assigned for pronouncing on the truth of theological understanding, criteria that pertain not to that understanding itself but to the subsequent set of operations, at the level of judgment.

Second, whatever we understand we also speak, express, manifest, in an inner word. But there are two kinds of inner word, for it is one thing to grasp a cause or reason or intelligibility, and it is quite another to grasp sufficiency of evidence for a judgment.⁸ There is a simple (*incomplexum*)

⁷It is entirely in keeping with Lonergan's position on the relation between understanding and expression that the parallel can be extended to include the gradual development of the formulations in which theological understanding is expressed. See note 11.

⁸In the course of the treatise on the Trinity that follows this chapter, these two types of inner word are further differentiated, to allow for an inner word that results from practical understanding, an inner word that results from existential self-understanding, and an inner word that issues in a judgment of value. The structure is the same; the content differs. The psychological analogy that Lonergan employs for understanding the

inner word uttered at the second level of consciousness when one defines something on the basis of grasping its immanent intelligibility, or when one arrives at a hypothesis because one has grasped a possible answer to a question for intelligence. And there is a compound (*complexum*) inner word uttered when what has been defined or entertained as a hypothesis is then affirmed or denied, that is, when the synthesis defined or surmised in the "first act" is posited or rejected in the "second." As understanding is of itself neither true nor false, so the simple inner word (*verbum interius incomplexum*) that expresses this understanding is of itself neither true nor false. For a true or false inner word, one must proceed to the word that issues from one's grasp of evidence; and such a word proceeds at a level subsequent to the level of direct understanding, that is, at the level of reflective understanding issuing in judgment.⁹ So the inner word that issues from theological understanding cannot be called true or false; "true" and "false" pertain to the yes or no of the compound inner word.

Third, what we conceive in an inner word we also express in outer words. Since the inner word *can* be discovered in subsequent reflection to be true or false, outer words tend by metonymy also to be called true or false. But this usage is misleading if we attend to the words themselves rather than to the intention of the one that speaks them. If there is no complex *inner* word of affirmation or negation, no *positing* of a mental synthesis, then outer words manifest only a simple word, one that in itself is neither true nor false, since it does not entail affirmation or negation. If one is merely uttering a definition or a hypothesis that one is considering, or if one is repeating someone else's opinion without taking a stand on it,

divine processions is centered *on the inner word that issues in the judgment of value regarding existential self-constitution*. This point is easily overlooked in discussions of his Trinitarian theology, or for that matter in discussions of the resources inherent in the tradition that has embraced the Augustinian-Thomist psychological analogy. Lonergan is tapping those resources in a new and extremely creative way in his own analogy, so much so that it makes sense to regard his work in *De Deo Trino* as the third major moment in the history of this analogy, and his late suggestions regarding an analogy "from above" as heralding a fourth moment. For the latter suggestions, see Bernard Lonergan, "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 74-99.

⁹The basic text here is Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 2 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), ch. 1 and 2.

there may be many words, and they may include "is" and "is not," but they are not true or false words, for they do not manifest an intention to assert but merely an intention to consider things or to report on another's views. Not even by metonymy can the outer words that express theological understanding as such be called true or false. For that, one must move beyond mere consideration to the next level of consciousness, to affirmation or negation.¹⁰

Fourth, just as theological understanding itself is imperfect, analogical, obscure, and gradually developing, so the consequent inner word and outer words are themselves understood only imperfectly, in an analogical manner, and obscurely; and theological expression of systematic understanding advances through the ages to an ever more exact articulation.¹¹

3 IS WHAT IS UNDERSTOOD TRUE?

The second question raised in 1964 about the truth of theological understanding is, Is what is understood true? Or again, how is theological understanding related to the antecedent truth of doctrines?

It is here that the two texts diverge. In the earlier version, this question did not receive the separate treatment that the later version accords it. None of the points from five through ten in *Divinarum*

¹⁰Lonergan is clearer on this distinction than are Aristotle and Aquinas. The distinct act of positing synthesis is emphasized in the second chapter of *Verbum* more than in the texts of Thomas on which that chapter is based. See also Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (latest printing, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 335, where he states that the view that understanding is the "faculty of judgment" has some basis even in Aristotle and Aquinas.

¹¹Lonergan's text (p. 20) reads, "Quarto, sicut ipsa intelligentia theologica est imperfecta, analogica, obscura, *pedetentim sese evolvens*, etc., ita etiam consequens verbum interius et consequentes voces exteriores sunt imperfecte intellectae et analogice et obscure" (emphasis added). The parallel between understanding and its expression should be drawn further, as I have tried to do in my text. As understanding slowly develops (*pedetentim sese evolvens*), so do the ways of expressing it. In the terms that Lonergan uses in *Insight*, there are "levels and sequences of expression" in theology as in any other field, and there is a complex interpenetration of understanding and expression. See Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 576-81.

Personarum takes up this question explicitly. There the truth of the doctrines that one attempts to understand in systematics is more or less taken for granted. The issues associated with that antecedent truth do not receive detailed treatment. In 1964, in contrast, not only is the matter treated, but three distinct points are made in response to the question. The first has to do with the difference between beginning from data and beginning from truth. The second regards the relative merits of turning to scripture and turning to the dogmas in order to find the basic problems for systematic understanding. And the third touches briefly on other theological loci as sources of these basic problems.

3.1 Data and Truth

While the earlier version acknowledges the different starting points for theological science and other sciences, only in the later version is the issue accorded separate treatment.

First, then, theological science differs from natural and human science in that it begins not from data but from truths.¹² Natural science seeks understanding of what is given to the senses. It moves to truth only by understanding sensible data. It hopes to attain greater probability through successive and ever better hypotheses and theories.¹³ In human science, one does not begin from bare sensible data but rather from sensible data endowed with human meaning and significance. But the meaning with which the data (for example, the writings of a philosopher) are endowed is not accepted as true from the outset, and so human science, like natural science, intends a move to truth through ever more probable theories. But the meaning found in the word of God proceeds from divine and infallible knowledge,¹⁴ and so theology, which begins

¹²Needless to say, the generality of this statement was modified by the time Lonergan wrote *Method in Theology*, where the statement holds for systematics (see *Method in Theology*, 347-48, on data and facts) but not for theological knowledge in general. The first functional specialty, research, has precisely the task of making the data available; the second functional specialty, interpretation, has to do with understanding the data, and so on.

¹³Note that this is a major qualification of Lonergan's use earlier in this text of the Aristotelian definition of science as *certa rerum per causas cognitio*.

¹⁴See Lonergan's statement in a lecture roughly contemporaneous (1963): "The word of God, whether taken as the word of the Bible, or the word of tradition, or the incarnate

from revealed truth, is subalternate to divine knowledge.¹⁵ So too, the first sense in which theological understanding can be said to be true is that it consists in understanding divinely revealed truth. (More is understood in theology, of course, than the truth revealed by God, but that further understanding is not “theological understanding” in Vatican I’s precise sense of the understanding of the mysteries hidden in God that could not be known unless they were divinely revealed.)

3.2 Scripture or Dogmas?

The second point under the question of the relation of systematic understanding to the prior truth of doctrines has to do with the relative merits of scripture and the church’s teaching authority as the sources of doctrinal truth from which the theologian learns the mysteries whose understanding is sought in systematic theology. Lonergan’s position on this issue at this point in his own history is more complex than might appear on a first reading. Elsewhere, I have affirmed the basic point he is making and tried to indicate how it can be developed.¹⁶ Here I will simply present it as I understand it, while drawing attention to the fact that emphasis was placed on this matter only in the 1964 text, and so only after there was dropped from the text the programmatic suggestions of a new,

Word that is the incarnate meaning of the Son of God – that meaning is not only given, not only has a meaning, but also has a value, a truth, that has a divine origin.” Bernard Lonergan, “The Analogy of Meaning,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 6 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 206.

¹⁵See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1, q. 1, a. 2 c. Again, on Lonergan’s later understanding in terms of functional specialization, this statement would hold for systematics, and perhaps for the rest of the “second” or “direct” phase of theology. It would hold for the first phase (research, interpretation, history, and dialectic) *only* for those whose horizon is such as to enable them to accept as well the conclusions of the second phase. The methods of exegesis and history will remain the same for both believing and unbelieving exegetes and historians; the data studied may be the same; but the results will differ because of who the interpreter or historian is.

¹⁶Robert M. Doran, “Bernard Lonergan and the Functions of Systematic Theology,” *Theological Studies* 59, 4 (1998): 570. See also the forthcoming article in *Lonergan Workshop*, “Reflections on Method in Systematic Theology.”

more concrete, and more comprehensive synthesis rendered possible by, among other things, modern biblical exegesis.¹⁷

Church teaching holds that what is proposed by the church to be believed by all as divinely revealed is also contained in the fonts of revelation (DB 1792, DS 3011). It is church teaching too that what is so proposed is defined by the church in the same sense that it has in those fonts (DB 2314, DS 3886). It follows that with regard to the truth and its meaning it matters not at all to which of these sources one goes; one will find the same truth and the same meaning in both sources.

Still, ecclesiastical statements of doctrine are often much closer than biblical statements to the task and role of *systematic* theology. The reason has to do with the respective categories employed in the two sources. While biblical categories reflect the immediate usage of the everyday life of particular writers and readers at particular times, in particular places and circumstances, on particular occasions, with particular goals in mind, the church has arrived at other categories that can be called "catholic" (with a small "c"), that is, categories that have a universality about them that enables them to be understood and employed more broadly. The church has discovered the pertinence of these categories precisely as it has faced some of the difficult problems of a universal community dispersed over the face of the earth and destined, so it believes, to last until the end of time. The meaning of the biblical categories may have been clear for the early Christians who were addressed in these terms, but in some instances we can assimilate their meaning today only through long and difficult study. So-called catholic categories, on the other hand, have a certain interior clarity that allows their meaning to be grasped by anyone who has successfully completed a certain amount of study (*studia media*). Biblical categories regard God in such a way that they simultaneously tell us what to feel, say, and do; catholic categories expound the divine reality in itself, *secundum se ipsam*. We can more clearly grasp the theological problem *precisely as a problem for systematic understanding* when it is affirmed

- that the Son is consubstantial to the Father than when we read in the Letter to the Hebrews that "he is the reflection of God's glory and the

¹⁷This does not invalidate the point that Lonergan is making, of course, but I do wish to raise the question of whether the relationship is merely coincidental.

exact imprint of God's very being" (Hebrews 1:3). And so systematic theology does better if it takes its beginnings and its problems from the definitions of the church rather than from biblical studies.

The relationship between scriptural categories and the categories that Lonergan here calls catholic are spelled out in greater detail in a later section of the chapter, in which some of the complex relations between the *priora quoad nos* (first for us) and the *priora quoad se* (first in itself) are discussed. That treatment appears in both versions of this chapter, with several small but significant differences. But in the earlier version the relationship between biblical and catholic categories comes up for discussion *only* in the sections that are concerned precisely with the historical vagaries of theological thinking and expression, that is, in sections 7 and 8 of the earlier version of the chapter, and only after Lonergan has proposed a vision of a new form of theological synthesis that relies on the fruits of biblical exegesis. All other uses of variants of the word "catholicus" in the earlier version refer not to a transcultural intentionality but to the Catholic Church. In sections 7 and 8, which correspond (with a few important differences) to sections 8 and 9 of the later version, Lonergan is presenting in effect a theological understanding of theological history, and *in that context* he uses the word "catholicus" to refer to the transcultural problem and its solution. But in section 4 of the later version, which I am summarizing here, he prescind almost entirely from the historical question and offers an abstract comparison of the symbolic and commonsense categories of scripture with the quasi-systematic (later, "post-systematic") categories of the dogmas. He does this before any detailed treatment is given to history in its significance for systematic theology. The presentation is ahistorical, logical, static, and abstract. This is not to deny that the historical significance of the transcultural problem and its solution are important in the later sections of the 1964 version. But I will argue in a later article that the small differences from the earlier version mask a larger difference that has to do with that importance. And the point that I am making now is that the solution to the transcultural problem in terms of catholic categories is introduced early on in the later version and in a manner that is independent of any discussion of historical contexts. It almost seems to be

a negation of the earlier version's vision of an emerging synthesis based on biblical exegesis and historical scholarship. I do not think it too much to say that there is a residual classicism, not in the point itself that Lonergan is making, but in the way he is making it. In the earlier version historical particularity and difference could be incorporated in a synthetic mode of understanding; in the later version that affirmation seems to be dropped.

Thus while I agree with the basic point that Lonergan is making regarding the accessibility in dogma of the problems for systematic understanding, I would also urge that the affirmations that he makes need delicate nuancing. This material does not appear at all in the earlier version of this chapter, in which Lonergan also anticipated *a more concrete form* of synthetic theological understanding than is found in either dogmatic or systematic theology as these were traditionally (classically) conceived. Again, in that earlier version, his concern was not to come to grips with a logical ideal. It seems clear that there is some connection between the absence in the later version of the material regarding a more concrete theology and the presence in that same version of the position that we are now reviewing. Lonergan has, at least temporarily, dropped any mention of the more concrete form of synthetic understanding to which he alluded in the earlier version, a synthetic understanding rendered possible precisely by advances in exegetical and historical methods. Those methods yield to synthesis as a way is found to move from their results (which often have to do with the "accidentals" of history) to the explanatory understanding of history that would qualify in its own way (a new way) as a dimension of systematic (or at least synthetic) theology. Is it possible, with such an anticipation, that one could turn just as fruitfully to biblical categories as to the post-systematic categories of the dogmas to find the problems that set the agenda for systematic theology? Is it possible that a catholic (small "c") understanding of the symbolic categories of the scriptures is possible? Was Lonergan vaguely anticipating such an affirmation in the earlier version? The only understanding of biblical categories, or of aesthetic and symbolic categories in general, that is acknowledged in this section of the 1964 version is exegetical understanding in the usual meaning of that

term, as a specialization of commonsense understanding, and that type of understanding does not yield explanation or synthesis. For explanation or synthesis one must (according to the 1964 text) move beyond symbolic categories to, for instance, the metaphysical (later called post-systematic¹⁸) categories that are employed in dogmatic statements. The possibility of *resolving symbolic categories into a source in interiority so as to yield explanation* is not alluded to at all, whereas it is at least hinted at in the earlier version.¹⁹ Why should metaphysical categories alone be capable of resolution into transcendental sources? Or, more precisely, why should it be necessary to find the metaphysical equivalents of other categories before these other categories are resolved into their critical grounds?²⁰

Despite these qualifications, however, we must remember that here Lonergan's principal concern is where systematic theology should go in order to find its *problems*. And on this point I have registered a basic agreement with his position. In fact, I have proposed that we take as part of the core statement of systematics a four-point hypothesis that is found later in both versions of Lonergan's Trinitarian systematic theology, a hypothesis that is an attempt at a synthetic understanding precisely of *dogmatic* statements.²¹ It is around that four-point hypothesis, joined to a theory of history, that I propose we construct a systematic synthesis. And

¹⁸*Method in Theology*, 304, 312, 314.

¹⁹My own position on such matters is found in chapters 19 and 20 of *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990). See also "Psychic Conversion and Lonergan's Hermeneutics," in *Lonergan's Hermeneutics: Its Development and Application*, ed. Sean E. McEvenue and Ben F. Meyer (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 161-208, reprinted in Robert M. Doran, *Theology and Culture*, vol. 2 of *Theological Foundations* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995), 439-500.

²⁰On metaphysical equivalence, see *Insight*, 521-33.

²¹See Lonergan, *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica*, 234-35. The hypothesis relates the four divine relations to four created supernatural realities: the *esse secundarium* of the assumed humanity of the incarnate Word (a created participation of paternity), sanctifying grace (a created participation of active spiration), the habit of charity (a created participation of passive spiration), and the light of glory (a created participation of filiation). I regard this hypothesis as a portion of the basic systematic conception, where by "basic systematic conception" I mean what would stand to systematics as the periodic table stands to chemistry. The other component of the basis systematic conception is the theory of history found in Lonergan's analysis of progress, decline, and redemption and in the developments proposed in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*.

so my practice will indicate that I am not departing very widely from Lonergan's own affirmation here, if that affirmation is understood as answering the question, Where does systematic theology most profitably derive its core problems?

But the reference to catholic categories raises a greater difficulty. Lonergan clearly means the categories of Scholastic philosophy and theology, but his own thought on this issue even at the time he wrote this material was more nuanced than some of these statements might lead one to believe. One need only think of the grounding that we find in *Insight* of such Scholastic categories as potency, form, and act, a grounding that is original with Lonergan, but that also makes possible a new and quite contemporary appropriation of these categories within the context of modern science.²² The problem of catholic categories did not go away for Lonergan, but it becomes far more nuanced in the question of a transcultural base in interiority for general and special categories. Categories have a transcultural base to the extent that they are derived proximately from interiorly or religiously differentiated consciousness. As Lonergan in *Insight* is able to derive the principal categories of metaphysics (central and conjugate potency, form, and act) from interiorly differentiated consciousness, and thus to endow these categories with a validity that they might not otherwise have for many a modern mind, so later "for every term and relation there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness."²³ All of this must be kept in mind if we are to give the best possible interpretation to what Lonergan is saying at this point in *De Deo Trino*.

Moreover, Lonergan immediately shows that he understands that the issue is more complex. The systematic theologian cannot always begin from church statements. Scripture contains so many and such great treasures of truth that they are never adequately exhausted ("tot tantosque ... thesauros veritatis ut numquam reapse exauriantur": DB 2314, DS 3886). There is much in scripture that the church has never defined, and it is matter that is not of lesser moment than what has been

²²*Insight*, 456-63.

²³*Method in Theology*, 343.

defined.²⁴ Some mysteries, such as the redemption, are so fully expounded in scripture that there has hardly been a debate about their reality, and so only a few magisterial statements have been made about them, and those rather brief. But other mysteries, such as the Trinity, are expressed more indirectly in scripture and treated in steps, rather than all together and from a single viewpoint. It is these mysteries, Lonergan says, that have aroused wonder, doubts, and disputes, and from the disputes the church has not infrequently reached clear and exact statements. So we have an immediate qualification to the previous answer to this question: whether one should go to scripture or to magisterial statements depends on what one is studying.

However, Lonergan says, when we do go to scripture to learn of the mystery whose understanding we seek, we must not confuse the systematic task with that of biblical theology. If we fall into this confusion, we will never arrive at the goal that is proper to systematic theology. Dogmatic and systematic theologians seek to attain from scripture what would not have to be sought if the matter had been defined, that is, what in itself is clear, that whose meaning can be expressed in catholic categories, what surely has been revealed.²⁵ Technical methods are thus required, methods that arrive not at what is probable or more probable but at the certain. The systematic theologian seeks what regards divine reality. So when he or she investigates the mind of Mark, of Paul, of John, or of any other biblical writer, it is not in order to understand a particular author's mentality, but rather to proceed further, to determine what is clear and certain about God and about divine realities, where such truths are mediated through the particular writings under consideration.²⁶

²⁴*De Deo Trino, Pars Systematica*, 21: "... multa sane sunt in scripturis quae nondum ab ecclesia definita sint; neve haec omnia dicas minoris esse momenti."

²⁵It is a matter for serious question, I believe, whether the scriptural affirmation of the redemption, which is very clear in the sources, can ever be expressed in the catholic (that is, metaphysical) categories that Lonergan is thinking of. Lonergan's own theology of redemption, as presented in thesis 17 of *De Verbo incarnato* (on the Law of the Cross) is not metaphysical but (to use Balthasar's term) dramatic.

²⁶At this point Lonergan adds a paragraph that I will simply translate: "So much, then, for the end. But regarding the means to be employed in pursuit of the end there is required a longer and more difficult disquisition. For in contemporary studies the dogmatic theologian is something of a stumbling block. The character of modern investigations and modern sciences is such that they attend very exactly to positive data

3.3 Other Loci

The third major point in the 1964 version under the question of the relation of systematic understanding to the revealed truth proposed in dogmas is that the divinely revealed mystery is found not only in scripture and the infallible pronouncements of the church but also in other "theological loci" or sources. The systematic theologian must employ all of these to learn the mystery about which understanding is sought. It is doubtful that Lonergan is using the term theological loci in the precise sense that derives from Melchior Cano. It is more likely that he is referring simply to other sources to which the theologian will look in order to reach an understanding of the mysteries: the liturgy, the daily life of Christians, the lives of the saints, and so on. It is even possible that he would include the teaching of other theologians, what later came to be called theological doctrines.²⁷ But his position is that one will be in a better position to avoid misunderstanding and pseudo-systems if one takes one's *fundamental problem* in any treatise from the dogmas of the church and derives connected and consequent problems from the fundamental problem. Then too, one can relegate to subordinate status those problems that arise more from human opinion than from truths revealed by God and so avoid incurring the difficulties treated earlier in the chapter when Lonergan addressed the topic of "the misunderstanding of a system."²⁸

and proceed effectively to promote understanding of the data, but find themselves unequal to the task of determining positively and with any certainty just what is true. Thus what modern methodology omits is what the dogmatic theologian must do. But just how one would be able to do this can be treated neither briefly nor easily. And so I have thought it better to leave this question for another occasion than to treat it here all too quickly."

²⁷Lonergan does not explicitly mention "theological doctrines," that is, the doctrines that have already been proposed by other theologians and that constitute part of one's own doctrinal mind-set. Yet it must be asked whether Lonergan himself really begins his Trinitarian systematics (for example) from dogmatic pronouncements of the church or from his own acceptance of the theological doctrines found in Thomas's Trinitarian systematics, that is, from what is already a systematic understanding of church dogma, just as Thomas began his own Trinitarian systematics with more than an implicit acceptance of what Augustine had worked out at the conclusion of his "way of discovery" in *De trinitate*.

²⁸See my earlier article, "Intelligentia fidei in *De Deo Trino*," 79-80.

4 IS UNDERSTANDING OF THE TRUE ITSELF TRUE?

The third major division of material in the later version's treatment of these issues has to do with the question, How is theological understanding related, not to the antecedent truth that belongs to doctrine, but to the *consequent* truth, that is, to the judgment that will be passed on theological understanding itself? What in itself is neither true nor false nonetheless participates in truth not only "antecedently," insofar as it is understanding of revealed truth, but also "consequently," if in fact it is judged to be a true understanding of a true mystery. This is the only issue treated in the corresponding section of the earlier version, and as we have seen, the first four of ten points devoted to it are identical with the four points that Lonergan presents in the later version in response, not to this question but to the first question treated there, that is, whether theological understanding is true *secundum se*. In the later version, Lonergan treats under twelve points (which do not include the four just mentioned) the issues surrounding the judgment that concerns the truth of theological understanding.

I see no way of proceeding here except to set forth the data first and then to comment on them. So I will list first the twelve points of the 1964 treatment of this third major question in the section, and then I will list points five through ten of the earlier version. Comment will follow this presentation of data. It will be around point ten of the earlier version, which is completely missing from the later version, that the most significant differences occur.

4.1 The Treatment in the Later Version

The first point made in the later version's treatment of the issue is that the truth of theological understanding is not the truth that belongs to *common metaphysical principles* that regard the transcendentals (*ens, unum, verum, bonum*) and that are employed explicitly or implicitly in every human inquiry (for instance, the principles of contradiction, identity, and sufficient reason). These principles articulate the very constitution of human intelligence and rationality. They enunciate the conditions of the possibility of any human knowledge. The theologian necessarily uses

them at least implicitly, like everyone else, for we all necessarily rely on the constitution of the mind that these principles articulate. These principles include everything about everything. Theological understanding, on the other hand, involves some *determination* of these principles, and so the consequent truth of theological understanding is not the same as the truth of these principles. Rather, it has to do with this determination.

Second, the truth of theological understanding is not the truth that proceeds either from grasping the essence of something or from demonstrating a property derived from an essential principle. We are talking about the understanding of divine mystery, and we do not know God immediately by essence but mediately by analogy. Understanding divine mystery is not grasping the divine essence or deriving anything from it.

Third, the truth of theological understanding is different from the truth attained in natural theology (philosophy of God). In fact, three types of theological knowledge can be distinguished. What natural reason conceives of God and demonstrates about God by analogy from creatures is something quite different from what cannot be known by us unless it is divinely revealed and received by faith. But in addition to both of these, there is what reason illumined by faith comes to understand when it inquires about mysteries in the strict sense. This is something different from either of the first two types of theological knowledge. While it involves analogies, the analogies are not at all of the same order as those involved in the natural knowledge of God.²⁹

Fourth, the truth of theological understanding is different from the antecedent truth that is understood. The latter is the divine mystery itself

²⁹This seems to be all that Lonergan says at this point regarding the relation between systematics and philosophy of God. In *Method in Theology* and more completely in *Philosophy of God, and Theology*, he will offer a far more complex proposal regarding the role of philosophy of God *within* systematics. Still, the later methodological objectification of this relation specifies a set of dynamics always operative in his "practice" as a systematic theologian. Thus, for instance, *Philosophy of God, and Theology* names a set of relationships that can already be found in the *pars systematica* of *De Deo Trino*. For even later thoughts on a "new" natural theology, see Bernard Lonergan, "The Scope of Renewal," in *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 16, 2 (1998) at 91, 98-101. It remains to be seen what this late proposal means for systematics, but this is not the place to explore that question.

revealed by God and received in faith. As such it is what we are seeking to understand. The consequent truth is the truth of that understanding. If the antecedent truth is dogma, it is assigned the theological "notes" *fide divina et forte etiam catholica* (of divine and Catholic faith), while the consequent truth more often than not is no more than probable, the best available understanding. Moreover, the object of divine faith does not change in the course of time;³⁰ dogmatic declarations propose only the same truth understood in the same sense;³¹ but theological understanding, knowledge, and wisdom concerning the doctrine of the faith grow and advance in individuals and in all, in the single person as well as in the whole church, according to the degree proper to each age and each time.³² In asking about the consequent truth of theological understanding, we are asking about the truth of this growing understanding.

Fifth, all the characteristics of a hypothesis are verified in theological understanding, and so the consequent truth of theological understanding is *per se* (*quod ex ipsa rei natura oritur*) the truth that belongs to a hypothesis. The characteristics of a hypothesis are the following:

1. A hypothesis is a conceptual and verbal expression proceeding from an act of understanding and enunciating a principle.
2. It solves some problem.
3. In itself it is neither true nor false, but it can be true.
4. It is more probable the more problems it solves virtually.
5. It attains more to certitude the more every other way of solving the same problems as well or better is excluded.

When one attains the theological understanding praised by the First Vatican Council, all the characteristics of a hypothesis are present in one's understanding:

³⁰DB 1800, DS 3020.

³¹DB 1792, 1800, 2314; DS 3011, 3020, 3886.

³²DB 1800, DS 3020. Lonergan here uses the order of the terms found in the council document: *intelligentia, scientia, sapientia*. For the issue around his use of these terms earlier in the chapter, see Doran, "Intelligentia Fidei in *De Deo Trino*."

1. There proceeds from such understanding an inner and an outer word, a conceptual and a linguistic expression.

2. One is speaking of the same things concerning which earlier one had inquired seriously, devoutly, moderately; but before one reached understanding one spoke of a problem to be solved, whereas now that understanding has been reached one is speaking of a problem that has been solved.

3. Whoever has some understanding of divinely revealed mystery understands truth (antecedent truth), but that understanding is in itself neither true nor false; it pertains to the "first operation," the operation concerned with the question, *Quid sit?* The second operation, concerned with the question, *An sit?* follows, and truth is formally attained only in the second operation. But this understanding *can* be true. In the subsequent operation one *can* respond affirmatively to the question, *An sit?* One can affirm that one's systematic understanding of doctrine is itself true.

4. If one is seeking a most fruitful understanding and finds it, one solves one problem not in such a way that the solution is sterile and without ulterior fruit, but in such a way that the direct solution of one problem is also the virtual solution of others. The more numerous the connected and consequent problems for understanding that are resolved, the more probable is one's hypothesis.³³

5. This affirmative response gets closer to certitude the more every other way to understanding is excluded. Theological understanding, then, clearly is hypothetical.

Sixth, as the First Vatican Council teaches, understanding, knowledge, and wisdom grow and develop over time.³⁴ There is a historical series of discoveries. The fruitfulness of theological understanding of the mysteries of faith is, then, twofold: not only are many problems solved as this understanding grows but also earlier and less perfect stages prepare, promise, and in some way even contain later developments.

³³Consider the synthetic nature of the four-point hypothesis mentioned above.

³⁴Again, note the order in which these virtues are mentioned.

It is in connection with this point that we will find what for our purposes are the most important differences between this section of the 1964 text and the corresponding material in the earlier version. Recall that the present section of the 1964 text was not in the earlier version. A first observation is that this sixth note may be related to a relocation of the “via historica” in later sections of the chapter. In the earlier version the “via historica” was one of the ways to the goal of systematic understanding. In the later version it is *prior* to the two procedures (analytic and synthetic, or dogmatic and systematic) that lead to the strictly theological act of systematic understanding. But even more significant is the difference in the way in which earlier and later stages in theological understanding are discussed. Here they are developments in *intelligentia*, *scientia*, and *sapientia*, that is, in the three intellectual virtues that in my previous article I argued were given a meaning in this text that was heavily influenced by Lonergan’s attempts to relate his thought on method to contemporary developments in logic. Thus earlier and later stages in theological understanding are limited to developments in *systematic theology as the latter has traditionally been understood*. But as we will see, the corresponding section of the earlier version speaks of a *new* kind of synthesis possible in our time, a synthesis that is beyond both dogmatics and systematics as these have been traditionally understood, and that is both more concrete and more comprehensive than either of these, even as it remains an understanding of the same divine mystery. For some reason this discussion is eliminated entirely from the 1964 version of this chapter.

In the 1964 text, then, with its focus on the developments that have occurred and can occur with systematics as this has traditionally been conceived, Lonergan treats earlier and later stages in terms of (1) the object understood, (2) the analogy employed to understand the object, and (3) the perfection achieved in the understanding itself.

1. The object that is understood is always the same. Earlier and later stages agree *in eodem genere, eodem dogmate, eodem sensu, eademque*

sententia.³⁵ It is always the same divinely revealed mysteries that theologians are seeking to understand.

2. But there are developments in the analogies employed to understand the mystery. Theology proceeds from a multiplicity of analogies to an agreement that one analogy is better than the rest or perhaps even that it is the only satisfactory analogy. First many different ways are tried, then the agreement grows that perhaps a certain analogy is to be preferred to others, and finally understanding advances as this analogy is proposed more profoundly and more exactly.³⁶

3. The growth that the First Vatican Council spoke of affects not only *understanding* as theologians penetrate the principle more fully and more profoundly but also the subsequent *knowledge* that draws conclusions from the principle and the *wisdom* that orders the totality of the subject matter. Thus, to use Lonergan's example, Augustine and Aquinas tried to understand the same Trinitarian dogma, and they employed essentially the same psychological analogy. But Augustine expressed the analogy psychologically (and, we might add, only at the conclusion of the lengthy *De trinitate*), while Aquinas was able to express it both psychologically and metaphysically (and at the very beginning of the treatment of trinitarian theology, in question 27 of the *prima pars* of the *Summa theologiae*). To this extent at least in the work of Aquinas there is a fuller understanding of the principle, a broader ordering through wisdom, and

³⁵Translated (from Vincent of Lerins) in the Roman Liturgy of the Hours for Friday of the twenty-seventh week in ordinary time: "along its own line of development, that is, with the same doctrine, the same meaning, and the same import." In *Method in Theology*, 323, there is a suggestion that the last three of these be translated "the same dogma, the same meaning, the same pronouncement."

³⁶This presupposes, of course, that theology is developing. Earlier in the chapter, Lonergan treated the alternative possibility: genuine advances in analogical understanding are not understood by later generations; the misunderstanding of a system leads to its rejection; and, finally, the rejection of the system leads to a rejection of the dogmatic truths that the system was attempting to understand. In "*Intelligentia Fidei in De Deo Trino*" I mentioned how Karl Rahner's failure to understand the Thomist *emanatio intelligibilis* was followed by efforts based in Rahner (though very much against his own intentions) to reduce the "immanent Trinity" to the "economic Trinity," and finally by denials that there is any immanent Trinity to be understood. But I must also stress that one who wishes to maintain the continuing vitality of the psychological analogy has to be prepared to show its relevance to contemporary issues. That will demand some serious work.

a more exact deduction of conclusions. And a similar point may be made, I believe, in comparing Lonergan with Aquinas (though Lonergan might not have made the claims for himself that I am making for him here). There are advances in Lonergan's employment of what is essentially the same analogy, since it proceeds from an explanatory understanding of interiority, from an interiorly differentiated consciousness that is not to be found as such in Aquinas. Moreover, Lonergan's later thinking moved to yet more profound levels of understanding: his later use of what essentially is still the same analogy is "from above," and as such is more satisfactory and more faithful to biblical data than the uses "from below" that are found in Augustine, Aquinas, and even the earlier work of Lonergan himself. But this is an area of development that Lonergan left for others to explore.

I will return to this material later, when discussing the corresponding section in the earlier version.

Lonergan's seventh point is that no limit is to be placed on the increasing and advancing understanding, knowledge, and wisdom.³⁷ Various possible sources of such limitation are considered, and all are ruled out. (1) The *object* to be understood certainly imposes no limit, since a divine mystery reveals the infinite. (2) The *analogy* that one employs is not a source of limitation. Even if we can show that only one analogy will do, still that analogy is derived from what reason knows naturally, and reason can always understand natural realities more perfectly. (3) No limit is placed on theological understanding by the *sources*, the fonts of revelation, since they contain so many and such great treasures of truth that they will never be exhausted. (4) No limit is imposed by *wisdom* as it organizes the structure of theological thought, since the more reason penetrates what is natural and analogous, and the more the study of the sources lays open their treasures, to that extent growing and advancing wisdom has more material that can be ordered. And (5) no limit accrues from theological *understanding and knowledge*. Where wisdom poses a problem to understanding, reason illumined by faith, when it inquires

³⁷And so on systematic theology as traditionally understood. Again, no mention is made of the new, more concrete, and more comprehensive synthesis of which the earlier version spoke.

seriously, devoutly, and moderately, can hope to reach some understanding by God's grace; and where the understanding of the principle is attained, there spontaneously follows a knowledge of conclusions. If I may employ language that I have used in expressing my own anticipations,³⁸ there is in principle no reason not to expect an ongoing genetic sequence of systematic theologies.

Eighth, besides growing and advancing understanding, there is also poor understanding, with the consequences we have seen: pseudo-problems and pseudo-systems.

Ninth, the judgment on the consequent truth of theological understanding proceeds chiefly from three sources:

1. We can judge this consequent truth by asking, What per se flows from this theological understanding? Does it solve a particular problem? Is this problem a divine mystery that can be understood by us in this life mediately, imperfectly, analogically, obscurely? Is this a fruitful understanding of the mystery, one that virtually solves other connected problems? Is there another analogy that resolves the problems better or just as well, or is there no other analogy that can be known by us in this life that does the job this well?

2. We can appeal to historical comparisons. Was the same problem considered earlier? Was it considered directly or indirectly, in the same or in another complex of problems, with the same or another analogy? If the analogy is basically the same, is it now being penetrated more profoundly? Have new aspects been added because of advances in the natural and human sciences or in, for example, scriptural, conciliar, patristic, and medieval studies? Does the understanding of the principle truly ground the deduction of the other conclusions throughout the rest of the work? Are there now more and fuller deductions than before? Is there attained a better single insight into and grasp of the whole subject matter? Can there now be grasped further problems that both invite and demand further advance in understanding, knowledge, and wisdom?

³⁸See Doran, "Bernard Lonergan and the Functions of Systematic Theology" (see note 16). See also Robert M. Doran, "System and History: The Challenge to Catholic Systematic Theology," *Theological Studies* 60, 4 (1999): 652-78.

3. We can consider the pseudo-problems and pseudo-systems that have arisen and been promulgated in the area under investigation and that perhaps still influence theological thought. Are all the questions that were ever raised about the issue still being given equal treatment, or is there now possible a selection so that some are treated as principal issues and others as annexed questions while still others are finally put to rest? Does the selection simply follow common use, or is it determined by some principle? The principle should be the fact that an understanding of a divinely revealed mystery is being sought. For then problems arising from poor understanding will be treated only to the extent that impediments to understanding the mystery need to be removed.

Lonergan is providing criteria by which certain theological formulations can be given doctrinal status, that is, criteria for the establishment of theological doctrines. I have suggested in addition that this theological understanding can be granted something of a doctrinal status for the systematic theologian, that is, the status of theological *doctrine*, if it brings closure to a theological debate, if it provides the only really satisfactory analogy for understanding a divine mystery, or if it articulates an inevitable practical conclusion or implication of the gospel of God in Christ Jesus.³⁹

Tenth, we can compare the judgment on theological understanding with other theological judgments. Four considerations are listed here:

1. This judgment differs from all theological conclusions. Such conclusions are easy: given the premises, the conclusion either follows necessarily or it does not; if it does not, it is invalid; if it does, it is no less true than the premises. But a judgment about theological understanding is extremely difficult. Such understanding treats a principle, not a conclusion. The principle may enunciate a possible hypothesis; the

³⁹Each of the three examples of "theological doctrines" that I discuss in the article "Bernard Lonergan and the Functions of Systematic Theology" meets one of these criteria. The theological doctrine of Aquinas on operative grace, as interpreted by Lonergan, brings a closure to the *de auxiliis* debate. The psychological analogy is the best analogy for understanding Trinitarian processions. And the preferential option for the poor is an inevitable practical consequence of the gospel.

hypothesis may be more or less probable; at the very least it may be a step along the way that alone leads to the kind of understanding that the First Vatican Council praises. Part of the *habitus* of systematic theology is the facility to discriminate the weight of various theological hypotheses.

2. A judgment about systematic theological understanding differs from what can be known about God through the mediation of creatures by the natural light of reason. The difference here has to do with both the problem and the solution. It has to do with the problem: the problem for theological understanding arises solely from what has been revealed; eliminate revelation, and there are no problems regarding the triune God, the incarnate Word, the grace of Christ, the sacraments, and so on. And it has to do with the solution: philosophical knowledge of God neither introduces nor systematically develops hypothetical and internally obscure analogies; what it affirms to be in God analogously it also demonstrates, something that systematic theological understanding does not even begin to do. Thus philosophical knowledge of God demonstrates that God is conscious, but it cannot demonstrate that God is dynamically conscious in the sense that a divine Word proceeds from a divine *Dicere* or that *Amor* proceeds from the divine *Dicere* and the divine *Verbum*.⁴⁰ There is no valid reason for the philosopher as such to suppose that this is the case. The systematic theologian, on the other hand, presupposes, on dogmatic grounds, that God is dynamically conscious in precisely this fashion, along the lines of the intelligible emanations of word from insight and of the act of love from insight and word together. The reason he or she presupposes this is not that it can be demonstrated, or even that it can be clearly understood — it cannot be. The reason rather is simply that one finds in this obscure element, in the analogy of intelligible emanations, the root of all the other obscure matters that one believes must be affirmed about the triune God. Without this one principle, the other matters cannot be understood; with it, some very imperfect, analogical, obscure, and gradually developing understanding becomes possible. Understanding this principle, the analogy of intelligible emanations, does not presuppose understanding anything else but rather is essential if we are to understand anything else. Understand this, and the rest of a systematic theological

⁴⁰For details, see *Verbum*, 201-204.

treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity tumbles out; neglect it, or fail to understand it, and you are on the way to the effects that Lonergan speaks about when he treats what happens when a system is poorly understood.

3. The judgment on theological understanding differs from all dogmatic determinations, not with respect to the problem but with respect to the solution. There is no difference in the problem: both dogmatics and systematics posit questions that disappear with the elimination of revelation, questions that regard divine realities themselves. But there is a difference in the solution: dogmatic determination occurs through a revealed truth or at times through a naturally known truth,⁴¹ while theological understanding adds a further hypothetical element which the sources do not contain with any certainty and which reason cannot demonstrate.

4. We can relate the dogmatic question and the systematic question not only to one another but also to the biblical question.⁴² The dogmatic question and the theological question both differ from the biblical question; they regard divine realities themselves, not the mind of an author regarding divine realities. The biblical exegete investigates the ways in which, for example, various biblical authors used the term "Son of God." The doctrinal question asks about the reality itself of Jesus of Nazareth. And systematic answers differ even from dogmatic solutions. For example, the doctrine, in stating that the Son is not made but begotten, is introducing nothing hypothetical but is gathering, pondering, affirming what has been revealed. But the systematic question asks, What kind of generation is involved? What kind of begetting can there be in God? How can the affirmation that the Son is begotten be true? Many other questions are posited virtually with the explicit positing of this question. They do

⁴¹Thus Lonergan in *De Deo Trino*. In *Method in Theology* he limits dogmatic determinations, at least in fact and probably in principle, to mysteries that are so hidden in God that they could not be known at all were they not revealed. And he bases this limitation on his exegesis of the texts of the First Vatican Council regarding dogma. In our age of "creeping infallibility" it becomes clear how immensely salutary this limitation is.

⁴²This type of relation would become in *Method in Theology* the distinction of two phases: doctrines and systematics belong to the second phase, the phase of direct discourse, whereas biblical interpretation belongs to the first phase, where investigators are concerned to relate the views of others.

not all immediately come to mind, of course, but they are added in the course of time. The initial problem cannot be solved until one thinks out clearly and distinctly the type of generation that is completely singular and completely unknown to us from any other source. This is a problem, the answer is a hypothesis, and from the hypothesis as from a principle many other things flow. Some of them are matters of faith, some are matters concluded from faith, and some are simply matters that are not demonstrably contradictory to reason. Thus it is that the hypothesis becomes a theory that is verified in many ways.

In the eleventh place, Lonergan insists that so-called conclusions theology not be regarded as constituting the structure of systematic theology. Conclusions theology distinguishes theology both from reason and from faith. It allows theology no principles except those that can be derived either from reason or from faith. It lets theology be only about conclusions from these principles. And it insists that these conclusions are either pure (where both premises are from faith) or mixed (where one principle is from faith and one from reason).

The first reason for abandoning such a notion of theology is that it is not what Vatican I spoke of when it spoke of theological understanding. The Council did not say that reason illumined by faith, when it assumes premises from the founts of revelation and perhaps joins to them another principle from reason, arrives at a most certain conclusion by observing the laws of logic. It said rather that reason illumined by faith, when it inquires reverently, diligently, and modestly, achieves by God's grace a very fruitful understanding of the mysteries, both by analogy with what is naturally known and by the connection of the mysteries with one another and with our last end. It is one thing to inquire so as to understand, and it is quite something else to grasp something in such a way as to be able to demonstrate conclusions. It is one thing to seek an analogy for an imperfect understanding of mystery, and it is quite something else to pluck premises from scripture and reason. It is one thing to expect understanding by God's grace, and it is quite something else to attain certitude by observing accurately the rules of logic. The council's intention is not obscure: before it condemned semirationalism,⁴³ it wished to

⁴³DB 1816, DS 3041.

present positive Catholic doctrine, and so it distinguished two orders of knowledge⁴⁴ and taught the part of reason in cultivating supernatural truth.⁴⁵ Nor is it obscure how the understanding of these mysteries is related to pure and mixed conclusions. When deductions are made from the revealed mysteries themselves, one is simply stating the *problems* more clearly and more distinctly. The more numerous and more exact are such deductions, the more numerous and more difficult are the problems that systematic theological understanding must tackle. Since the problems are manifested because the premises narrate divine mysteries, they cannot be resolved unless some understanding of the mysteries is attained. When this understanding is attained by analogy with what is naturally known, a hypothetical element is introduced. Even if the same analogy is materially pointed to, insinuated, suggested, even clearly indicated, in the sources, it is not formally shown to have been there with all its systematic implications.

Nonetheless, the deductions that enable the problems to be exhibited more clearly and distinctly are a step toward the theological understanding that is desired. For such conclusions provide, not the understanding of the mysteries, but one or other element that will enable us to achieve such understanding. But they do this *by exhibiting the problem itself more clearly and more exactly*, not by providing a solution to it. One of the clearest examples one could ask for of this is presented in the second chapter of *De Deo Trino, Pars systematica*. Lonergan begins the first assertion of his systematic treatment of the Trinity in this work – the treatment is a good deal more complex than in the earlier version – by stating that the divine processions must be *per modum operati*. That is, divine procession is not to be conceived at all along the lines of the emergence of the act of understanding from inquiry (*processio operationis*): that emergence is an emergence of act from potency. Nor is it to be conceived as *processio operati*, such as the procession of inner word from understanding in human dynamic consciousness, since such a procession is the emergence of act from act, and in God there is only one infinite act. But it is to be conceived as an internal procession in which the

⁴⁴DB 1795, DS 3015

⁴⁵DB 1796, DS 3016.

originating act and the originated act, while really distinct, are distinct not absolutely (there is only one God) but by relation (*secundum esse relativum*): as the Council of Florence says, in God *omniaque sunt unum, ubi non obviat relationis oppositio* (all things are one unless the opposition of relation dictates otherwise).⁴⁶ This conclusion, that divine processions are *per modum operati*, is, Lonergan says, a strict deduction from the truths of faith through notions and metaphysical principles known to all of us. As such it is theologically certain. It is a perfect example of what he means by a theological conclusion. But that conclusion is far from providing the *hypothetical understanding of the mystery that the systematic theologian seeks*; it provides only a translation of the category "divine procession" into the systematic category *per modum operati* that will enable the analogy of intelligible emanations, in which the understanding consists, to be elaborated. The statement that divine procession is *per modum operati* (along the lines of a *processio operati*) provides no more theological understanding than the assertion that there are processions in the one infinite divine act. What it does provide – and this it does precisely as a conclusion strictly deduced from the mysteries of faith – is the transposition of the category of "divine procession" into a category that will enable the analogy to be constructed.⁴⁷

So it is not true that theology is simply about pure and mixed conclusions. From the revealed mysteries there logically follows the clear statement of the problems whose solution will occur only through understanding the mysteries. And when the solution introduces a hypothetical element, there is posited a properly theological principle that is neither from faith alone nor from reason alone but from reason enlightened by faith and inquiring reverently, diligently, and modestly. For example, "The divine processions, which are *per modum operati*, are

⁴⁶DB 703, DS 1330.

⁴⁷Actually, the transposition is more complicated. The doctrine itself ("God from God") provides a natural and external determination of the procession. The metaphysical transposition to *per modum operati* offers an external and metaphysical determination. And this determination enables us to see how an analogy is possible that provides a *natural and internal determination* ("secundum emanationem intelligibilem"). But these are details for systematic Trinitarian theology itself.

in some measure understood on the basis of a likeness to intelligible emanation" — part of Lonergan's first assertion.⁴⁸ Concluding from what is believed that the processions must be *per modum operati* enables one to conceive them by analogy with the intelligible emanations in human consciousness of word from insight and of the act of love from insight and word. Theological conclusions clarify the problem so that one may more readily proceed to theological understanding, but the conclusions do not themselves yield that understanding.

"Conclusions theology," the assumption that systematic theology consists only in drawing conclusions from the mysteries, has caused a great deal of harm. First, it has fostered a tendency to impose later systematic discoveries on earlier authors. If one loves the systematic yet knows no other method of proof than deduction from the sources, one tends to find one's own systematics already at work in scripture or in the Fathers or in the medieval authors. Second, since not all systematic theologians are of one mind and heart, they end up, as a group, imposing on the sources not one system but many different systems. Third, since the true criterion of a valid system is not deduction from sources, conclusions theology cannot refute poor systems and offer serious arguments for better ones. Fourth, exegetes and historians regard theologians who deduce systems from their sources as incompetent in exegetical, patristic, medieval, and other historical matters. Fifth, if exegetes and historians know no other argument for a system except deduction from the fonts of revelation, they will call every system vain speculation. But if the view that systematic theology is only about pure and mixed conclusions could be abandoned, systematic and positive theology could be of mutual aid rather than at odds with one another. Understanding a doctrine and understanding the history of a doctrine are closely related to one another. When the doctrine is the same, and when understanding, knowledge, and wisdom regarding it grow, then positive and systematic theologians have no reason to oppose each other. What now is understood by the systematic theologian was already being prepared in the course of history, and so by understanding history the systematic theologian acquires full

⁴⁸"Processiones divinae, quae sunt per modum operati, aliquatenus intelliguntur secundum similitudinem emanationis intelligibilis." Lonergan, *De Deo Trino*, 2 75.

and exact understanding of his or her own task. From understanding earlier solutions the positive theologian can more clearly grasp and more confidently judge what the earlier states of affairs were and in what direction they were headed.

In the twelfth place, there are two supreme criteria of the truth of theological understanding that have yet to be mentioned. One of them regards human nature, and the other the divine source of revelation.

Human nature, however, presents a problem. Our immersion in the sensible creates for us a peculiar kind of problem. The questions and solutions expounded in the schools lie beyond the horizon of one who has not undergone something of an intellectual conversion, and so they appear to be distant from reality, from serious living, from usefulness. We insist that what we want and need is something completely different from what we hear the theologians teaching. It is our existential problem that we need to emerge from the sensible so as not only to say but also to agree and, as it were, *even to feel that the real is made manifest not through data but through truths*. But this existential problem can be transferred to or projected upon the objective field. Then it is supposed that what is at issue is not the intellectual conversion of the subject but the very subject matter of theology. Then there has begun a most serious deviation, one that very easily will find almost innumerable followers (as any professor of serious systematic theology knows).

With regard to the divine source of revelation, the meaning of any truth is to be measured by the understanding of the one from whom that truth proceeds. Since a revealed truth proceeds from divine understanding itself, its meaning is to be measured only by divine understanding. The Catholic theologian believes that God has entrusted divine revelation to the church, and that the church is charged with the mission of guarding it faithfully and declaring it infallibly. And this means that the theologian cannot put an ultimate and absolute trust solely in his or her own intelligence and wisdom but must always acknowledge that the meaning both of the revealed truth and of the sacred dogmas is to be determined solely by the teaching authority of the church.⁴⁹

⁴⁹DB 1788, 1800, 1818 (DS 3007, 3020, 3043).

4.2 *The Treatment in the Earlier Version*

In the earlier version, as we have seen, the first four points that are given in the third section (which corresponds to section 4 in the later version) are identically the four points that in the later version are listed in response to the first question, Is theological understanding true in itself? Those points, again, are: first, in itself theological understanding is neither true nor false; second, the inner word in which this understanding is expressed is neither true nor false; third, the outer words expressing theological understanding are in themselves neither true nor false; and fourth, as theological understanding itself is imperfect, analogical, and obscure, so the consequent inner word and outer words are imperfectly, analogically, and obscurely understood.

The fifth point excludes from theological understanding some other forms of truth, and so concludes to the only possibility that is left. What flows from theological understanding as such is neither a self-evident truth nor a mediate truth certainly demonstrated from intrinsic reasons nor a hypothesis whose intrinsic possibility is clearly grasped. If these are all ruled out, then theological understanding can yield only a hypothesis the very intrinsic possibility of which is imperfectly, analogically, and obscurely conjectured.

Let us investigate in greater detail each of the forms of truth that are excluded:

1. Theological understanding cannot involve a truth that is self-evident or that is expressed in analytic principles.⁵⁰ Self-evident truths and analytic principles are absolutely certain, and they admit no development, for they issue from an understanding that is complete, clear, and proportioned to what is being understood. Theological understanding, on the other hand, is imperfect, analogical, obscure, and gradually evolving.

⁵⁰Lonergan offers a thorough treatment of analytic principles in chapter 10 of *Insight* and again in chapter 3 of *Phenomenology and Logic* (Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 18). "By an analytic principle is meant an analytic proposition of which the partial terms are existential; further, the partial terms of an analytic proposition are existential if they occur in their defined sense in judgments of fact, such as the concrete judgment of fact or the definitively established empirical generalization." *Insight*, 331.

2. Theological understanding also cannot result in demonstrations that proceed with certitude from intrinsic reasons or causes or immanent intelligibilities. The force of a syllogism is extensive, not intensive. That is, what is known through the premises is extended to the conclusions, but the conclusion always has the force of the weaker premise. Since theological understanding cannot found premises that are self-evident for our knowledge, it cannot ground conclusions that can be certainly demonstrated from intrinsic reasons or causes.

3. Theological understanding cannot lead to hypotheses whose intrinsic possibility can be clearly and perfectly grasped. A hypothesis is a simple inner word in which the content of a direct insight is uttered. The inner word proceeding from theological understanding cannot itself be other than imperfectly, analogically, and obscurely understood, because the understanding itself can be no more than imperfect, analogical, and obscure. Thus the intrinsic possibility of what is understood in this way cannot be grasped perfectly and clearly.

Again, once these have been ruled out, the only possibility that remains is that theological understanding can yield only a hypothesis the very intrinsic possibility of which is imperfectly, analogically, and obscurely conjectured.

In the sixth point of the earlier version's treatment of this question, Lonergan offers some suggestions regarding criteria that must be met if the theologian is to grant something of a truth status to a particular systematic proposal. These are quite different from the considerations that in 1964 were listed under the ninth point in Lonergan's treatment of these same issues.⁵¹

Thus, theological understanding *can* acquire truthfulness from other sources, and this in three ways. First, there is a broad basis and starting point for theological understanding in naturally known truths about God and about other things in relation to God. But this basis is incomplete and does not include within itself any of the truths that we believe with supernatural faith, and so it is by no means sufficient. The best it can do is

⁵¹See earlier, pp. 57-58.

support and reinforce the truth of strictly theological understanding.⁵² Second, the fonts of revelation and their infallible interpretations contain many certain truths about God and about other things in relation to God. From these truths taken as premises, it can be determined with certitude or at least with probability whether the *ratio veri*, the formality "true," can be conceded to a given theological hypothesis. Third, from theological hypotheses deductions can be made, and the more fully and accurately the conclusions of such deductions agree with what we believe or know from other sources, the more probable is the hypothesis. These are ways of ascertaining the likelihood that one's theological hypothesis may be on target.

Seventh, there can be progress from the fragility of hypothesis to the dignity of theory if several conditions are met: first, if theological understanding attains a synthesis in which other revealed truths are understood together; second, if this synthetic understanding can be expressed through an integral system; third, if the system can be derived in part from what can be naturally known, and at the same time if it can agree with supernaturally known truths; and fourth, if it receives the approval or even the mandate of the teaching church.

Eighth, the truth of any system is derivative and not equally certain in all its parts, and so we must distinguish between what is revealed and believed by divine faith, what is defined by the church and believed by Catholic faith, and what is accepted by theologians with certain qualifications.

Ninth, the meaning of any truth is measured by the intelligence from which that truth proceeds. Revealed truth is measured by the divine intelligence alone from which it proceeds. No theological system determines the meaning of revealed truth and of sacred dogma. That, says Lonergan, is the responsibility entrusted to the church's own teaching authority.

We come, finally, to the tenth point. The major differences between the two texts in their treatment of the issue of the truth of theological understanding is that the later version eliminates much that Lonergan

⁵²As we stated above, the relations between philosophy of God and systematics are presented in much richer detail in Lonergan's later work.

said in this tenth point of the earlier treatment. The focus of the tenth point is on the assertion that there is no contradiction in the fact that theological understanding, knowledge, and wisdom can increase while the sense of revealed truth remains the same, dogma remains the same, and the meaning of the faith remains the same. An increase of theological understanding, knowledge, and wisdom consists not in the fact that by means of increasingly probable theories we draw closer to a hitherto unknown truth, but rather in the fact that the same truth, which has always been believed, becomes more and more comprehensively known, understood, appreciated. The variation is not in the object that is understood but in the manner of understanding. Those who progress in the understanding of revealed truths understand not one thing now, and then another, but the same thing ever more comprehensively. The same object, understood in the same sense, can be understood in a different manner.

The difference between the two texts lies not, of course, in any later denial of this point, but rather in the earlier treatment's inclusion of one particular manner of understanding the meaning of revealed truth that is not even alluded to in the later version. More precisely, in the earlier version Lonergan gives four examples of the manner in which theological understanding, knowledge, and wisdom can increase even as the meaning that one understands remains the same, and the fourth of these is not mentioned at all in the 1964 version's treatment of the growth of understanding, knowledge, and wisdom; it is not featured there as one of the ways in which that growth can occur. Moreover, while it will resurface to a certain extent in notes that Lonergan wrote as he prepared to write *Method in Theology*, it does not appear as such in that book. Yet I have to ask whether it remained intrinsic to Lonergan's ultimate systematic goal, even if he never found the adequate means to express it in his later writings.⁵³

⁵³The paragraphs that outline these four ways of understanding appear in smaller type in Lonergan's text, and so perhaps may be more tentative or not central to his argument. But perhaps they are in smaller type simply because they provide examples of the point he is making, namely, that progress in understanding revealed truth does not mean understanding different things but rather understanding the same thing ever more comprehensively ("... qui in revelatis veris intelligendis proficiunt, non aliud et aliud sed idem magis magisque comprehensive intelligunt").

In addition, this section, which was dropped in 1964 to be replaced there by the section on the problem or question, treats four manners in which theological understanding, knowledge, and wisdom, *mentioned in that order*, can grow. I argued in the previous article in this series that the 1964 treatment, in the new section 3, of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge (in that revised order) was forced and artificial, a contrivance developed in order to address logical issues that were very much on his mind at the time. Now I am asking whether the section of *Divinarum Personarum* that we are discussing, a section in which the same three qualities are treated in a manner that accords more clearly with the meaning of Vatican I, should be regarded as a more satisfactory presentation of this material than what replaced it in 1964. With that question I am also bringing to center stage the historical emphases that appear in a remarkably provocative fashion in the fourth of the examples that Lonergan presents at this point.

The issue, then, is: How does theological understanding grow? One answer is presented in *Divinarum Personarum*, and another in *De Deo Trino*. Are they compatible or mutually exclusive? Why did the presentation change? These are the questions.

In *Divinarum Personarum* we are asked first to consider someone who reads scripture and correctly understands its individual statements. Such a person understands many things correctly, but each of them separately, and so lacks comprehensive understanding.

We are asked to consider next someone who reads scripture and correctly understands individual statements, but who also compares texts, prescind from accidentals, and finds over time that the same thing is being said in many places and in many different ways. Such a person is moving toward dogmatic apprehension. Then if one goes on to conceive this identity of meaning in such a way as to express it in technical terms, one is performing the role of the dogmatic theologian. The same truth as that found in scripture is being expressed; it is understood in the same sense; but it is understood in a different manner. One is prescinding from the accidentals: who is speaking, with whom the speaker is conversing, on what occasion, in what circumstances, with what intention. One is prescinding from the actions that are narrated and from the images,

figures, or parables that are used to convey a meaning. One is prescinding from the emotions, sentiments, and affections aroused. One is attending only to the essentials, but whereas in the first example one used biblical words and concepts to express these, now one is using new and more technical terms, more remote but perhaps also more essential concepts. One is moving from commonsense apprehension to at least a tincture of systematic or technical meaning.

Third, one can go deeper. One can grasp revealed truths in their inner coherence. The technical dogmatic exegesis⁵⁴ that constituted the second step, where scriptural truth is affirmed in concepts that are pertinent to all of biblical revelation, here gives way to systematic understanding. One who grasps the essentials of what is said in scripture can provide a technical dogmatic exegesis. Such a one enters on the way of "dogmatics." But dogmatics is also the discovery of theological *problems*, that is, of problems that give rise to further questions for understanding. One who seeks that coherent and synthetic understanding of what scripture teaches to be true has entered on the way of systematic theology. God is one, but God is also three. Christ is God, but Christ is also human. All depends on the gratuitous will of God, and yet our own merits will determine our reward. How are such affirmations to be understood? Something new is being demanded at this point, something beyond dogmatic grasp and affirmation of common assertions. A new kind of understanding is being called for, beyond the type of exegesis that yields dogmatic comprehension. Again, the person who understands the core meanings of what is said in scripture is engaged in technical dogmatic exegesis and is finding theological problems, but only the one who attempts to answer the questions raised *by these problems* is doing systematic theology.

Still, although a new kind of understanding occurs at this point, it is still an understanding of the same revealed truth. Theological understanding does not change the meaning of revealed truth. Rather, the revealed truth, understood in the same sense, is grasped more clearly,

⁵⁴Loneragan refers to this exegesis as "systematic exegesis," but to prevent confusing it with "systematic theology," I have adopted the phrase "technical dogmatic exegesis."

more fully, and more systematically. Systematic theology, in the sense that Lonergan intends when he writes of systematics, has begun.

Now, to this point Lonergan is talking simply about the systematics whose methodological prescriptions he is attempting to uncover in the chapter under investigation. In the fourth step, however, he suggests something further, but mentions it only by way of anticipating a development that we may expect to occur. This is the step that has become so important in my own considerations. One can go deeper still, Lonergan says, and take a new step in comprehension. Here we meet head-on one of Lonergan's clearest statements of some of the problems that can be summed up in the expression "system and history."

Thus, besides the technical dogmatic exegesis of step 2 that leads to doctrines (and we might add, besides the exegetical and historical work that qualify as what later would be the functional specialties of interpretation and history), there is the possibility of a *historical exegesis that includes the accidentals in a synthetic manner*. The historical exegesis that Lonergan speaks of here is beyond the work later spoken of as the functional specialties of interpretation and history, precisely because it is *synthetic*. It is explanatory. Only at the very end of the chapter on interpretation in *Method in Theology* is the possibility raised of explanation, and then only in a tentative and almost apologetic fashion. Dialectic, of course, is headed toward explanation, and the paragraph in *De Deo Trino* that we are here summarizing finds its ultimate development in what Lonergan wrote about that fourth functional specialty. But it is salutary to call attention to the problems and possible resolutions as they emerged in his own mind, for one can read and reread the chapter on Dialectic in *Method in Theology* and still not grasp how it is promoting the same more concrete and more comprehensive theology that Lonergan here, for a brief moment, glimpses as a possibility. Not only is there a historical *exegesis* that is beyond the technical dogmatic form of interpretation that was discussed in step 2, there is also, besides the systematic understanding of step 3, a more concrete and comprehensive *theology* that considers the economy of salvation *in its historical evolution* and seeks to understand it *synthetically* in these terms. Steps 2 and 3 involve universal, and to that extent abstract, considerations, but this

fourth step is concrete. The *synthetic* character of such theology, Lonergan is quick to add, has not yet clearly appeared. But this kind of theology has been in preparation for a long time, thanks to so much biblical, conciliar, patristic, medieval, liturgical, ascetical, and other research. It is at this point that Lonergan makes the remark that today's scholars resemble twelfth-century compilers rather than thirteenth-century theologians. But, he adds, those who today with solid scholarship engage in biblical studies, patristic exegesis, and other areas of history relevant to theology can look forward to *a future theology in direct discourse that will be more concrete and more comprehensive than what we have come to know as dogmatic and systematic theology*. The fruit of exegetical and historical scholarship will not be lost *in and for speculative theology itself* (whether exegetes and historians want to be so remembered or not!). True progress in knowledge always includes with some exactness the achievements of the past. Theology wants only to understand the truth more fully, and this fourth step represents an advance on the second and third, that is, on dogmatic and systematic theology as we have known them up to this point.⁵⁵ For it includes a synthetic understanding of historical concreteness and particularity.

The analogy with science is clear. Before the discovery of calculus, certain data were judged to be beyond scientific understanding. Differential calculus provided an "upper blade" that enabled those data to be explained. Lonergan is inching his way toward the enunciation of an upper blade that would enable a synthetic, explanatory understanding of historical concreteness and particularity. It is my contention that at this point in his development he intends that a new *systematic* theology would include that understanding along with the understanding of doctrines that has always been its concern. After presenting the four

⁵⁵Lonergan's wording of this fourth way recalls a distinction from Aristotle that Lonergan cites around this same time in other contexts: the distinction between science in potency and science in act. "... science is twofold: for science in potency is one thing, and it treats only of universals, while science in act is something else, since it is now being applied to particulars." ("... duplex est scientia: alia enim scientia est in potentia, cum tantummodo universalium sit; alia autem scientia est in actu, cum iam particularibus applicetur" [*Divinarum Personarum*, 19].) The text moves directly from an appeal to this distinction to the affirmations that constitute the fourth way in which the same truth can be understood.

successive deepenings of understanding, he writes, "Enough, then, about the act by which the end is attained. The understanding of the mysteries is an instance of the first operation of the intellect, and it is imperfect, analogical, obscure, gradually developing, synthetic, and fruitful."⁵⁶ The fourth step, not just the third, has to do with the act by which theological understanding is attained. In one sense we reach systematic understanding at step 3; but we reach it more profoundly at step 4.⁵⁷ The issue is clear: What are the methodological grounds of step 4? How is such a theology to be derived? What are its principles? What are its foundations? What is its relation to the doctrinal and systematic theology that Lonergan speaks of so clearly not only in *De Deo Trino* but also in *Method in Theology*?

5 CONCLUSION

There is little or no substantive difference between the 1964 text and the earlier version on the precise issue of the relation of systematic understanding to the dogmas that it attempts to understand. But we saw in an earlier article that section 3 of 1964 did not appear in the earlier version, and with it there are introduced concerns that I have interpreted in terms of Lonergan's interest in addressing issues raised in his study of symbolic or mathematical logic. Together with the introduction of such concerns, there is the omission of the important statement in the earlier version regarding the possibility of a more concrete and comprehensive synthesis that would find some way of taking into account the particularities of history. My hypothesis is that there is a connection between these two differences.

Further articles on the same chapter will raise more explicitly the problem of the relation between system and history. But we should note

⁵⁶"Haec ergo sufficient de actu quo finis attingitur. Est enim mysteriorum intelligentia prima quaedam intellectus operatio, imperfecta, analogica, obscura, pedetentim evolvens, synthetica, fructuosa." Lonergan, *Divinarum Personarum*, 19.

⁵⁷To these four ways in which the same revealed truth can be ever more comprehensively understood, Lonergan then adds the manner in which God understands revealed truths and the manner in which the blessed participate in God's own understanding. He adds these considerations simply in order to amplify his main point that the same truth can be understood in different manners.

that a number of comments relevant to this issue have already been made in the sections we have just reviewed: Lonergan has spoken of such matters as the dialectical history of systems, the historical development of the analogies employed in systematic understanding, the subsequent historical effects of advances and setbacks in theological understanding, and so forth. But the theme of historical movements in general, and the relation of history to system in particular, are treated more explicitly in the material we will see in later articles. No solutions are given there to the problems that we have already raised; but it is clear that Lonergan is aware of the question. The very fact that the two versions of the chapter present such different treatments of the question is reason enough to expect that the issue is not yet settled and that what is going forward in his own development will entail further clarifications on this issue. It remains to be determined, of course, just how complete was his final answer to the question. It may be the case that he never resolved it to his own satisfaction, but it may also be the case that the answer is obvious when we trace the very development of his thinking on the issue. As there is a more concrete historical exegesis of biblical and other sources that attains a synthetic understanding of the commonsense religious development of the authors, and as there is a more concrete synthetic theology that grasps the evolution of the economy of salvation and of the church's appropriation of it, so there is a more concrete interpretation of a thinker like Lonergan that grasps in the very interpretation of the data on his development the systematic links that bind elements of that development to one another. It is those links that I am searching for in these articles.

BERNARD LONERGAN TO THOMAS O'MALLEY NOVEMBER 8, 1978

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

In November of 1978 Bernard Lonergan, Distinguished Visiting Professor at Boston College, wrote to Thomas P. O'Malley, S.J. who was then Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Chair of the Promotions Committee at that same institution.¹ Lonergan's letter was a response to O'Malley's request to assess the scholarly work and academic potential of Harvey D. Egan, a colleague in the theology department, who was under what proved to be a successful consideration for promotion to the rank of associate professor with grant of tenure. The significance of the letter "Lonergan to O'Malley" exceeds that of a routine professional recommendation. The letter not only demonstrates Lonergan's transparent admiration for a colleague's professional excellence; it reveals and locates an extraordinary shift in the personal context of Lonergan's theological enterprise.

In "Lonergan to O'Malley" Lonergan acknowledges that an address made by Egan to the Jesuit community at Boston College in the 1975-76 academic year was the occasion when he first began to understand the notion of "consolation without a previous cause," which refers to a foundational spiritual experience identified by St. Ignatius of Loyola in his

¹Bernard Lonergan to Thomas O'Malley (8 November 1978, Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto, A3108). All unpublished materials are quoted with the permission of the Trustees of the Estate of Bernard J. F. Lonergan. I am grateful to John Dadosky, then the archivist at the Lonergan Research Institute, who brought the Lonergan to O'Malley letter to my attention when I was doing archival research for an article on Lonergan and mysticism [Gordon A. Rixon, "Bernard Lonergan and Mysticism," *Theological Studies* 62, 3 (2001): 479-97].

Spiritual Exercises.² Lonergan makes the startling admission that he had heard the words “consolation without a previous cause” without grasping their meaning for fifty-three years, ever since he entered the Jesuit order in 1922 and began to make annual retreats according to the *Spiritual Exercises*.³ Lonergan seems to suggest that his early appropriation of the Ignatian spiritual tradition was framed by a metaphysics of objects and had not developed apace with the anthropological turn to the conscious subject which had characterized his intellectual development. Lonergan indicates that he was just then learning (from Egan) that the Ignatian *examen conscientiae* might refer not to an examination of conscience but much more richly to an examination of consciousness, *Bewußtein* and not *Gewissen*, evaluating the quality of the conscious affective movements discerned in prayer. In what appears to be a moment of exceptional personal integration, Lonergan then relates his own intellectual investigation of operative grace in Aquinas, the analysis of an external predication in which the mind is not the mover but simply the moved, to the Ignatian description of a consolation which is from God alone, not accompanied by any conscious antecedent capable of accounting for the spiritual movement. Lonergan continues to adopt as his own Egan’s

²The talk was an informal presentation based on Egan’s doctoral project, “An Anthropocentric-Christocentric Mystagogy: A Study of the Method and Basic Horizon of Thought and Experience in the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola” (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster), which was completed in 1972 under the supervision of Karl Rahner and subsequently published [Harvey D. Egan, *The Spiritual Exercises and the Ignatian Mystical Horizon* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976)].

³Lonergan’s statement here must be interpreted in light of the considerable evidence both in his published works and archival papers that his intentional (re)appropriation of the Ignatian spiritual and mystical tradition began prior to his encounter with Egan in 1975-76. For instance, in *Method in Theology*, Lonergan cites Rahner’s understanding of the notion of “consolation without a cause,” which is assumed and developed in Egan’s presentation [Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999; original ed. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1972), 106, n. 4]. “Lonergan to O’Malley” might be read in the spirit of an “Ignatian repetition,” that is, as a complexification and synthetic integration of previous fruitful understanding within an affectively, intellectually, or mystically enriched perspective, not at all dissimilar to what Lonergan himself understands as sublation.

position that such mysticism informs "a whole way of life" and is not restricted to a series of exceptional phenomena.⁴

Our appreciation of this integrative moment in Lonergan's personal and intellectual journey is enhanced by recalling that the 1975-76 academic year followed immediately upon the controversial and divisive Thirty-Second General Congregation of the Society of Jesus (Rome, December 2, 1974 to March 7, 1975). In its decree "Our Mission Today: The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice," the highest juridical body of the Society of Jesus espoused what, for many Jesuits, amounted to be two poles of an irresolvable dialectic.⁵ In the midst of palpable community tension over the twofold commitment to faith and justice, Lonergan not only experienced a profound moment of spiritual and intellectual integration, he also recommenced his study of economics, effecting in his own person a concrete reconciliation of the challenge the Jesuits had placed before themselves.⁶ "Lonergan to O'Malley" invites interpreters of Lonergan's thought to appreciate more fully the significance of Lonergan's Ignatian heritage on the genesis and development of his thought, perhaps even to the point of resuming their own encounter with this exceptional thinker.

Gordon A. Rixon, S.J.
Regis College, Toronto

⁴The character, significance, and prevalence of "consolation without a previous cause" are points of considerable debate among Ignatian scholars. For a recent critical study of Rahner's interpretation of this and other aspects of Ignatian spirituality, see Philip Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

⁵Thirty Second General Congregation, "Our Mission Today: The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice," *Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977), 411-38.

⁶For a retrospective assessment of the significance of the Thirty-Second General Congregation for Jesuits working in higher education, see Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, "The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice in American Jesuit Higher Education" (address to a conference on "Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education," Santa Clara University, October 5-8, 2000, available at http://www.scu.edu/news/releases/1000/kolvenbach_speech.html).

METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies
20 (2002)

BERNARD LONERGAN TO THOMAS O'MALLEY¹

November 8, 1978

Reverend and dear Father,

In response to your letter of November 3rd, I write to recommend unreservedly The Reverend Harvey D. Egan, S.J., for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor of Theology with tenure. I cannot imagine that it would be hard for him to find employment elsewhere, but I feel it would be a disaster for the theology department at Boston College to lose not only an outstanding teacher but as well a prolific writer on matters of the greatest importance at the present time to Catholic theology.²

His initial goal in life was to become an electrical engineer, and to this end he spent four years at Worcester Polytechnical Institute where he obtained his Bachelor of Science, cum laude [in electrical engineering]. It was largely there I feel that he acquired the clarity and precision of thought, the attention to detail and the thoroughness, that characterize his teaching and writing in theology. After all, engineers have to make things work.³

¹Bernard Lonergan to Thomas O'Malley (8 November 1978, Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto, A3108), edited here by Gordon A. Rixon with minor textual corrections and footnotes supplied. Published with permission of the Trustees of the Estate of Bernard J. F. Lonergan.

²Egan did have a successful tenure review and is currently professor of theology at Boston College.

³Lonergan received a copy of Egan's resume, which supplies many of the biographical details about which Lonergan weaves his own evaluative comments. The resume and other supporting documents can still be found among Lonergan's papers in the archives of the Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto.

His studies in philosophy at Weston [College] and in theology at Woodstock [College] were completed magna cum laude to be followed by four years at the University of Münster in Germany where he earned his doctorate, again magna cum laude. As German students used to wander from university to university before settling down, I asked him how he happened to go straight to Münster and stay there. He answered that his only reason for going to Germany was Karl Rahner. He had written Rahner while still in America telling him his desire (1) to pursue the line of thought Rahner had developed in his *The Dynamic Element in the Church*,⁴ (2) to promote the study of mysticism in Catholic circles, and (3) to clarify traditional doctrine on the discernment of spirits. Since it is rare for doctoral candidates to know in advance just what they wish to do, Rahner promptly accepted to guide Egan to the doctorate.⁵

I got to know Fr. Egan in 1975-76 when he addressed the Jesuit community at St. Mary's Hall on "Consolation without a previous cause."⁶ I had been hearing those words since 1922 at the annual retreats made by Jesuits preparing for the priesthood. They occur in St. Ignatius's "Rules for the Discernment of Spirits in the Second Week of the Exercises."⁷ But now, after fifty-three years, I began for the first time to grasp what they meant. What had intervened was what Rahner describes as the anthropological turn, the turn from metaphysical objects to conscious subjects. What I was learning was that the Ignatian *examen conscientiae* might mean not an examination of conscience but an examination of consciousness: after all in the romance languages the same

⁴Karl Rahner, *The Dynamic Element in the Church*, *Questiones disputatae* 12, trans. W. J. O'Hara (Montreal: Palm Publishers, 1964).

⁵Egan's doctoral project, "An Anthropocentric-Christocentric Mystagogy: A Study of the Method and Basic Horizon of Thought and Experience in the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola" (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster) was completed in 1972 under the supervision of Karl Rahner.

⁶St. Mary's Hall is the principal residence of the Jesuit Community at Boston College. In conversation, Egan advises me that the talk given in the 1975-76 academic year was an informal presentation based on his doctoral project.

⁷For a literal English translation, see Ignatius Loyola, Saint, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph*, trans. Louis J. Puhl (Chicago: Loyola University, 1951), ##328-36.

word is used to denote both conscience and consciousness, both *Gewissen* and *Bewußtein*.⁸ I was seeing that "consolation" and "desolation" named opposite answers to the question, How do you feel when you pray? Are you absorbed or are you blocked? I was hearing that my own work on operative grace in St. Thomas (cf. *Theological Studies*, 1941-42)⁹ brought to light a positive expression of what was meant by Ignatius when [he] spoke of "consolation without a previous cause:" in Aquinas grace is operative when the mind is not a mover but only moved; in Ignatius consolation is from God alone when there is no conscious antecedent to account for the consolation.¹⁰

In time I came to know Fr. Egan's views on mysticism. It is not just a series of exceptional events. It is a whole way of life. It is the way to which St. Paul refers in Rom 8:14 "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." It is of a piece with Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light, Lead Thou me on."¹¹ It replaces Socrates' obedience to his *daimon*¹² with the Ignatian rules: In desolation change nothing;¹³ rely on consolation when there is no conscious antecedent that accounts for the consolation,¹⁴ or, in the words of Aquinas, grace is operative when you become willing to do the good that previously you were unwilling to do.¹⁵ The succession of such changes in willingness is the way of the mystic that first purges one of

⁸*Spiritual Exercises*, ##24-26.

⁹Lonergan revised and published his doctoral project in a series of four articles, "St. Thomas' Thought on Gratia Operans," *Theological Studies* 2 (1941): 289-324; 3 (1942): 69-88, 375-402, 533-78. A critical edition, including the published articles and the original dissertation, is available in the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan [Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2000)].

¹⁰*Spiritual Exercises*, ##330, 336.

¹¹"Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom, Lead Thou me on!" (John Henry Newman, "The Pillar of the Cloud," in *Verses on Various Occasions*, Collected Works of Cardinal Newman, vol. 35 [New York: Longmans Green, and Co., 1918], 156-57 at 156.)

¹²*Apologia*, 31d.

¹³*Spiritual Exercises*, #319.

¹⁴*Spiritual Exercises*, #336.

¹⁵*Summa theologiae*, 1-2, q. 111, a. 2.

one's inordinate attachments, then opens one's eyes to things as they are, and eventually brings those that persevere to a transforming union with God.¹⁶

As many of the Fathers of the Church, Saints Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas were mystics. But the Aristotelian-Augustinian row of the closing thirteenth century with its *Correctio fratris Thomae*,¹⁷ its *Correctio corruptorii fratris Thomae*, and its succession of *Correctiones correctionum*, came to end by taking refuge in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, which conceived science as a body of self-evident principles and demonstrable conclusions.¹⁸ It was a view that, for Aristotle, held only for mathematical science and, for our contemporaries, does not even hold for mathematics. But in the fourteenth century it led first to skepticism and, down the centuries, it has ensured the separation of mysticism and theology. Catholic theologians may be mystics but they used to think it wiser not to let that appear in their discourse. The sad result has been that today Catholic youth in their desire to learn to pray too often [have] turned to Indian gurus and even [pray] to pagan gods.

Fr. Egan's resume of his studies and writings is forceful evidence of how radically the situation has changed. The nineteenth-century German Historical School innovated in hermeneutics and history. Their example

¹⁶Responding to a correspondent, Lonergan refers to mysticism as a "distinct pattern of experience" (Bernard Lonergan to Rocco Cacópardo, 28 January 1968, Lonergan Research Institute). For a discussion of the notion of "transforming union" in Lonergan's thought and its relation to Ignatian and Carmelite spirituality, see my "Lonergan and Mysticism," *Theological Studies* 62, 3 (2001): 483-88.

¹⁷Lonergan is referring to William de la Mare, *Correctorium fratris Thomae*, 1279, and his respondents who put forward competing sets of coherent fundamental terms without methodological grounding in acts of understanding and critical reflection. See Lonergan's comments on the Aristotelian-Augustinian controversy [unpublished lectures, "Method in Theology Institute," Regis College, July 9-20, 1962 (File #301, Lonergan Research Institute), 102-105].

¹⁸See also Lonergan's comments on fourteenth-century Scholasticism ["Theology and Praxis," in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 100-109; original ed. *Catholic Theological Society: Proceedings* 32 (1977), 1-16]. Lonergan suggests here that the seminal work on the period is Konstanty Michalski, *La philosophie au XIV^e siècle: six études* (Frankfurt: Minerva, 1969).

spread to the universities of the world. Their influence has penetrated into the study of the bible, of the Fathers, of the Scholastics, and of modern and contemporary theologians. Control has shifted from rules of logic over general propositions to the authenticity of subjects doing research, interpreting documents, discerning historical movements, and evaluating key decisions. For a Catholic theologian to become an authentic person there is no more efficient instrument than the cultivation of the spiritual life.¹⁹

Fr. Egan is a master of the spiritual life. Carmelites are shrewd judges yet for five years in a row they have had him direct their annual retreat in their convent at Santa Clara. Now on the east coast several times a year they journey from a number of other convents to their convent in West Roxbury for four-hour sessions in which they put to him their questions and breathe in his spirit.

Again, I have had indications that he is a very successful teacher. Students like him and his ways and, on at least one occasion, they have given him top rating among teachers of theology.

I have been able to consult his dissertation and found it a mine of erudite information. I have worked through his second book which, in about one third the space, reworks and updates the dissertation. It is an original work and a signal²⁰ contribution to Ignatian studies.²¹

He has become a regular contributor to the quarterly, *Theological Studies*, which by a wide margin for nearly forty years has been the leader among U.S. periodicals publishing scholarly articles and reviews in Catholic

¹⁹As Lonergan will suggest in the postscript at the end of this letter, Gerald McCool offers an overview of the contemporary development of theology and its relation to religious and mystical experience, within which to situate and appreciate Egan's contribution [Gerald A. McCool, "Twentieth-Century Scholasticism," in *Celebrating the Medieval Heritage: A Colloquy on the Thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure*, *The Journal of Religion*, ed. David Tracy, 58(Supplement, 1978): S198-S221].

²⁰The text perhaps calls for "singular."

²¹Harvey D. Egan, *The Spiritual Exercises and the Ignatian Mystical Horizon* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976).

theology. Besides his full length article in the September issue of this year²² and a review article on Rahner's *Grundkurs des Glaubens*,²³ he has contributed twenty-two book reviews (ten on Rahner's writings), and he has been invited to review for *Theological Studies* the sixty books on mystics that Paulist Press is in the course of issuing.

Communio is an international Catholic quarterly. It was initiated by Ratzinger (now Cardinal Archbishop of Munich), Urs von Balthasar, and de Lubac, when all three were on the International Theological Commission. In undertaking to publish Fr. Egan's "Reflections on Christian Mysticism" in *Communio*, the editor was enthusiastic about his referees' praise for the article.²⁴

Thought, the Fordham quarterly, has become a venerable institution and under its new editor, Fr. Richard Dimler, S.J., is giving promise of new life and vigor. He has been canvassing new contributors and in a reply I recommended Fr. Egan to him. He wrote Egan and Egan submitted his paper on "The Cloud of Unknowing and Pseudo-Contemplation." In undertaking to publish the paper Dimler and his editorial board praise it as an outstanding contribution to *Thought*.²⁵

Besides a number of reviews in lesser quarterlies, there is the very relevant paper he presented last June to the Catholic Theological Society of America on "The Challenge of Mysticism for Contemporary Catholic Theology." It is due to appear in the 1978 *Proceedings* of the Society.

A final note would draw attention to the categories of projects for coming papers and books: commissioned works in process; potential

²²Harvey D. Egan, "Christian Apophatic and Kataphatic Mysticism," *Theological Studies* 39, 3 (1978): 399-426.

²³Harvey D. Egan, "Review of *Grundkurs des Glaubens: Einführung in den Begriff des Christentums*, by Karl Rahner," *Theological Studies* 28, 3 (1977): 555-59.

²⁴Re-titled "Mystical Crosscurrents." Harvey D. Egan, "Mystical Crosscurrents," *Communio* 7, 1 (1980): 4-23.

²⁵Harvey D. Egan, "The Cloud of Unknowing and Pseudo-Contemplation," *Thought* 54, 213 (1979): 162-75.

commissioned project; on-going projects; long-range projects; other professional projects. He apparently is not aiming at being a weekend celebrity.²⁶

To conclude, I again most heartily recommend that Boston College recognize Fr. Egan's remarkable qualifications as an exceptionally up-to-date teacher and scholarly writer by advancing him to the rank of Associate Professor of Theology with tenure.

Respectfully yours,

Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.

Visiting Distinguished Professor of Theology

P.S. The University of Chicago Press has just published *Celebrating the Medieval Heritage: A Colloquy on the Thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure* as a Supplement to Volume 8 (1978) of the *Journal of Religion*. Background for our concern is provided by Gerald A. McCool, S.J., "Twentieth Century Scholasticism," pp. S198-S221.²⁷

²⁶See Lonergan's discussion of commitment to the intellectual pattern of experience [Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1992; original ed. London: Longmans, 1957), 210].

²⁷See note 19.

KIERKEGAARD'S RETRIEVAL OF THE EXISTENTIAL SUBJECT

Paul St. Amour

*St. Joseph's University
Philadelphia, PA 19131*

Lonergan opened his 1968 Aquinas Lecture, "The Subject," by suggesting that horizons of human knowing and living are conditioned and bounded not only by various historical, social, and psychological determinants but also by certain potentially constrictive philosophical factors. While "The Subject" offers neither a positive account of self-appropriation such as we find in "Cognitive Structure" or *Method in Theology*, nor a negative account of the flight from understanding such as we find in the analysis of bias in *Insight*, it remains a distinctive and significant work precisely because it offers a nuanced typology of the fundamental impediments to self-appropriation itself. I will suggest that the basic categories Lonergan introduces in "The Subject" – the neglected subject, the truncated subject, the immanentist subject, and the alienated subject – are dialectical categories which correspond respectively to breakdowns in self-appropriation at the first, second, third, and fourth levels of the "reduplication" of conscious intentionality. These counterpositional types are not the timeless possibilities of human nature as such but have emerged historically in the methodological shortcomings of inadequately self-appropriated philosophers and the philosophical traditions they have inspired. If we remain mindful however of the fact that Lonergan's own momentous achievement of objectifying the task of self-appropriation became possible only given the prior emergence of what he was to identify as the turn to interiority and the shaky beginnings of the third stage of meaning, we

may perhaps come to appreciate the waywardness of prior philosophy as something more than mere blundering. Lonergan demonstrated a generosity of spirit, similar to that of Aquinas, which could affirm that "the many, contradictory, disparate philosophies can all be contributions to the clarification of some basic but polymorphic fact."¹

Such a clarification is merely potential however; it must be rendered explicit. While Lonergan acknowledged that there has occurred since the nineteenth century "a great emphasis upon the subject," spearheaded by thinkers such as "Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Buber,"² and reiterated the epochal significance of this development in *Method* ("the second stage of meaning is vanishing, and a third is about to take its place")³ he identifies the positional contributions and counter-positional tendencies of "third stage" thinkers vis-à-vis the retrieval of the cognitional-existential subject only in a general and cursory manner. If, however, the history of philosophy is to be interpreted as in some sense setting the conditions for the possibility of self-appropriation, as Lonergan's approach suggests it could be, then the identification of broad movements is only a beginning, and the detailed dialectical analysis of the specific contributions and shortcomings of particular thinkers will remain an important task for Lonergan scholarship for some time to come.⁴

In this paper I would like to employ the dialectical categories Lonergan introduces in "The Subject" to advance a critical appreciation of Søren Kierkegaard as a particularly significant figure in the turn to interiority and the emergence of the third stage of meaning. I will argue that Kierkegaard not only differentiated and clarified the exigencies of

¹Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3 (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1992), 412.

²Bernard Lonergan, "The Subject," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (Westminster Press: Philadelphia, 1974), 70.

³Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972; reprint ed., Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1979), 96.

⁴In *Method* Lonergan states that "transcendental method is coincident with a notable part of what has been considered philosophy" (25) and that "the history of mathematics, natural science, and philosophy and, as well, one's own personal reflective engagement in all three are needed if both common sense and theory are to construct the scaffolding for an entry into the world of interiority" (262).

what Lonergan would discuss in "The Subject" and elsewhere under the rubric of "the existential subject," but that he did this in large measure by inviting a reversal of the neglected, truncated, and immanentist subjectivity that he encountered in the Hegelianism of his day. As "positions invite development and counter-positions invite reversal," we find in "The Subject" a lucid and systematic invitation to invite the reversal of four general types of impediments to self-appropriation.⁵ While Kierkegaard was largely unaware of the positive scope of self-appropriation, his efforts to retrieve the existential subject deeply engaged him in eradicating many of the actual impediments to self-appropriation which would later become the concern of Lonergan. By superimposing Lonergan's dialectical categories in "The Subject" upon Kierkegaard's critique of Hegelianism, I hope to systematically clarify how Kierkegaard "invited reversal" and contributed to the emergence of the third stage of meaning by waging his own "series of attempts to win for the subject acknowledgment of its full reality and its functions."⁶

I. THE NEGLECTED SUBJECT

The neglect of the subject, Lonergan suggests, can arise in a variety of ways. A fascination with the objectivity of truth, with its absoluteness and intentional independence from the subject, can all too easily prescind from the fact that, ontologically, truth comes to be apprehended, and continues to subsist, only in the minds of intelligently and rationally self-transcending subjects. Such fascination regards truth as "so objective as to get along without minds."⁷ Likewise, an ideal of pure reason which emphasizes logically necessary deductions from self-evident principles need not concern itself either with the subject or with the bothersome conditions of its cultivation. Finally, metaphysical accounts of the soul methodologically fail to attend to conscious subjects and their self-constituting operations.

⁵ *Insight*, 412.

⁶ "The Subject," *Second Collection*, 70.

⁷ "The Subject," *Second Collection*, 71-72.

We recall that Lonergan describes self-appropriation as a reduplication of the structure of conscious intentionality.⁸ Transcendental method "is a matter of applying the operations as intentional to the operations as conscious."⁹ The "neglected subject," I submit, results from a breakdown at the most basic level in the fourfold reduplication which is self-appropriation. The aforementioned objectivistic tendencies hinder one from adequately "*experiencing* one's experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding."¹⁰ In short, subject-neglecting philosophy cheats the subject by estranging it from the immediacy of the data of consciousness and by distracting it from attending to its own intentional operations.

Kierkegaard's polemic against the Hegelian "System" was a corrective to what he perceived to be a severe objectivistic neglect of the existential subject. His appeal to the individual was motivated neither by Enlightenment political liberalism nor by romantic expressivism.¹¹ Rather, Kierkegaard realized that a culture enamoured by abstract and impersonal systems is liable to depreciate the task of striving to become a self. At risk of absentmindedly losing itself, the self must attempt to recollect itself out from under the abstractions of the age and back into a genuinely personal identity grounded in the concrete actuality of ethical and religious striving. Kierkegaard's *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (pseudonymously authored by Johannes Climacus), while motivated by the desire to expose and correct Hegelianism's misrelation to Christianity, interprets this misrelation as a symptom of a far deeper and more universal misrelation of the subject to itself. Climacus suspected that "if people had forgotten what it means to exist religiously, they had probably also forgotten what it means to exist humanly."¹² Hence Kierkegaard's

⁸Bernard Lonergan, "Cognitive Structure," in *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 208-11.

⁹*Method in Theology*, 14.

¹⁰*Method in Theology*, 14-15. Emphasis mine.

¹¹Merold Westphal, *Becoming a Self: A Reading of Kierkegaard's Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1996), 140.

¹²Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 249.

critique of Hegelian speculation was motivated by a sense of the cultural precariousness, not only of Christianity, but more generally of the existential dimension itself.

Climacus argued that speculative philosophy, especially of the Hegelian sort, amounts to an absentminded neglect of existence. Formulating a somewhat unique notion of the ethical, he suggests that a person who is genuinely existing is infinitely interested in existing [*existerende*]; it is precisely this earnest interest in one's own existing, and in what this requires, which characterizes the ethical mode of existence and sets it apart from the merely aesthetic mode. Ethical existing demands what Climacus termed "inwardness," and truth, in this existential context, can not be a truth which prescind from one's own existing.

Those who become fascinated with the System however, relinquish inwardness and come to assume an inhumanly extroverted orientation. As the self becomes obsessed with gaining "much knowledge" and obsequious in relation to speculative thought, it progressively forgets itself. The speculative thinker loses himself in matters which have little bearing upon his own increasingly impoverished existing and, at the limit, seems almost to exchange his self for the System which he has appropriated as a surrogate identity. Climacus argues that such objectivistic disinterest in the self constitutes a speculative mode of the aesthetic and is inherently inimical to ethical self-concern. In a suggestive analogy he writes: "Having to exist with the help of the guidance of [the System's] pure thinking is like having to travel in Denmark with a small map of Europe on which Denmark is no larger than a steel pen-point. . . ."¹³ What Climacus objects to is not human knowing as such, but rather the tendency for knowledge to become inhumanly dissociated from one's existential task, one's self-orientation, one's determination in time of an eternal finality. Speculation provides a map upon which one can find everything but one's self.

In attending to the neglected existential subject, Kierkegaard diagnosed a cultural pathology which is the inverse of what is commonly called psychological delusion, inability to cope with the "real world," flight into subjective fantasy, and so forth. Like Blaise Pascal before him,

¹³ Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 310-11.

and Walker Percy afterward, Kierkegaard reminds us that a flight in the opposite direction can also occur. The flight of the speculative thinker who evades subjectivity by retreating into conceptual systems can be equally pathological, however prevalent and socially commended it may be.

The cultural situation Kierkegaard confronted was one in which individuals were held so spellbound by the achievements of speculative thought that they forgot what it meant to exist as individuals. In practice, people were living, as in the animal and plant worlds, as if no significant difference between an individual and a member of the species existed. Kierkegaard's response to this self-neglect was to attempt to communicate its inhuman and fantastical nature. By attempting to effect a transition from a fascination with *what* is known, to the qualitatively different issue of *who* it is that is doing the knowing, and *how* all human knowing occurs under the constraints of finitude, Kierkegaard hoped to break the spell of Hegelian pure thinking and disclose its performatively contradictory nature. Kierkegaard asked his readers—not face-to-face and beggingly, but through the mediation of indirect discourse, to renounce speculation as a severe form of absentmindedness. By exposing the real poverty of fantastical conceptualism, Kierkegaard hoped that individuals would humbly return to themselves and strive to appropriate authentic potentialities latent within the apparent poverty of the neglected subject.

Against the fantastical neglect of the subject, Climacus again and again insisted upon the primacy of the ethical, which is, first and foremost, the imperative to exist as a human being.

It seems a bit peculiar to me that there is continual talk about speculation . . . as if this were a man or as if a man were speculation. Speculation does everything—it doubts everything, etc. The speculative thinker, on the other hand, has become too objective to talk about himself. . . . Now, should we not agree to be human beings! As is well known, Socrates states that when we assume flute-playing, we must also assume a flutist, and consequently if we assume speculative thought, we also have to assume a speculative thinker . . .¹⁴

¹⁴Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 51.

The problem with Hegelian idealism, as Kierkegaard understood it, was that it hypostatized speculative thought and endowed it with activity, agency, and self-determination to such an extent that the activity, agency, and self-determination of the merely existential subject came to be eclipsed. What resulted was a situation in which all the emphasis was on speculative thought, and very little was on the speculative thinker. By raising, in a variety of creative ways, the "should we not agree to be human beings" issue, Kierkegaard evoked a disturbing tension between the hubris of speculative thought and the actual being of the existing speculative thinker. Adverting to this tension sets the condition for the possibility of coming to understand Hegelian pure thought as a performative contradiction.

Climacus does not argue that the System is untrue. Rather, he raises a series of disruptive performative questions: For whom could it be true? Could it be true for a human being? Would it still be true for a human being who refuses to forget what it means to exist? Such questions intend to communicate the incommensurability of speculation and actual existence. To the degree that they successfully do this, the reader is placed in the position of having to make a choice with regard to speculation and existence—either speculate, or exist—but not both. It is fairly clear where Climacus himself stands regarding this either/or. He states: "in the confessional a Hegelian can say with all solemnity: I do not know whether I am a human being—but I have understood the system. I prefer to say: I know that I am a human being, and I know that I have not understood the system."¹⁵

II. THE TRUNCATED SUBJECT

The neglected subject, unattuned to its own conscious operations, inevitably suffers an oversight of insight. The truncated subject emerges as the neglected subject disregards the concrete and dynamic character of human understanding to focus instead almost exclusively upon the more obvious currency of concepts. The truncated subject's refuge in conceptualism is marked by an "anti-historical immobilism" that ignores

¹⁵Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 311.

the origin of concepts in the dynamic inquiry of human subjects; by an "excessive abstractness" that would understand the concrete, not by way of the intimate relation of the intelligible to the sensible, but rather through the jejune relation of the universal to the particular; and finally, by a conception of Being that is static, closed, connotatively empty.¹⁶ In its most severe forms (Lonergan cites behaviorism, logical positivism, and pragmatism) the truncated subject "concludes that what he does not know does not exist," and so becomes involved, not merely in an oversight of insight, but in a more or less explicit denial of subjectivity itself.¹⁷

The truncated subject, I suggest, results from a breakdown at the second level in that fourfold reduplication that is self-appropriation. Conceptualism disregards the concrete and dynamic origins of concepts in the act of insight and is impoverishingly abstract precisely because it hinders one from adequately "*understanding the unity and relations of one's experienced experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding.*"¹⁸ Conceptualist philosophy cheats the subject by offering the concept, and closed systems of concepts, as a surrogate for "insight into insight," for self-understanding, for the subject's potentially lucid relation both to itself and to Being.

It is obvious that Kierkegaard was no friend of conceptualism. Regarding conceptualism of the Hegelian variety, Climacus actually protests in the *Postscript* that "no one can be led by this philosophy to understand himself, which is certainly an absolute condition for all other understanding."¹⁹ Climacus is contemptuous of "busy thinkers" who would prefer myriad concepts to the singularity of their own existential actuality. He writes: "If ethics deprived a busy thinker of the whole world and let him keep his own self, he would very likely think: 'Is this anything? Such a trifling thing is not worth keeping. Let it go along with all the rest'."²⁰ If forced to choose between the clarity of familiar concepts and the risk-laden ambiguity inherent in existential striving, the busy

¹⁶"The Subject," *Second Collection*, 73-75.

¹⁷"The Subject," *Second Collection*, 73.

¹⁸*Method in Theology*, 15. Emphasis mine.

¹⁹Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 311.

²⁰Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 341-42.

thinker desperately clutches at the former. Habitual self-neglect fosters a certain inward atrophy and then attempts to compensate for this emptiness by pursuing an extroverted conceptualist orientation. Climacus describes this flight from interiority into totalizing conceptual systems as "fantastical." As inwardness is progressively disregarded, the speculative thinker's outward flight becomes progressively more fantastical. At the limit, inwardness is seen as nothingness: "the whole question of the self becomes a kind of false door with nothing behind it."²¹ The self-alienation of the neglected and now truncated existential subject culminates in what Anti-Climacus called the despair of not willing to be a self.²²

Kierkegaard was also keenly sensitive to the various ways that conceptualism legitimated abdication of personal identity and existential responsibility at the social level by encouraging dissolution of the individual into the comfortable anonymity of "the public," of *Sittlichkeit*, of Christendom. His critique was not merely a general critique of the aesthetic mode of existence but elucidated many of the specific defects of conceptualism that Lonergan himself identified. Concerning conceptualism's "excessive abstractness," for example, Climacus quite effectively satirizes the notion that the particular can be grasped within an apprehension of the universal.

At one time it was perilous to profess being a Christian; now it is precarious to doubt that one is. . . . If someone were to say, plainly and simply, that he was concerned about himself, that it was not quite right for him to call himself a Christian . . . people would give him an angry look and say, "It is really boring of this fellow to make so much ado about nothing; why can't he be like the rest of us, who are all Christians. . . ." If he were married, his wife would tell him, "Hubby, darling, where did you ever pick up such a notion? How can you not be a Christian? You are Danish, aren't you? Doesn't the geography book say that the predominant religion in Denmark is Lutheran-Christian? . . . Don't you tend to your work in the office as

²¹Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death: A Christian Psychological Exposition for Upbuilding and Awakening*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 56.

²²See Kierkegaard, *Sickness Unto Death*, 49-67.

a good civil servant; aren't you a good subject in a Christian nation, in a Lutheran-Christian state? So of course you are a Christian."²³

This passage humorously indicates the inextricable concreteness and particularity of interiority, as well as the senselessness of the notion that Christianity can be mediated by any merely geographical, economic, social, or political universal. When ethico-religious self-concern and inwardness are forsaken for a conceptualist rationality that would logically infer the individual from society, when a wife's intimate knowledge of her husband's inner life can be deduced from a geography book, when by virtue of sharing the same map everybody is allowed the satisfaction of being a Christian, it is clear that conceptualism has culminated, not in the incarnation of Absolute Spirit, but rather in a sad relaxation of the human spirit. The single individual who happens to persist in approaching Christianity as a task (and who may have some doubts regarding whether he is actually living up to that task) is regarded as an "eccentric" who has somehow managed to misplace that which is universally accessible to everyone else. By regarding the individual merely as an abstract function of the universal, conceptualism obfuscates the radical concreteness the subject-as-subject. "In the language of abstraction, that which is the difficulty of existence and of the existing person never actually appears; even less is the difficulty explained. Precisely because abstract thinking is *sub specie aeterni*, it disregards the concrete, the temporal, the becoming of existence, and the difficult situation of the existing person . . ."²⁴

What, fundamentally, is this difficult situation? In *Sickness Unto Death*, after defining the human being as spirit, and spirit as the self, Anti-Climacus offers his notorious definition of the self.

The self is a relation that relates itself to itself or is the relation's relating itself to itself in the relation; the self is not the relation but is the relation's relating itself to itself. A human being is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom

²³Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 50-51.

²⁴Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 301.

and necessity, in short, a synthesis. A synthesis is a relation between two. Considered in this way, a human being is still not a self.²⁵

From the logical standpoint of the principle of identity, from the conceptualistic affirmation that what is, is—Anti-Climacus's statement that "the self is a relation that relates itself to itself" seems redundant and somewhat puzzling. It is not immediately apparent how such a contorted act could be rendered intelligible, or what its purpose might be.

Kierkegaard's meaning becomes apparent, however, when we realize that he was attempting to express a conception of the self that surmounted the truncated horizon of conceptualism. Human existing is a becoming; existence is intrinsically dynamic. One is a self, one exists, not already, but only in and through a conscious and conscientious process of self-constitution. One becomes a self, not as a matter of course within the necessary unfolding of the Hegelian dialectic of being, but only by negotiating one's existence in relation to an existential dialectic of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity.

Climacus repeatedly argues in the *Postscript* that logic concerns being and being is static, finished. Its temporality is backward-looking; in being, everything is "already." This static conception of being is incommensurate with existential becoming. Insofar as one is concerned with ethical and religious becoming, what is needed is not a rationality that confirms one as one already is, but a "subjective thinking" that orients and reorients desire toward the individual one is to become, especially in relation to that power which posited the relation in the first place, that is, God.

Long before Heidegger, Kierkegaard opposed conceptualism's anti-historical immobilism by insisting upon the ineradicably temporal character of human knowing. The speculative thinker who supposedly thinks the Hegelian identity of thought and being manages to do so only by forgetting that he is a human being. Kierkegaard would check such tragicomic hubris by reminding us that "speculative thought and absentmindedness are still not quite the same thing."²⁶ In actuality, that is,

²⁵ Kierkegaard, *Sickness Unto Death*, 13.

²⁶ Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 119.

excluding all such forgetfulness, "a human being thinks and exists, and existence separates thinking and being, holds them apart from each other in succession."²⁷ Whatever an existing person may think, or however often, the act of thinking itself is always performed under the temporal conditions of a finitely existing human thinker. "The systematic idea is subject-object, is the unity of thinking and being; existence, on the other hand, is precisely the separation. From this it by no means follows that existence is thoughtless, but existence has spaced and does space subject from object, thought from being."²⁸ Human existence is not "thoughtless" but we must remain mindful of the fact that human thought remains human, and is not divine. Any total and perfect unity of thought and existence would require the human thinker to slip beyond the conditions of finitude and temporality to achieve an eternal continuity with being. Kierkegaard insisted that such an identity simply can not be actualized by we who happen to be living in the medium of existence.²⁹

III. THE IMMANENTIST SUBJECT

While it is the case that human knowers achieve intentional self-transcendence insofar as their cognitional operations constitute a compound of experiential, normative, and absolute objectivity, neglected and truncated subjects do not know their knowing and so inevitably tend to assume that knowing must be something analogous to sense

²⁷Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 332.

²⁸Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 123.

²⁹Lonergan's differentiation of direct understanding from reflective understanding, of insight from judgment, confirms Kierkegaard's notion that, for the human knower at least, there remains a distinction between thought and being. Insights are merely possibly relevant to what is actually the case. However, whereas Climacus regarded all knowing (including historical knowledge and claims regarding sense experience) as merely probable, Lonergan affirms the possibility of positing *limited* identities of thought and being in the grasp of the virtually unconditioned. Lonergan and Kierkegaard would be in agreement, I suspect, in affirming that any perfect or total apprehension of the unity of thought and being, such as was purportedly available in Hegelian pure thought, would belong to God alone.

perception.³⁰ If knowing were analogous to sense perception however, the intentional self-transcendence of the knower would be an impossibility. When knowing is construed as a matter of "taking a look," so that what is "out there" in the so-called external world somehow comes to exist "in here," as a content contained in the mind of the knower, we inevitably arrive at the immanentist subject, for it is impossible ever to verify that the thoughts "in here" correspond to the reality "out there." On the assumption that knowing is a kind of looking, the only possible standpoint from which to verify the correspondence of the mind with reality would be one in which the subject somehow jumps up above the mind, to compare representations "in here" with presentations "out there." But such epistemic jumping is impossible; one can never jump so high as to arrive at a perspective that would no longer be characterized as "in here." Hence the immanentist subject denies its own capacity for rational self-transcendence and mistakenly believes that, in principle, it can not verify the truth of its phenomenal representations, its perspectives, its beliefs.

The immanentist subject, I submit, results from a breakdown at the third level in the fourfold reduplication that is self-appropriation. The "picture thinking" that Lonergan describes as being at the root of the immanentist subject hinders one from adequately "*affirming the reality* of one's experienced and understood experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding."³¹ Immanentist philosophy cheats the subject by attempting to convince her that she is confined within her own skin.

In *Method* Lonergan makes the following interesting remark:

The absolute idealist, Hegel, brilliantly explores whole realms of meaning; he gives poor marks to naïve realists; but he fails to advance to a critical realism, so that Kierkegaard can complain that what is logical also is static, that movement cannot be inserted into logic, that Hegel's system has room not for existence (self-determining freedom) but only for the idea of existence.³²

³⁰For Lonergan's account of experiential, normative, and absolute objectivity, see *Insight*, 402-407.

³¹*Method in Theology*, 15. Emphasis mine.

³²*Method in Theology*, 264.

What is interesting about this remark is that Kierkegaard's writings give no indication that he had any adequate positive conception of critical realism as such, or even an interest in it. Climacus, for example, used the term "objectivity" in an almost exclusively pejorative manner, regularly opposed objective knowing to allegedly more authentic notions of "inwardness," and even constructed quasi-Kantian arguments that make room for faith by emphasizing the uncertainty of all knowledge. While Lonergan affirms the normativity of Kierkegaard's critique of Hegel's failure to properly acknowledge the existential subject, it would be far too charitable to attribute to Kierkegaard himself any *explicit* realization that Hegel "fails to advance to a critical realism."

If Lonergan's diagnosis regarding Hegel is correct, it seems that Kierkegaard was merely treating the symptoms of a disease he didn't fully understand. This raises a question. If Kierkegaard had no adequate positive appreciation of the need for a critical realism, how was it that he became so acutely sensitive to the oppressive confinement of Hegelian immanentism? The answer, I think, is that Kierkegaard's critique is working not "the way from below upward" but rather, "the way from above downward." Despite what seems to be Kierkegaard's inadequate self-appropriation at the cognitional levels, despite the fact that Kierkegaard himself seemed to be caught up in the very immanentism he sought to oppose, it nevertheless is the case that Kierkegaard was keenly sensitive to the exigencies of the existential subject and was ingeniously committed to setting in place concrete intellectual conditions for recognizing the need for ethical and religious conversion. Kierkegaard's self-appropriation, not at the cognitional levels, but at the existential level, seems to have sufficed to bring him into direct confrontation with Hegelian immanentism, and, as we have discussed, with the truncated and neglected subject as well. While Lonergan would have us get beyond the immanentist subject by coming to appropriate the distinction, within our knowing, between understanding and judgment, Kierkegaard would have us get beyond the immanentist subject by having us come to appropriate the distinction, within our concrete existing, between our knowing and our choosing.

While on critical realist grounds there do occur limited identities of knower and known in any grasp of the virtually unconditioned, Hegelian pure thought claimed access to absolute truth, to a total and complete identity of thought and being. Hegelian speculation regarded human thought—certainly not thought at the level of *Verstand*, but thought at the level of *Begriff*—as commensurate, at least in principle, with the dialectical unfolding of being. In this identification of thought and being Kierkegaard discerned a tremendous hubris and a totalizing denial of finitude. The identity involved, in his opinion, the reduction of being and—of more significance to Kierkegaard—of the existential dimension itself, to the narrow confines of human thought. Speculative philosophy not only considered itself to be superior to religious modes of self-understanding, not only considered itself to be the ultimate human expression of Absolute Spirit, but it also presented itself as the fully adequate expression of the Absolute's *self*-knowledge. Pure thought was glorified as the full realization of the identity of thought and being, as the absolute unification of subject and object, as the perfect commensurability of inner and outer. Pure thought is the Absolute, "in and for itself," knowing itself completely, totally, transparently. To Kierkegaard this represented both a relativization of the absolute, and an absolutization of the relative; in short, it amounted to both idolatry and blasphemy.

In defense of the existential dimension, Climacus warned that if people allowed themselves to become hypnotized by the absoluteness of this purportedly absolute knowledge, concern for existential striving would be eclipsed. Speculative philosophy promised to endow to its adherents an unprecedented degree of rational self-possession. If one could only master the System one could identify oneself with nothing less than the self-knowledge of the Absolute. Against this foreground, the mundane background of finite existing, the consciousness of what it means to exist as a finite human being, was rendered trivial. Although Kierkegaard's penchant for the Socratic certainly compelled him to share with Hegel an appreciation for self-knowledge, the self-knowledge offered by Hegelianism seemed, ironically, to be based upon a deeper forgetfulness. Rather than expressing rational self-possession, Hegelian-

ism actually represented a rationalistic dispossession of the existential self.

The philosophical thesis of the identity of thinking and being is just the opposite of what it seems to be; it expresses that thinking has completely abandoned existence, that it has emigrated and found a sixth continent where it is absolutely sufficient unto itself in the absolute identity of thinking and being. Abstractly, in a volatilized metaphysical sense, existing eventually becomes evil; abstractly, in a humorous sense, it becomes a very *langweilig* [boring] affair, a ludicrous delay.³³

Hegelianism oppressively renders existence immanent to thought. Climacus argued that this illicit unification involves a tremendous confusion of the aesthetic and the ethical spheres, an "even greater confusion in the world of spirit than if in civic life the response to an ecclesiastical matter would be given by the pavement commission."³⁴ Consequently, the concern in the *Postscript* was to demonstrate that the existential dimension is not in fact immanent to thought, that existence itself drives a wedge between thought and being. Climacus attempted to clear ground for an ethico-religious standpoint that would be sharply distinct from the aesthetic sphere and could offer resistance to the hubris of speculative aestheticism. Mere thought does not, and in principle can not, encompass the actuality of ethico-religious existing. Existential decisiveness lies beyond mere thought, and it is achieved by a passion that is fundamentally distinct from the disinterested rationality characteristic of speculative aestheticism. Kierkegaard attempted to convey a sense of this distinction to his readers, not by directly providing a straightforward general account of it but rather by imaginatively, affectively, connotatively illustrating what might be meant by passion—both ethical passion, as we find, for example, in the Judge William character of *Either/Or*, and religious passion, as we find in the Abraham of *Fear and Trembling*, in the writings of Anti-Climacus, or in Kierkegaard's latter non-pseudonymous works. Ethical and religious passion engages the subject in commitments which invariably involve risk and typically do not accommodate the

³³Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 331.

³⁴Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 324.

desire for security and objective certainty. Mere thought however, is disinterested. A thinker does not become passionately committed to anything merely by thinking. Ethically speaking, the highest thought is merely the possibility of a commitment.

Existence as it must be lived can not be rendered immanent to any closed conceptual system. Attempts at closure tragically render the ethico-religious sphere immanent to the aesthetic sphere. Kierkegaard's confrontation with totalizing rationality impelled him to creatively set conditions for his reader to self-appropriate at the existential level. It is with this intention in mind that we must interpret Climacus's more notorious and seemingly antiintellectualist claims. Only by clarifying the distinction between the lived passion of ethico-religious actuality and the aesthetic phantom of speculative thought could Kierkegaard hope to challenge Hegelianism's totalizing identity of thought and being and break its bonds of immanence.

IV. THE EXISTENTIAL SUBJECT

The existential subject is not the subject as will, is not the subject as practical reason, but is the concrete subject as consciously deliberating, evaluating, deciding, acting. While these operations are conditioned by the subject's knowing, they extend beyond the intention of the intelligible, the true, the real, to a fuller intending of the good. As striving to actualize the transcendental notion of value, the existential subject not only influences objective situations but constitutes "the first and only edition of himself."³⁵

Now Kierkegaard's primary concern, as should be obvious, was precisely to retrieve the existential subject. In clarifying, differentiating, and relating the aesthetic, ethical, and religious dimensions of existence, Kierkegaard identified the aesthetic stage as a form of self-alienation, as a refusal to appropriate the full demands of existential subjectivity. Kierkegaard was deeply attuned to the need for ethical and religious conversion and, with Socrates, Augustine, Pascal, and others, was one of

³⁵"The Subject," *Second Collection*, 83.

the first to attempt to explicitly clarify the ethico-religious exigencies of the existential subject. Lonergan acknowledges in *Method* that “Kierkegaard marks a trend” and suggests that he seems to have compactly anticipated the concerns of Nietzsche, Dilthey, Husserl, Bergson, Blondel, pragmatism, and existentialism.³⁶

One way, perhaps, to better appreciate the Kierkegaardian trend is to recognize that Kierkegaard was engaged in advancing what we might call the task of existential self-appropriation. Kierkegaard passionately yet accurately disclosed many of the central operations that constitute what Lonergan would later come to identify as the fourth level of conscious intentionality. He advanced possibilities for self-knowledge by explicating a profound understanding of the existential ontology of the self. His intimations of interiority have provoked readers to conscientiously recognize, for themselves, the absolute significance of ethico-religious subjectivity, and the relative significance of the aesthetic stage.³⁷

What may be less obvious than these outward achievements however—yet nevertheless inseparable from them—is the peculiar manner in which Kierkegaard enacted his authorship. Quite remarkably, Kierkegaard recognized from the outset the necessity of writing, and of being an author, in a way that would remain *performatively consistent* with the existential actualities he was attempting to disclose. Kierkegaard’s driving intention was not to provide a conceptually accurate and comprehensive account of existential subjectivity to the disinterested speculative thinker. To the contrary, he seemed to do everything in his power to avoid direct discourse. His motives for employing pseudonymous authorship and indirect discourse are consistent both with the substantive content of his ideas and with his overall intent. He realized that any adoption of direct discourse would remain vulnerable to the totalizing aspirations of Hegelian dialectic and would itself performatively constitute a major concession to the very

³⁶ *Method in Theology*, 264.

³⁷ I would wish to qualify the aptness of the term “existential self-appropriation” however, insofar as Kierkegaard seems not to have adequately apprehended how existential operations are dynamically related to each other or to other operations that condition them on underlying cognitional levels. This critique will be developed in the next section, on the alienated subject.

conceptualism and objectivism he sought to oppose. To directly state that ethico-religious existence, and not the System, is absolute—this would perversely come to appear as a paragraph *within* the System. Pseudonymous authorship allowed Kierkegaard to leave the reader alone before the existential dialectic in the texts, alone before the existential dialectic in one's own living, alone before God. Indirect discourse allowed Kierkegaard to circumvent the speculative aesthetic preoccupations of the neglected, truncated, immanentist subject, and to awaken the existential subject from its objectivistic slumber. Kierkegaard's writings attempt to bring one to the point where one can understand the fundamental existential options, understand that one's very self is at stake in these options, understand that the options can not be negotiated merely by thought, but only by choosing. Long before Lonergan wrote *Method*, at least one other person found it worth his time to argue that "a life of pure intellect or pure reason without the control of deliberation, evaluation, responsible choice is something less than the life of a psychopath."³⁸ In short, Kierkegaard's writings invite the existential subject to return to itself.

V. THE ALIENATED SUBJECT

While Kierkegaard argued that the self can be alienated from itself as existential subject, Lonergan argued that the existential subject can be alienated from itself as an objectively knowing existential subject, and he suggests that such an alienated existential subject can not remain a *good* existential subject for long. Existential reflection, although richly concrete, tends to raise questions that can not be resolved by appealing merely to the experience of existential subjects. Foundational ethical and metaphysical questions arise insofar as we begin to evaluate our evaluating and deliberate upon our deliberating. With reference to which value are we to evaluate our evaluating? What is the value of our existential striving itself? Is it worthwhile? Is the transcendental notion of value, which I am, confirmed and supported by a friendly universe? Or is

³⁸*Method in Theology*, 122.

human goodness simply an inexplicable anomaly in an otherwise amoral world? These questions are existentially important because their answers (or the absence of answers) underpin and condition the intentionality of our ethical praxis. If human moral striving is fundamentally incongruous with world process, she who would nevertheless strive to actualize moral goodness in spite of this fact posits herself as alien to the rest of the universe. On the other hand, he who would "drift into the now seductive and now harsh rhythms his psyche and of nature" by capitulating to an amoral universe, sacrifices the transcendental notion of value and thereby becomes alienated from his very self.³⁹ In addition, those existential subjects who happen to be committed to the realm of theory, to the *bios theoretikos*, may perhaps raise questions concerning "whether the universe could be intelligible without having an intelligent ground"⁴⁰ and whether there exists a necessary being, "a reality that transcends the reality of this world."⁴¹ If answers are not forthcoming in this case, one becomes alienated not merely from the transcendental notion of value but also from the transcendental notion of being itself.

The very striving of existential subjects gives rise to a host of questions concerning God's existence, omnipotence, and goodness; the orientation of this groaning, changing, evolving physical universe; the ultimate significance of human consciousness and human effort. In the absence of adequate answers to such questions, the existential subject is likely to be alienated, to some significant degree, from its own fundamental orientation toward self-transcendence. The most basic form of alienation, Lonergan would come to write in *Method*, is "man's disregard of the transcendental precepts, Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible" and "the basic form of ideology is a doctrine that justifies such alienation," and thereby compounds it.⁴² It hardly must be mentioned that the consequences of such alienation and ideology are significant; they amount, not merely to some generalized feeling of

³⁹"The Subject," *Second Collection*, 86.

⁴⁰*Method in Theology*, 102.

⁴¹*Method in Theology*, 103.

⁴²*Method in Theology*, 55.

unease, but to a pervasive fourfold bias and progressively intractable cycles of historical decline.

It is important to note that Lonergan is in fundamental agreement with Kierkegaard concerning how faith functions as the sustaining ground and restorative principle for authentic existential praxis. In *Method* Lonergan states that "faith places human efforts in a friendly universe; it reveals an ultimate significance in human achievement; it strengthens new undertakings with confidence. . . . Most of all faith has the power of undoing decline. . . . It is not argument but religious faith that will liberate human reasonableness from its ideological prisons."⁴³ Yet it is also important to note that the latter Lonergan's appreciation for the way from above downward and faith did not supplant his insistence on the importance of progress by way of self-appropriation. Indeed it is precisely the latter which faith reforms and sustains.

Hence Lonergan is wary of those who, in the name of concreteness or subjectivity or ethics or existential reflection or faith, would disdainfully brush aside ancient but fundamental questions of cognitional theory, epistemology, and metaphysics. Although previous *answers* to these questions perhaps have not been satisfactory, to reject the fundamental *questions* is in effect to reject the task of self-appropriation itself. To reject the task of self-appropriation is to forsake the possibility of discovering in one's own subjectivity the normative grounds of intentional self-transcendence and objectivity. When this is the case one is not only alienated from the notion of being, which one is, but the integral connection is severed between oneself as notion of being, and oneself as notion of value. The exigencies of existential subjectivity and faith come to be construed in opposition to those of cognitional subjectivity. A gulf separates thought and existence, knowing and choosing, objectivity and subjectivity, the head and the heart. The existential subject is divided from within. It is perhaps possible that existential passion can be sustained for a while on its own steam despite this "far more radical truncation" of the subject, but—as we might ask Camus's Sisyphus—to what end, and for how long? ⁴⁴

⁴³*Method in Theology*, 117.

⁴⁴"The Subject," *Second Collection*, 86.

The present analysis may raise concerns about Kierkegaard himself, who was arguably the founder of existential reflection and certainly no stranger to polemics against speculative philosophy. To what extent, or in what respect, is the Kierkegaardian subject an alienated subject? In his efforts to remedy Hegelianism's alienation from the existential subject, was Kierkegaard himself blindsided by this less obvious, but equally problematic, form of alienation?

In adjudicating this matter, it is salutary to first appreciate the fact that Kierkegaard was engaged in advancing self-appropriation at the existential level. Lonergan's own *Method in Theology* formulation of self-appropriation indicates a significant advancement, in a Kierkegaardian direction, over his previous formulations in *Insight* and "Cognitive Structure." In *Method* the reduplication of conscious intentionality requires something beyond mere self-knowledge; it requires that one also *choose* to become what one is. Full self-appropriation involves not just a knowing of one's knowing, but also a knowing and a choosing of one's whole self, of one's self as both a knower and a chooser. It is a conscious and conscientious relating of oneself to oneself. At the existential level, self-appropriation involves a "*deciding to operate in accord with the norms* immanent in the spontaneous relatedness of one's experienced, understood, affirmed experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding."⁴⁵ While self-appropriation, as self-knowledge, is a rational affirmation of what one already is, full self-appropriation is, in addition, a radical self-choosing. As such, self-appropriation requires the making of a free decision regarding whether or not one will existentially affirm, through one's deliberating and evaluating and deciding and acting, the full range of self-transcending operations which constitute one to be who one is. Full self-appropriation requires both the objectivity of knowing and the subjectivity of free self-constitution. Therein one not only becomes rationally conscious of one's ontology but also conscientiously cooperative with it.

Returning to the case of Kierkegaard, we may note that both Anti-Climacus's definition of the self in *Sickness Unto Death* as "a relation that relates itself to itself," and Judge William's insistence in *Either/Or* that his

⁴⁵*Method in Theology*, 15. Emphasis mine.

friend the aesthete can gain the actuality of the ethical stage only by choosing to choose – both are remarkably congruous with Lonergan's new emphasis on existential self-constitution in his latter account of self-appropriation.⁴⁶ So too is Kierkegaard's sustained and central concern for faith and the need for moral and religious conversion. A vast divide separates Kierkegaardian faith from what Lonergan lamented as the cult of the absurd, and the vastness of this divide needs to be understood and appreciated. Nor, finally, is it to be thought that the Kierkegaardian priority of faith over metaphysical questions concerning the existence and nature of God of itself constitutes the alienation of the existential subject. Lonergan himself came to affirm a "primacy of the existential,"⁴⁷ and he too came to affirm that "only secondarily do there arise the questions of God's existence and nature, and they are the questions either of the lover seeking to know him or of the unbeliever seeking to escape him."⁴⁸

Despite his retrieval of the existential subject however, Kierkegaard does not completely evade the problem of the alienated subject. Existential subjectivity is not adequately integrated with cognitional subjectivity. Although Kierkegaard has an interest in the existential subject, there is no corresponding interest in appropriating this same subject as an objective knower. While in the *Postscript* Climacus does in some manner acknowledge the importance of human knowing to human living, his central arguments – that "truth is subjectivity"⁴⁹ and that existence "can not be a system for any existing spirit"⁵⁰ – are clearly disinterested in, or even antithetical to, anything even remotely resembling an *unrestricted* desire to know. As propositional truth is placed in opposition to subjective truth and the inwardness of the existential subject, Kierkegaard has little interest in grasping the cognitive self-transcendence that occurs in the act of judgement. Insofar as Kierkegaard has an interest in being, it is not at all in being as isomorphic with the structure of human knowing, and

⁴⁶Kierkegaard, *Sickness Unto Death*, 13.

⁴⁷"The Subject," *Second Collection*, 84.

⁴⁸*Method in Theology*, 116.

⁴⁹See Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 189-230.

⁵⁰See Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 109-25.

certainly not in being as the heuristic anticipation of that which would be known by the totality of correct judgments.

Although Climacus's target was actually objectivism, and not objectivity as such, he makes no distinction between the two. Lonergan, it is likely, would have been concerned with Climacus's tendency to employ the terms "objective" and "objectivity" almost exclusively in a derogatory manner. When subjectivity is promoted at the expense of objectivity a merely pejorative notion of objectivity prevails and there is fostered no adequate understanding of the subject as an intentionally self-transcending knower. The danger inherent in any attempt to promote existential subjectivity at the expense of objectivity is that "condemnation of objectivity induces, not a merely incidental blind spot in one's vision, but a radical undermining of authentic human existence."⁵¹ To disregard the need for a normative understanding of objectivity is to alienate the existential subject from awareness of those immanent and personally verifiable standards that would express the exigencies of its own potential for authentic human knowing. To denigrate the disinterested desire to know as a naïve fiction is to blur the distinction between fact and ideology and thereby to undermine critical grounds for assessing the violation of epistemic norms. When concern for objectivity does not find a place within the horizon of the existential subject, the authentic subjectivity which Kierkegaard and others sincerely sought to promote is inevitably undermined. It is for this reason that Lonergan makes the claim that "a real exclusion of objective knowing, so far from promoting, only destroys personalist values."⁵² While Lonergan affirmed the motivation of Kierkegaard and other existentialists in their attempt to retrieve subjectivity and self-determining freedom from the oppressiveness of totalizing conceptualism, he clarified matters considerably by precisely explaining how and why it is not objectivity as such which is at fault, but rather objectivism—that is, objectivity as it has been progressively misconstrued by naive realism, by naive idealism, by empiricism, by critical idealism, and by absolute idealism.⁵³

⁵¹"Cognitive Structure," *Collection*, 220.

⁵²"Cognitive Structure," *Collection*, 221.

⁵³See *Method in Theology*, 262-65 and "Cognitive Structure," *Collection*, 214-19.

The issue dividing Kierkegaard and Lonergan is not the same issue that divided Kierkegaard and Hegel; the issue at hand is not the sufficiency of faith. As I have suggested, both Kierkegaard and Lonergan believe that in some sense faith serves as the ultimate creative and healing existential foundation. What concerns Lonergan is the pervasive but mistaken notion that faith, coupled with a merely pejorative notion of objectivity, can adequately cultivate and maintain the conditions for sustained moral and religious self-transcendence in the long run. "By deliberation, evaluation, decision, action, we can know and do, not just what pleases us, but what truly is good, worthwhile. Then we can be principles of benevolence and beneficence, capable of genuine collaboration and true love. But it is one thing to do this occasionally, by fits and starts. It is another to do it regularly, easily, spontaneously."⁵⁴ Insofar as there occurs alienation from the transcendental notion of being; insofar as the transcendental notion of being is construed as not merely distinct from, but separate from, or even opposed to, the transcendental notion of value; insofar as the transcendental notion of value is considered alien to world process and our effort to understand world process—to this extent questions of ultimate existential import will tend to go unasked and unanswered, ideological justifications of alienation will emerge to fill the void, and the "longer cycle of decline" will decline all the deeper.⁵⁵

Our affirmation of Lonergan's intellectualist existentialism need not be overly critical of Kierkegaard however. I think it is fair to say that insofar as the problem of the alienated subject arises for Kierkegaard it arises not so much out of his retrieval of the existential subject as such but rather out of the way he felt he had to construe his existential imperatives in polemical opposition to an objectivistic, conceptualistic, necessitarian, totalizing dialectical system that tended to generate neglected, truncated, immanentist, existentially self-alienated subjects. Kierkegaard's tendency to oppose ethico-religious exigencies to objectivity, truth, and system must be interpreted within this polemical context. Charges of anti-intellectualism and subjectivism, as well as the misuse of Kierkegaard in some latter existentialism to legitimate these tendencies, stem in large measure

⁵⁴*Method in Theology*, 35.

⁵⁵For a discussion of the longer cycle of decline, see *Insight*, 251-67.

from a failure to take the Hegelian context of Kierkegaardian discourse adequately into account.

What is truly remarkable about Kierkegaard, in light of the present analysis, is that even though he was relatively unconcerned with self-appropriation at the cognitional levels, he was nevertheless strikingly attuned to its impediments in the distortions of the neglected, the truncated, and the immanentist subject. The most plausible explanation for this may be that Kierkegaard's exceptional self-appropriation at the existential level allowed him to experience, as a disvalue, those counterpositional tendencies that were fundamentally incompatible with his sensitivity to the exigencies of existential subjectivity. That this should even be possible can be understood in terms of Lonergan's affirmation that "the many levels of consciousness are just successive stages in the unfolding of a single thrust, the eros of the human spirit."⁵⁶ Conscious intentionality is a *unified* dynamism, ordered in the manner of a series of successive sublations. The existential level in particular "sublates the prior levels of experiencing, understanding, judging. It goes beyond them, sets up a new principle and type of operation, directs them to a new goal but, so far from dwarfing them, preserves them and brings them to a far fuller fruition."⁵⁷ As the knowing and choosing subject-as-subject is *one* subject, we should only expect that severe distortions at the cognitional levels of consciousness would somehow interfere with the exigencies of conscious intentionality at the existential level. What allowed Kierkegaard to be critically aware of neglected, truncated, and immanentist subjectivity to the degree that he was, was not a normative understanding of the cognitional levels as such, but rather a keenly intelligent sensitivity to the way these cultural aberrations violated his own felt sense of the existential dimension and what it required of him as a human being. I close by simply suggesting that it is not difficult to discern how Lonergan's ideal of *full* self-appropriation might prove complementary to Kierkegaard's critique of speculative aestheticism, to his normative retrieval of the ethical and the religious as existential dimensions, and finally to his

⁵⁶*Method in Theology*, 13.

⁵⁷*Method in Theology*, 316.

edifying notion that one must at all costs be faithful to oneself as an existential subject.

BOOK REVIEW

Transcendent Experiences: Phenomenology and Critique. By Louis Roy, O.P. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001. xiv + 219 pages.

In *Method in Theology* Lonergan speaks of the experience of being-in-love. These are of different kinds; there is the love between husband and wife, between parents and children. There is the love of friends and love of country. There is one experience of being-in-love, however, which reorients, or as Lonergan puts it "dismantles and abolishes the horizon in which our knowing and choosing went on. . . ." (*Method in Theology*, 106). This being-in-love is a conscious dynamic state. This is not to say that it is something one knows. Rather, it is an experience of mystery. "Because it is being in love, the mystery is not merely attractive but fascinating; to it one belongs; by it one is possessed. Because it is an unmeasured love, the mystery evokes awe" (*Method in Theology*, 106). What Lonergan is describing is an experience of the transcendent; it is the experience of God's love flooding our hearts. It is this kind of experience of transcendence that Louis Roy deals with in his new book, *Transcendent Experiences: Phenomenology and Critique*.

Roy's work is divided into three major parts with the chapters running consecutively. Part I is titled "A Phenomenological Approach." He begins by defining what he means by transcendent experience: "an event in which individuals by themselves or in a group have the impression that they are in contact with something boundless and limitless, which they cannot grasp and which utterly surpasses human capacities" (xi). Once this definition is in place, Part I fleshes out more clearly the nature of transcendent experiences. For Roy transcendent experiences entails six elements. First there is the preparation. By preparation Roy means the cognitive and affective disposition that sets the conditions, or conditions the experience. This preparation is "both long

and short-range during which time something has been fermenting in the personal life of the recipient of transcendent experience" (5). Second there is the occasion. Occasion is a particular type of natural event that sets off this experience from other similar types of experience. For instance, an occasion can be the hearing of a piece of music, a dream, an encounter with another person, or an action. In fact, Roy's description of this type of experience seems analogous to Lonergan's account of the experience of getting an insight. "It (occasion) can bring about a sudden release of tension that facilitates the emergence of a strongly novel feeling" (5). Third there is the predominate feeling of transcendence. This feeling has a special property. It suggests "the presence of an unlimited reality, possibly called life, light, love, goodness, cosmos and so forth" (7). Fourth, there is discovery. "A discovery is an insight, a discernment which strikes home. Such a disclosure has a cosmic import when it suddenly hits on something whose significance is unrestricted" (7). The fifth element is interpretation. One wants to know whether or not the experience is really an experience of the transcendent. Lastly there is the fruit of the experience. This concerns the benefits "obtained in terms of knowing, wisdom, attitude and motivation."

Using these six elements, Roy identifies four types of transcendent experiences: aesthetic, ontological, ethical, and interpersonal. The aesthetic occurs "in connection with nature or the cosmos ... The second type ... consists in feeling intellectually secure and grounded in a being that lies beyond contingency and nothingness ... The third ... is an apprehension of a value, such as justice, solidarity, kindness ... The fourth ... stems from the quest for loving and includes the sense of a special presence" (9-10). These four types are not to be thought of as stages one goes through with respect to the spiritual life. They are typologies with overlapping traits that help differentiate the type of experience with which one is dealing. After explaining these four types of transcendent experiences Roy offers the reader a series of personal narratives from a variety of sources to make more concrete what these experiences entail. Each narrative exemplifies one of the four types (aesthetic, ontological, ethical, and interpersonal) and also the six elements of a transcendent experience: interpretation, preparation, feeling, discovery, occasion, and fruit. For example, Roy

draws upon the writings of Clark Moustakas, a psychologist and essayist, for an account of an aesthetic transcendent experience. Moustakas recounts an experience in which he had become deeply saddened, depressed, psychologically wounded because of the way a close colleague had been unfairly maligned. He writes: "Nothing was real. It disturbed me to see each situation as contrived, as feigned ... A numbness had settled in, right at the center of my thought and feelings" (14-15). Later that evening, after his children had gone to sleep, he decided to take a walk. "The night was silent and serene in spite of the atmospheric turbulence. Suddenly without understanding in any way, I experienced a transcendental beauty in the white darkness" (15). This experience lifted from Moustakas his overwhelming sadness and despair to the point that "in communion with nature the self can reach a new dimension of optimism and a new recognition of the creative way of life" (15).

In the subsequent analysis of this narrative, Roy shows how all six of the constitutive elements of transcendent experience are present. The preparation for Moustakas's experience was the unjust criticism of a close friend and esteemed colleague. The occasion that makes this experience aesthetic is his encounter with nature, which produces a feeling of transcendence; which in turn "conveys his basic discovery: he is in communion with nature and its creative potential" (16). Moustakas then interprets the event as a new understanding of himself and the world around him; the fruit of this experience is a new strength and capacity to face painful conflicts. In fact, all of the other narrative examples that Roy provides, from Arthur Koestler's ontological experience, to an interpersonal experience as found in the novel *Dr. Zhivago*, are equally valuable because they enable the reader to see his or her own experience embedded in these different stories.

"Part II: Historic Contributions" is the longest section of the book. Here Roy deals with a considerable number of authors from the Western philosophical tradition and their particular take on what constitutes a transcendent experience: Kant and the Sublime, Schleiermacher and the feeling of absolute dependence, Hegel's dialectic of the infinite, William James's four marks of mysticism, Rudolf Otto and the Numinous, and lastly Maréchal, Rahner, and Lonergan and the transcendental nature of

human subjectivity. The strength of this section is that Roy's analysis of each of the aforementioned thinkers is not done in isolation. The strengths and limitations of each thinker are systematically and dialectically brought forward into each subsequent chapter so that by the end of Part Two all the authors that Roy treats are in conversation with one another. For example, when discussing Otto, Roy writes: "Otto insists on the difference between the numinous consciousness and the rational elements. He sees a trap in Schleiermacher's thesis that religious consciousness never occurs purely in itself, unmixed with sensitive consciousness. For Otto, this thesis seems to jeopardize the intuitive content of the numinous experience. So he invokes what James calls 'a sense of reality,' a feeling of objective presence, a perception of what we may call 'something there' as well as the unique bliss that characterizes that experience" (121).

Roy then ends Part II with Maréchal, Rahner, and Lonergan. For Roy, these three thinkers have not only incorporated and developed the insights of Kant, Otto, James, Schleiermacher, and Hegel with respect to the nature of transcendent experience, but have worked to overcome the philosophical limitations of these various thinkers. "They [Lonergan, Rahner, Maréchal] perfect the transcendental approach by accentuating the validity of our awareness of the infinite more than that admitted by Kant, post-kantians such as Schleiermacher and Otto, or the pragmatist James. However, they part company with Hegel as soon as he ventures into a speculative attempt at grasping the divine" (140).

In the final part, "The Validity of Transcendent Experiences," Roy addresses the question that has implicitly guided his work up to this point: can there be an experience of the infinite? Roy writes: "In order to answer this fundamental question, we will stand back from the details of the historical investigations carried out so far and focus on the most important insights obtained as we examined the thought of several philosophers on the infinite" (145). Roy then takes these insights that he has gleaned from his historical investigation and through the last two chapters works out a set of meanings for the basic concepts needed to understand transcendent experiences: experience, transcendence, the infinite, feeling, interpretation, and mediation. Ultimately, what Roy understands by each of these terms is grounded in his understanding of

critical realism. To give one illustration, Roy argues that "transcendent experiences do not provide knowledge ; they simply call attention to their 'object' — better called 'objective' — as supremely important. We may talk of a knowing stemming from them if we mean the conviction that they are unique and point to something essential. This 'something essential' we have called the infinite. We must agree with the constructivists that this transcendent is unknown. What they overlook is that the judgment by which religious experiencers claim to have encountered something real is perfectly valid, because it is grounded in human intentionality" (174). In short, Roy wishes to reinforce the fact that the dynamic orientation of human intentionality "is not merely open to the infinite it stands in a real relationship with it" (180).

Roy's book is a very good beginning for those looking for a succinct but clear account of the nature of transcendent experience, as well as how some of the important thinkers from the Western philosophical tradition have tried to grapple with the nature of this experience. He does a fine job of laying out his concerns and then developing his position. The real strength of the book is that it is written from a moving viewpoint. Each section and its concomitant chapters provide significant insights which are then brought forward into subsequent chapters to enrich and deepen and expand the reader's understanding of transcendent experiences.

However, I do have two minor criticisms. First, at times Roy seems to take for granted that the reader has prior familiarity with some of the technical terms he introduces, so little effort is made to explain the meanings or even the source of these terms. For example, in his discussion on Otto and the "Numinous," Roy introduces the concept "ideogram" when explaining Otto's understanding of the phrase "wrath of God." I would have found it helpful if Roy could have explicated the meaning and origin of the term and why Otto used it. Second, it would have been valuable if Roy had detailed more thoroughly why he picked the authors he did as opposed to some others. For instance, Nietzsche is an important voice, positive as well as critical, in dealing with questions of the infinite particularly his work, *The Birth of Tragedy*: "That striving for the infinite, the wing-beat of longing that accompanies the highest delight in clearly perceived reality, . . ." Likewise, Eric Voegelin's distinction between noetic

and pneumatic experiences of the transcendent could be considered a major contribution to philosophical reflection on transcendent experience.

These are minor criticisms. Overall I found the book illuminating and restrained in what it has attempted to do. In fact, in his conclusion Roy is quite modest in what he claims to have shown. "In themselves, however, transcendent experiences cannot settle the question of what (or who) is this infinite that has been foreshadowed" (154). Roy's point has not been to prove the existence of the infinite, absolute, God. It is, rather, to show that both men and women are by the very nature of their being open to the possibility of the infinite, and that indeed people do have experiences of the transcendent. In short, "people who have the strong impression that they have been touched by the infinite are right; they can trust their own interpretation provided they are willing to deepen it and, if necessary allow it to redirect their life ..." (187).

BRIAN J. BRAMAN

Philosophy Department

Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA

METHOD

Journal of Lonergan Studies

To: Business Manager,
METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies
THE LONERGAN CENTER
Bapst Library
Boston College
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467-3801

Please enter the following subscription(s) to *METHOD*:

- ☐ __ individual subscription(s) @ \$16 per year
- ☐ __ institutional subscription(s) @ \$28 per year
- ☐ This is a *renewal* of subscription(s) to *METHOD*.
- ☐ This is a *new* address.

Name _____

Address _____

Subscription orders must be prepaid in U.S. funds.
Please make checks payable to *THE LONERGAN INSTITUTE*.
Method subscriptions ordered on this form will begin
with the first (Spring) number of the 2002 volume.



recycled paper