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ANALYSIS OF FAITH

Translator's Introduction

Michael Shields, S.J.

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BERNARD LONERGAN COMPOSED "Analysis Fidei" in connection with his course lectures on faith to the Jesuit seminarians in Toronto in the second semester of the academic year 1951-52. As was his custom with other early Latin *opuscula*, he composed this work on his typewriter to give to students to retype and mimeograph for the class. One of the copyists, Walter A. Niesluchowski, has given us the precise date on which he finished this task with his notation on the last page: "wan - Toronto, March 8, 1952." It is interesting to note here that this was Lonergan's penultimate year in Toronto, a time, therefore, when he was heavily engaged in writing *Insight* in order to get it finished before leaving for Rome in the late summer of 1953. As Frederick Crowe has noted in his 1973 Regis College edition of this work, there are some echoes of *Insight* in it, particularly in §6 and §§57-59.

Of the four early Latin theological treatises in the Regis College edition, "Analysis Fidei" was the last to be written.¹ But its antecedents can be traced back twenty years, not only to Lonergan's years of teaching at the Collège de l'Immaculée-Conception in Montreal (1940-46) and in Toronto (1947-53), but, as we shall see, even to his student days in the 1930s.

In his professorial career, Lonergan is listed in the annual *Kalendarium* of the faculty of theology of the Immaculée as having taught

¹The others are "De Notione Sacrificii" (c. 1944), "De Ente Supernaturali" (1946), and "De Scientia atque Voluntate Dei" (1950).

the course "De fide" in his first year there, and, in his last year, courses on grace and the supernatural order for which he composed the work "De Ente Supernaturali." In his first year in Toronto he lectured on grace and on the supernatural virtues, when again "De Ente Supernaturali" was used as a sort of textbook for the course.

Prior to 1952, then, as far as an explicit treatment of faith is concerned, there is the brief one-page section on the supernaturality and formal object of faith in "De Ente Supernaturali" to which Lonergan apparently alludes in §22 of "Analysis Fidei." But there is also in the archives of the Lonergan Research Institute in Toronto a set of sixty-two typewritten pages of notes, all but two pages in Latin, on various topics concerning faith. The main headings are: Analysis of Faith, So-called "Scientific Faith," The Possibility of Believing, The Preambles of Faith and the Supernatural Element, The Assent of Faith, the Intervention of the Will, The Act of Theological Faith, Revelation, Dialectical Theology, Faith and Grace, Faith and Science, The Object of Faith, The Properties of Faith, The Light of Faith, and The Good, Love, and Friendship. The extraneous last page, mostly in English, is a brief discussion of the ontological argument for the existence of God.

Where do these notes come from? Presumably they would belong to the only other time Lonergan lectured on faith, namely, the course "De fide" in 1940-41. This is corroborated by comparing these pages with notes compiled for other courses taught in Montreal on the sacraments in general, on particular sacraments, especially the Eucharist, on creation, on eschatology, and on sanctifying grace. The same typewriter, which had a key for the symbol §, was used for them all, and the layout of the material is very much the same. Often there are lines or even paragraphs scratched out, and many handwritten marginal notations that are sometimes hard to decipher. As in those other sets of notes, there are numerous references to the theological manuals of Heinrich Lennerz, from which he derived much of his material, though not uncritically. Unlike "Analysis Fidei" and the other three short treatises, these notes were not composed to be a set of notes for the students but were apparently notes that Lonergan drew up for himself in preparation for the course he was given to teach.

Most extraordinary, however, of the antecedents to "Analysis Fidei" was a 25,000-word essay in English that Lonergan said he "put together ... upon the act of faith" in the summer of 1933.² That was the summer before he began the regular four-year course in theology, starting in September at the Immaculée and then transferring in November to the Gregorian in Rome. In the Lonergan archives there are thirteen pages of what are almost certainly remnants of this essay – thirteen pages out of thirty-six, including page 36, which seems to be the concluding page. It was typewritten, single-spaced, on lined foolscap paper; about 700 words to a page, which comes out to approximately 25,000 words.

Its central theme is assent. The first twenty-eight pages, of which eight are extant, seem to be a lengthy preliminary and mainly philosophical treatment of "the general scheme of human life into which the acts of assent and certitude must be fitted and of which they form parts" (p. 28). Lonergan ends this section with the assertion that "This [the higher life, 'the life of grace' (p. 27)] leads to the assent called faith ... and to that generic subordination of the will ... to the will of God ... as is expressed in the baptismal vows...." The concluding section, pp. 28-36 (of which pp. 29-31 are missing), takes up the question of assent and certitude, ending with the truth for man, namely, Christ. As Frederick Crowe has remarked, "The argument of the essay seems to have the majestic sweep that will be characteristic of Lonergan's work from now on."

That at age twenty-nine Lonergan would spend an idyllic summer holiday hammering out a lengthy essay on assent and faith shows how absorbed he was by such philosophical and theological issues at this relatively early stage in his life. One may speculate, why these issues and not others? At any rate, thanks to the preservation of this essay, fragmentary though it is, we can see that ideas expressed in "Analysis Fidei" had been percolating in his mind throughout the various

²Letter to his Provincial Superior, 22 January 1935; see Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., *Lonergan* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1992) p. 19 and note 49, p. 34. It would have been written during the holidays he spent with the Jesuit community in Kingston, Ontario, at their summer cottage on nearby Wolfe Island. One of the other young Jesuits there recalls that Bernie's typewriter could be heard clicking away "far into the twilight."

intellectual journeys he was to take during those nearly twenty years from 1933 to 1952.

This translation has been done from the autograph typescript, noting also the few minor and obvious errors that have been corrected in the Regis College edition. For the sake of easy reference, we have inserted the marginal paragraph numbers that were introduced in that edition.

ANALYSIS OF FAITH

Bernard Lonergan, S.J.

THE LOGICAL PROCESS

1 The logical process comprises two syllogisms:

(a) Whatever God knows and truthfully reveals to humankind is to be believed by us.

But this is something that God knows and truthfully reveals.
Therefore this is to be believed by us.

(b) If that which is to be believed by us exceeds the natural proportion of the human intellect, then we are in fact ordered and destined to a supernatural end.

But that which is to be believed by us exceeds the natural proportion of the human intellect.

Therefore we are in fact ordered and destined to a supernatural end.

2 Explanation of this second syllogism:

That which is to be believed by us is a good of the human intellect; that is to say, it is a good not only absolutely speaking, in the sense that every being is good, but also a good in relation to the human intellect, just as, for example, food is a good for an animal.

Now, that which is a good for the human intellect either lies within its natural proportion or else presupposes that the human intellect, and therefore also human beings themselves, are in fact destined to a supernatural end. The reason is that a good that is related to a certain potency is a perfection of that potency; a perfection, however, comes to a potency as that potency is either natural or obediential.

The major premise of the second syllogism, therefore, is an analytic proposition.

The meaning of the minor premise has nothing to do with either analysis or credibility or the truth of the mysteries of faith. It refers to a

fact that is clear to everyone, namely, that revelation is not set forth like a theorem in Euclidean geometry; indeed, it is proposed as a truth primarily to be believed rather than understood, since in fact it cannot be adequately understood in this life (DB 1796, DS 3016).

3 These two syllogisms can be combined into one, as follows:

Whatever God knows and truthfully reveals to humankind is to be believed by us; and if that which is to be believed exceeds the natural proportion of the human intellect, then we are in fact ordered and destined to a supernatural end.

But this is something that God knows and truthfully reveals to humankind, and it certainly contains truths that are beyond the natural proportion of the human intellect.

Therefore we are in fact ordered to a supernatural end, and hence all of divine revelation, including the mysteries, ought to be believed by us.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESS

4 There are two parts to the psychological process. Some acts remotely precede faith, while others more immediately lead to faith. Of those acts which remotely precede faith, the principal ones are the four judgments by which one affirms the truth of the four premises stated above; the secondary acts are all those that lead one to make these four judgments.

5 The acts which are more immediate to faith itself are these six:

First, the supernatural beginning of faith. It consists of a reflective act of understanding in which one grasps that there is sufficient evidence for reasonably eliciting next five acts.

Second, a practical judgment on the credibility of the mysteries. This consists in affirming that one is in fact ordered and destined to a supernatural end and that therefore belief in the mysteries of faith is a good for that person.

Third, a practical judgment on the "credendity"¹ of the mysteries. By this judgment one affirms that the whole of revelation, the mysteries included, ought to be believed.

Fourth, willing the end. In this act one wills the supernatural end to which one is destined, and intends to pursue it.

Fifth, willing the means. This is the "devout inclination to believe."² One acknowledges one's obligation to believe, and commands an assent of faith.

Sixth, the assent of faith itself, elicited in the intellect and freely commanded by the will.

THE REFLECTIVE ACT OF UNDERSTANDING

6 Growth in human knowledge is acquired in three steps:

The first step is experience, which consists in acts of the external and internal senses.

The second step is understanding. It begins from that wonder which is expressed in the question, What is it? It consists of two acts: first, the very quiddity, the "whatness," either of a thing or of a word, is understood; this is then expressed in a noncomplex inner word, through a definition, a thought, a consideration, or a supposition.

The third step is reflection. It begins from a critical uneasiness that is expressed in the question, Is it? It proceeds to gather and marshal all the evidence, whether found in sense data or in the memory, in definitions or hypotheses, or in previous judgments. When this evidence has all been collected and marshaled, it is, so to speak, weighed and measured in order to determine whether or not it is adequate for grounding a judgment. This reflection, weighing and measuring terminates in a reflective act of understanding in which one grasps that the evidence is either certainly or probably or possibly or doubtfully or not at all sufficient for making a judgment. Finally, in light of the evidence there

¹A nonce word, formed from the Latin *credendum*, "that which ought to be believed." (Tran.)

²Latin, *pius credulitatis affectus*. (Tran.)

emerges by a kind of rational necessity the judgment itself, a complex inner word.

IN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FAITH PROCESS THE REFLECTIVE ACT OF
UNDERSTANDING IS PIVOTAL

7 In any process, the pivotal act is that in which everything that precedes comes together, and everything that follows is anticipated and in some way grounded.

Now, in this reflective act of understanding everything that went before comes together. For those acts which remotely precede faith constitute a certain apprehension of the evidence for it, an apprehension which varies with different persons, being different in those who are learned and those who are not, and in those who have faith and those moving towards faith. It embraces many different acts concerning matters of philosophy, history, physics, apologetics. An entire lifetime could easily be spent in investigating and examining all these matters, unless one puts to oneself the reflective question about one's end and one's obligation to believe. But this question will surely remain fruitless unless one begins the laborious task of gathering and marshaling everything so as to be able to grasp how this question is to be answered. And if this is grasped, it is grasped in a reflective act of understanding.

8 Also, this same reflective act anticipates and in a way grounds all that follows. Faith is by no means a blind inner impulse (DB 1791, DS 3010). A rational nature differs from a blind and spontaneous nature in that the latter is governed by fixed laws while the former governs itself according to this absolutely universal law, namely, that the principle of sufficient reason must be obeyed. In order for this principle to be effective, future acts must be anticipated and then measured in accordance with this principle, so that thus anticipated and measured they may then be performed as having satisfied this principle. Human acts are reasonable to the extent to which they proceed from an intelligent grasp of their reasonableness. Thus a judgment is reasonable because it proceeds from a grasp of the sufficiency of the evidence. Volition is likewise reasonable because its object has been judged to be good, that is, in accord with reason; for the human good is to be in accord with reason.

9 Thus, in a reasonable psychological faith process the reflective act of understanding not only brings into a synthesis those acts preceding it but also weighs and measures them according to their bearing upon subsequent acts, namely, the practical judgments of credibility and credendity, the willing of a supernatural end and means, and finally the actual commanding and eliciting of the act of faith itself.

From all this it is sufficiently clear that the reflective act of understanding (1) supposes a transition from purely scientific and philosophical questions to a practical religious question, (2) gives unity to those acts that remotely precede faith, (3) collects and derives fruit from them, (4) grasps the reasonableness of all subsequent acts down to and including the assent of faith itself, and (5) grounds those same acts insofar as they are reasonably performed by a person.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LOGICAL AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESS

10 The logical process is an abstract representation of the psychological process. Thus, the logical syllogism contains three propositions which represent the objects of possible judgments. The psychological syllogism contains three acts of judging by which one reasonably affirms what is true.

The logical syllogism contains the word "therefore," which represents the object of a possible reflective act of understanding. The psychological syllogism contains the actual reflective act of understanding by which a person, in a spirit of critical reflection, apprehends by way of synthesis all the evidence to be found throughout those various acts and grasps that that evidence is sufficient to reasonably pronounce judgment.

11 The psychological faith process, however, adds something to both the logical and the psychological syllogisms. For in the reflective act of understanding that leads to the assent of faith, not only the judgment of credendity but also the free act of the will and the assent to be commanded are anticipated. Faith is no blind inner impulse.

Besides, these acts are anticipated, not so that they can be abstractly described, but that they be concretely performed. One anticipates, therefore, new obligations to be assented to through faith, a new life to be begun, new relationships of love towards one's neighbor, a new

submission of the mind to the magisterium of the church, and above all a new relationship with God to be entered into through the theological virtue of faith.

All of this clearly shows how gravely mistaken one would be who, being unaware of or ignoring this whole psychological process, would evaluate and judge the faith process solely on the basis of a logical analysis.

CONSTRAINT OF THE INTELLECT AND RATIONALIZATION

12 Objective intellectual constraint comes from the knowledge of things themselves, which are contradictorily the opposite of false judgments.

Subjective intellectual constraint (1) arises from experience, (2) is augmented by a clear insight and distinct conception, and (3) is brought to bear upon the intellect by reason of the law of the intellect, the principle of sufficient reason.

Hence demons, who by nature are extremely intelligent, experience the greatest degree of intellectual constraint. However, since they are not actually destined to a supernatural end, they know the revealed mysteries but not as a good for their intellects, and so cannot progress towards the assent of faith.³

But human beings who find the yoke of faith heavy and refuse to accept it do their best to avoid this intellectual constraint. So they look for reasons for asserting as false what is true and vice versa. This process is called rationalization, and as a result of it the church is continually faced with new errors to refute.

WHAT IS THE ANALYSIS OF FAITH?

13 Since science is the certain knowledge of a thing through its causes, the analysis of faith aims at resolving the assent of faith into all of its causes, intrinsic and extrinsic, proximate, intermediate, and immediate or first causes. This analysis, therefore, will be ontological, psychological, and typical: ontological, since it deals with things and acts; psychological,

³Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 2-2, q. 5, a. 2.

since these things are to be known and willed, and these acts are acts of the intellect and of the will; and typical, in the sense that it deals with what happens necessarily or at least contingently as a general rule.

Hence this question is not a matter of apologetics (What is the true faith?), nor a practical question (How to promote the true faith?), nor a question about logic (What premises lead to valid conclusions?). Rather, supposing the existence of an act of true faith, we ask, by reason illumined by faith, what that act is.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

14 Every finite being exists for an end. It has a form by which it is made proportionate to its end, it comes into being by an agent or mover, and it exists in a subject.

The subject, or material cause, of faith is *homo viator*, "man the wayfarer," that is, mortals during their course of life on earth.

Its end is the term to be known through faith, namely the one God in three persons, the present economy of salvation, Christ the incarnate Word, the church, and so forth.

Its formal object is truth, namely, truth revealed by God.

Note here that truth is in the intellect, in the assent itself. Good and bad are in things; the true and the false are in the mind. Also, logical truth is formally only in the judgment, the assent. This truth is in a way the form by which the act of faith is made proportionate to its term or end; for truth is the correspondence between the intellect and being. In other words, it is through truth that we know a thing.

Moreover, the formal object of faith is that truth which is the whole of revelation. "We believe that what God has revealed is true" (DB 1789, DS 3008); and "all things contained in the word of God and taught by the church as revealed are to be believed" (DB 1792, DS 3011).

The material objects of faith, therefore, are all those particular truths that are contained in the formal object. Thus to ask whether this or that is a matter of faith is to ask about the material object. By the same token, a heretic who believes some articles of faith while rejecting others attains material objects of faith but rejects the formal object. Similarly, a schis-

matic who rejects the revealed living magisterium of the church is equivalently heretical.

15 As to its efficient cause, remember that faith is produced in a rational intellect and therefore not by way of some blind law of causality but according to the principle of sufficient reason. This is why we speak of the motive rather than the agent or efficient cause of faith.

This motive is twofold. The motive of faith as acquired, faith *in facto esse*, is God himself as knowing and truthfully revealing. For faith is that kind of knowledge whose ultimate "why" is to be found in the knowledge possessed by another. The motive of faith as a process towards assent, faith *in fieri*, is the foundation of the psychological process by which one comes to make the assent of faith. As we shall see, it is found in those acts that constitute the remote and the proximate preparation for faith.

THE MOTIVE OF FAITH AS ACQUIRED

16 We are not concerned here with the psychological process that leads to the assent of faith. We are inquiring into the assent of faith itself, which is an act of a rational nature precisely as rational, and hence not only attains its object, as for example ocular vision attains color, but also imports a relationship to the reason, cause, motive, and ground for attaining its object.

It is of the very nature of faith that its ultimate motive is knowledge that is possessed not by the one who believes but by the one in whom one believes.

Why do you believe what has been revealed? Because it is the word of God. Why believe the word of God? Because God speaks truthfully; indeed, God cannot lie or deceive. Why do you believe God who speaks truthfully? Because one who speaks truthfully expresses what one has in one's mind, and there can be no question about what God has in his mind. He is omniscient; he cannot be deceived. God's knowledge, therefore, first truth itself, is the ultimate motive, ground, cause, and reason for faith. This point is clearly stated by the First Vatican Council: "... because of the authority of God who reveals, who can neither be deceived nor deceive" (DB 1789, DS 3008; see DB 1811, DS 3032).

The faithful agree with this. If you propose objections or doubts to them, they do not answer from what they know themselves but appeal to God who knows and truthfully reveals. They will even retort, "Do you think you know better than God?" Doubts about faith, therefore, are doubts either about God's knowledge or about his truthfulness and so must be resisted as one would resist temptations. Hence faith is infallible and absolutely firm, for God is infallible and supremely omniscient. Yet there is also an essential obscurity in faith by reason of its motive, since the motive of faith is God's knowledge, and we do not have knowledge of God as knowing.

17 We conclude, therefore, that the assent of faith as already possessed is not based on one's own knowledge, whether this was acquired through reason or through faith itself. Vatican I does not state that we believe truths because we either know or believe that God has knowledge and truthfully reveals them; it states that we believe "because of the authority of God who reveals them, who can neither be deceived nor deceive."

Moreover, "that which produces a certain perfection in another possesses that perfection all the more."⁴ If we had faith, therefore, because of some knowledge of ours, that knowledge would be the measure of our faith, and our faith could not possibly be any more solidly grounded or more certain than that knowledge. Nor can the assent of faith be made because of any knowledge of ours that is had through faith itself; this would involve circularity in reasoning, leading nowhere.

18 Here one may object that the assent of faith is made either on account of God's knowledge that is known or on account of God's knowledge that is not known.

In reply we say that the assent of faith is made on account of God's knowledge that is known both by reason and by faith itself; but the assent of faith is not made because God's knowledge is known, whether by reason or by faith, nor is it made insofar as it is known, whether by reason or by faith.

The question here is not about the object but about the motive of faith. This objection supposes or seems to suppose that the object of faith is attained only insofar as the motive is known. This is valid for science,

⁴The Latin tag is, *Propter quod unumquodque tale, et illud magis.* (Tran.)

but not for faith. Faith consists in this, that its ultimate ground is not one's own knowledge but another's. Here one can clearly see the problem of the reasonableness of faith, namely, how it can be that a person can know something not because of knowledge that that person possesses, but because of knowledge possessed by someone else.

THE SUPERNATURAL FORMAL OBJECT

19 It is a well-known principle in Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy that acts are known from their objects, habits from their acts, potencies or faculties from habits, and the essence of the soul itself from potencies.⁵ Well known also is this theological axiom: supernatural realities are to some extent understood by analogy from natural realities (DB 1796, DS 3016).

Accordingly, Thomistic theological analysis situates sanctifying grace in the essence of the soul; from grace flow the infused virtues just as potencies arise from the essence of the soul; from the virtues flow acts just as natural acts flow from habits naturally acquired; and acts attain the objects from which the acts themselves derive their species.

We conclude, then, that the doctrine on the supernatural formal object is based on methodological principles, both philosophical and theological.

20 Lennerz, however, makes this objection,⁶ that although specifically different objects determine the different species of acts, the reverse is not true. One can have different species of acts without having different objects. And he gives this example: a horse's act of seeing and a human's act of seeing have the same formal object, namely color. But these acts are of different degrees of ontological perfection, since equine vision proceeds from a material soul while human vision proceeds from a spiritual soul. Therefore, he concludes, it is wrong to deduce the diversity of formal objects from the ontological diversity between natural and supernatural acts.

⁵Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 2, q. 87.

⁶Heinrich Lennerz, S.I., *De virtutibus theologicis*, 4th ed. (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 4th edition, 1938) 177-80, §327.

21 To this objection we reply that an argument based on an example containing a false supposition proves nothing, and the above objection contains a false supposition.

Our position is that there is the same ontological perfection where there is the same formal object. A horse's act of seeing and a human's act of seeing are both material operations, the movements of a composite, that is, movements of an organ and a sensitive faculty, sight. As body and soul form a hylomorphic composite, so do sight and the eye form an accidental composite. Thus the act of seeing, whether in a horse or in a human, is a movement of that composite, namely, that which is composed of the eye and sight.

It is quite true, of course, that human seeing flows from a soul that is spiritual while that of a horse flows from a soul that is material. But it is not true that human seeing either exists or operates independently of matter; hence human sight is not a spiritual faculty. The human soul itself is spiritual since it is a subsistent form that can exist without the body and can operate independently of the body. But a human sensitive faculty is not a subsistent form: its operation is the movement of a composite and in this respect it differs from the act of understanding, which takes place without a bodily organ. Its proper existence is to exist in matter, and so in a separated soul the senses do not exist actually but only virtually.⁷

22 In a supplementary objection, Lennerz⁸ maintains that no supernatural object is clearly assigned, and that in fact those who favor that opinion forsake the object to take refuge in the motive.

This question, therefore, needs a fuller explanation. And having treated other supernatural acts elsewhere,⁹ we must now make a few observations here about the formal object of faith.

THOSE WHO BELIEVE PROPERLY ATTAIN A SUPERNATURAL FORMAL OBJECT

23 The absolutely supernatural is defined as that which exceeds the proportion of any and every finite substance. In the case of cognitive acts,

⁷Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1, q. 77, a. 8.

⁸*De virtutibus theologicis*, §§333-34.

⁹Apparently a reference to "De Ente Supernaturali" (1946), where the theological and other supernatural virtues in general were dealt with in Thesis III. (Tran.)

therefore, that act is supernatural which exceeds the proportion of any finite intellect.

Further, the intellect has two operations. The first operation is that by which the essence or quiddity of a thing is understood; and in this operation the object proportioned to the human intellect is the quiddity of a material thing. Hence the blessed in heaven attain a supernatural formal object through seeing God as he is in himself. But in this present life those who conceive either God or other supernatural goods by way of negation, analogy, and extrapolation, do nothing that exceeds the natural proportion of a finite intellect.

The second intellectual operation is that which attains truth and being. Since these notions are transcendental, they include absolutely everything. However, beings of different natures attain truth and being through different kinds of intellectual light, so to speak. Humans arrive at truth in accordance with their nature through the natural light of the human mind, angels through the natural light of angelic minds, and God through the natural light of the divine mind.

24 What is meant by this word, "light"? It refers to that power of the mind which gives rise to critical reflection and asks the question, Is it so?, about an essence it has understood and conceived. It is that power of the mind which, upon grasping the sufficiency of the evidence, makes judgment rationally necessary, and which, when the evidence is grasped as insufficient, makes judgment rationally impossible. It is that power of the mind which, when one has judged some good to be obligatory, exerts a moral constraint upon him as he deliberates, and fills him with peace when he wills so to act and with remorse when he refuses to do so. It is that power of the mind without which there is no inquiring about what is true, no assenting to evidence, no yielding to moral obligation. In humans it is no vain and empty word, is much less so in an angel, and least of all in God in whose image and likeness rational creatures are made.

We conclude, therefore, that that truth is supernatural which (1) is naturally unknowable by any finite mind, and (2) is attained through a proportionate light.

25 Now, the mysteries of faith are truths that cannot be known apart from divine revelation (DB 1795, DS 3015), that are beyond the created

intellect (DB 1796, DS 3016), and that cannot be understood or demonstrated even by a well-trained mind (DB 1816, DS 3041). Such truths are attained through a proportionate light, attained by God himself to whom divine light is natural, by the blessed in heaven who have an immediate vision of God and enjoy the light of glory, and by those who believe in the proper way and so do not cling to or rely upon their own light and their own knowledge but upon God's light and God's knowledge. For as we have seen, faith is that sort of knowing whose ultimate ground is someone else's light and knowledge. But as we have yet to see, the light of faith is that light given to us to enable us to adhere to God's light and knowledge.

On the contrary, those who do believe but not in the proper way do in fact attain the truth of the mysteries but not by a proportionate light. Demons rely on their own penetrating intelligence by which they come to recognize the mysteries as true. Heretics and schismatics yield to a purely human light in selecting those revealed truths which they consider to be more suited to their own personal bent or national culture or the spirit of the age.

AN ALTERNATIVE EXPOSITION OF THE ABOVE

26 (a) The act of faith is absolutely supernatural.

It is impossible for one to believe in the proper way without the grace of God (DB 179, DS 376; DB 180, DS 377; DB 813, DS 1553).

This grace is necessary not only for faith that is operative through love (DB 1814, DS 3035), but for faith itself, which is in itself a gift of God (DB 1791, DS 3010).

Faith is therefore a supernatural virtue (DB 1789, DS 3008).

(b) A supernatural act is specified by a supernatural formal object. For supernatural realities can be understood in some way; and this understanding is had through an analogy from realities that are known naturally (DB 1796, DS 3016). Natural knowledge of acts is obtained from their objects, according to Aristotelian-Thomistic methodology. Hence in treating supernatural acts theology will look for their specification from a supernatural formal object.

27 (c) The formal element in the act of faith is truth.

The act of faith is an assent (DB 1791, DS 3010). But that which is attained in a judgment or assent is truth, for the other elements of knowledge are already present in the question itself. For example, Do two and two make four? They do. Is God a Trinity? Yes. To any question the act of judgment or assent (1) as an act adds adherence to one alternative of a contradiction, and (2) as a cognitive act adds a true adherence, an adherence to that alternative of the contradiction which corresponds to reality.

(d) Supernatural truth is distinguished from natural truth not by the species of that which is known but by the intellectual light by which it is known.

Truth is transcendental, and so contains all truths within itself. Therefore the natural proportion of a finite intellect is not exceeded simply because one truly knows this or that. For the truth that is transcendental includes all that is true, just as being, which is transcendental, includes all that is. And as transcendental being is the adequate object of the intellect, so also is transcendental truth.

On the other hand, what does exceed the proportion of any finite intellect is the attainment of truth, not through the light it possesses naturally, nor through the light possessed by another creature, but through that light which exceeds the proportion of any finite intellect.

28 From all this we draw the following conclusions: from (a) above, we conclude that the act of faith is supernatural, from (b) that it is specified by a supernatural formal object, from (c) that its object as formal is truth, and from (d) that its object as supernatural is truth founded upon supernatural light.

Now this divine light (1) exceeds the proportion of any finite substance, (2) conceived as the principle of divine judgment makes it impossible for God to be deceived, (3) conceived as the principle of divine rational volition makes it impossible for God to deceive, (4) is therefore to be identified with the authority of God who in revealing cannot be deceived or deceive, and (5) is according to Vatican I the proper motive of faith in those who believe in the proper way.

ACTS WHICH IMMEDIATELY PRECEDE FAITH

29 The acts which immediately precede the act of faith are five acts listed in §5, above: the reflective act of understanding, the practical judgments of credibility and of credendity, and the acts of willing a supernatural end and means.

These acts exist if there exists an assent of faith that is free and has emerged reasonably.

For if the assent of faith is proximately free, it is an act commanded by a free act of the will.

But faith is a means to justification and salvation. Hence if reasonably willed it is willed as a means; and no one wills a means as a means without willing the end.

There exists, therefore, the willing of a supernatural end.

There likewise exist practical judgments concerning this end and this means; nothing is willed unless it is already known. For these judgments to be reasonable, they must proceed from a grasp of the sufficiency of the evidence, and this grasping that the evidence is sufficient is a reflective act of understanding.

30 These acts are supernatural, being specified by a supernatural formal object.

We suppose what we have proven just prior to this, that the assent of faith is an act specified by a formal object that is supernatural.

We also suppose what we stated in §8, that the reflective act of understanding anticipates the acts that follow upon it.

Putting these two suppositions together, we have our objective. For the object that is attained in believing properly is the very same object that is attained by willing to believe properly, by judging that one ought to believe in the proper way, and by grasping that there is sufficient evidence for one to so judge, will, and believe.

Again, as we remarked in §17, that which produces a certain perfection in another possesses that perfection all the more. Now, the willing and the assent of faith depend upon the willing of the end, and the willing of the end depends upon the judgment about the end. But the willing and the assent of faith are supernatural acts; all the more so, then,

are the acts in which they are virtually precontained and from which they flow as from their proximate proportionate causes.

31 There is a difference between the judgment about one's supernatural end and the natural desire to see God in his essence.

First of all, this judgment is an act of knowing; this desire is not a knowing but a wanting to know. It consists in that wonder which arises when one has come to know that God exists and which is spontaneously expressed in the question, What is God?

Secondly, this judgment regards the present state of humanity, that is, the actual ordering of human beings towards the vision of God. This desire regards the same end, not as actual, however, but as possible.

Thirdly, this judgment is a supernatural act that goes beyond the purview of philosophy (DB 1669, DS 2851), whereas this desire is purely natural.

ACTS WHICH REMOTELY PRECEDE FAITH

32 Of the acts that remotely precede faith, some are principal acts and others secondary. The principal acts are the four acts of judging by which the premises of the two syllogisms in §1 are affirmed. Secondary acts are those that lead to the principal acts, such as, for example, a sound philosophy and fundamental theology.

The principal acts do not exceed the natural proportion of the human intellect. We shall prove this, taking each premise separately.

1- *Whatever God knows and truthfully reveals is to be believed.*

In the words of Pius IX, "There is no one, surely, who does not know, no one, indeed, who cannot know, that whenever God speaks he is to be entirely believed, and that nothing is more in accord with reason itself than to acknowledge and firmly hold to those truths which one has recognized to have been revealed by God, who can neither be deceived nor deceive" (DB 1637, DS 2778). Now, whatever no one can be ignorant of does not exceed the natural proportion of human reason.

33 2- *This is what God knows and truthfully reveals.*

Pius IX again: "How many wonderful and luminous arguments are there all around us by which human reason ought to be quite clearly convinced that the religion of Christ is divine..." (DB 1638, DS 2779). If

reason ought to be thoroughly convinced of the divine origin of the Christian religion, knowing this fact does not exceed the natural proportion of human reason.

Pius XII, *Humani generis*: "... so many marvelous external signs have been displayed by God through which the divine origin of the Christian religion can be demonstrated with certitude even by the natural light of reason alone" (DB 2305, DS 3875).¹⁰

Pius XII again: "It is obvious how highly the church regards human reason, since it can even demonstrate with certitude the existence of ... God, and also prove irrefutably the foundations of the Christian faith from the indications given by God..." (DB 2320, DS 3892).¹¹

See also Vatican I, DB 1812, DS 3033; DB 1813, DS 3034; DB 1790, DS 3009; DB 1794, DS 3014; and DB 1799, DS 3019: "...right reason demonstrates the foundations of faith...."

34 3- *Human beings are in fact ordered to a supernatural end if God obliges them to believe what is beyond the natural proportion of the human intellect.*

This is an analytic proposition; see §2.

4- *Revelation goes beyond the natural proportion of the intellect.*

In the sense in which it is stated, this is obvious from the preaching of the faith; see §2.

Since the principal acts are not supernatural as to their substance, the same is all the more true about the secondary acts inasmuch as they lead to the principal acts--the existence of God, for example, which is the foundation of this entire matter (DB 1806, DS 3026).

THE GRACE OF CONVERSION TO FAITH

35 Grace that is supernatural in its substance ("elevating grace") is required for eliciting those acts that are proximately related to faith itself. The reason is that these acts are supernatural and specified by a supernatural formal object. See above, §30.

¹⁰ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 42 (1950), 562.

¹¹ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 42 (1950), 571.

According to the different needs of individuals, grace is required to elicit those acts that remotely lead to faith. In itself, this grace is "healing grace," supernatural in its manner.

36 *Grace is required.*

Pius IX: Human reason is wounded and weakened by original sin. And so the Pope asks, "Is there anyone who would think that reason is sufficient to arrive at truth?" (DB 1643, 1644).

Pius XII: "Indeed, the human mind can sometimes labor under difficulties even in reaching a certain judgment of 'credibility' concerning the catholic faith, even though so many marvelous external signs have been displayed by God through which the divine origin of the Christian religion can be demonstrated with certitude, even by the natural light of reason alone. For people are so led by prejudice and so driven by desires and bad will that they can reject those external evidences in front of their eyes and even resist those inspirations from above that God sends into our hearts" (DB 2305, DS 3875).¹²

Vatican I: "... God has willed to supplement the interior assistance of the Holy Spirit with external proofs of his revelation, that is, with divine acts, especially miracles and prophecies..." (DB 1790, DS 3009).

Just as faith itself teaches believers truths which can be known naturally so that all may know them readily, with firm certitude, and without any admixture of error (DB 1786, DS 3005), so also it is only fitting that God through his grace should help unbelievers to learn such natural truths.

37 *The need for this grace is not the same for everyone.*

Although original sin is common to all, it is present in people in different ways according to differences in personality, in erroneous and biased opinions, in bad will, and so on.

In itself this grace is healing grace, supernatural in its manner.

The reason is that what is directly intended is natural. As we have seen in §§32-34, those acts that remotely precede faith do not exceed the natural proportion of the human intellect.

38 *Steps by which the unbeliever is led to faith.*

¹² *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 42 (1950), 562.

The first step is unintentional on the part of the unbeliever but is intended by divine providence. Here the unbeliever elicits all acts for some natural end, which, however, when taken all together, will be remotely conducive to faith. Thus one can learn various natural sciences, philosophy, natural theology, history, ethical conduct, and so forth.

39 The second step is in accordance with the unbeliever's intention—not, however, a salutary intention, directed towards salvation, but only towards attaining naturally knowable truth. In this way a man, for example, who is an unbeliever may begin to study the Old and New Testaments, investigate miracles and prophecies, the history of the church and the councils, and so on. And if someone asks him why he is interested in these things, his reply would be that he is seeking truth. If one then objects that these studies will bring him to faith, his reply will be that if the faith is true, then it will be good for him to come to faith, but if false, he will not do so. If that one further objects that he will have to believe the mysteries of faith, his reply will be that it is reasonable to believe whatever God has revealed. And finally, if his objector says that it is impossible for a person by the natural light of reason to arrive at making a rational affirmation of the mysteries of faith, his reply will be that the adequate natural object of the human intellect is being and truth, and that since these are transcendental concepts they include absolutely all of reality. In a word, he seeks all naturally knowable truth, nothing more.

40 The third step is in accordance with a salutary intention. As yet our unbeliever is not convinced of the fact of revelation; nevertheless he wonders whether salvation is to be found among Catholics. He intends and wants salvation, and he wants a salvation that is true and genuine, not spurious or false. He wants it on condition that the truth be clearly seen, and so his will is conditioned. But as far as the will itself is concerned, the matter is already decided; for once that intellectual condition is fulfilled, he will immediately will unconditionally. If it is objected to him that he will have to believe the mysteries of faith, he will appeal not so much to transcendental truth as to supernatural truth. He possesses that hypothetical yet supernatural "devout inclination to believe" by which he wants to believe the mysteries of faith on account of the authority of God, provided that God has in fact revealed them.

41 In the fourth step, he comes to those acts that immediately precede faith. His intellect is enlightened by grace not only to inquire into but also to perceive that there is sufficient evidence for making a judgment about his actual supernatural end and about the obligation to believe. His will is inspired by grace to will that supernatural end and therefore to will the means to that end. Judgments follow reasonably upon the perceived sufficiency of the evidence, and these judgments and this willing of the end are in turn followed reasonably by an acknowledgment of the obligation to believe, by the command to assent to what has been revealed, and by the assent of faith itself.

42 *The graces needed for each of these steps.*

For the first and second steps, the action of divine providence, both exterior and interior, is sufficient, along with the healing graces that respond to the needs of each individual.

For the third and fourth steps, the absolutely supernatural graces of enlightenment and inspiration are required (DB 178-180; DS 375-77). In the third step, however, the grace of enlightenment is needed for an inquiry that is salutary, and so the grace of inspiration is needed for an act of the will that is hypothetical or conditioned. In the fourth step, the grace of enlightenment is needed not only for inquiry but also for understanding, and so also is the grace of inspiration needed both to will and to pursue absolutely and unconditionally a supernatural end.

43 All this must be correctly understood. We do not directly reject the opinion of those who hold that all grace that is actually given is elevating grace, which is absolutely supernatural. When we say that healing grace is sufficient for certain acts, we are speaking of cases that are hypothetical and abstractly defined. Those who maintain that all grace is elevating can prove their assertion by showing that those hypothetical cases never actually exist.

THE PROPERTIES OF FAITH

44 Faith, both as faith-in-process and as acquired, is reasonable.

Faith-in-process is reasonable because by the light of reason alone the evidence for it can be known with certainty and grasped as being

sufficient to reasonably elicit practical judgments, acts of the will, and the assent of faith itself.

Faith as acquired is reasonable from its very nature. For faith is that kind of knowing whose ultimate "why" is someone else's knowledge. But in divine faith this knowledge is God's knowledge; nothing, therefore, could possibly be more reasonable than divine faith.

45 The assent of faith is free.

This assent is immediately produced by the free command of the will. Nor is freedom lacking in the more remote phase of the psychological process, since every intellectual operation depends upon the will as to its exercise.

Note that faith is free because one comes to faith under the aspect of good. One proceeds to formal truth, which is found only in a judgment, in two ways: either under the aspect of intelligible description or explanation, or under the aspect of intellectual good. In the former case one attains either descriptive or scientific knowledge; in the latter case one attains faith. Therefore all faith is free by its very nature.

Note further that the reasonableness and the freedom of faith cannot be in conflict. Although reasonableness imposes a moral obligation, moral obligation obviously does not take away one's freedom.

46 The assent of faith is supernatural.

This assent attains supernatural truth, namely, first truth on account of first Truth; that is, it attains what God knows and truthfully reveals on account of the authority of God who reveals.

The proximate phase in the process towards faith is absolutely supernatural. From the entertaining of salutary thoughts to the assent of faith itself and to justification and salvation one is moved by God through the absolutely supernatural graces of illumination and inspiration. See §42.

The remote phase in the process does not in itself require grace; but in the concrete circumstances of human life, healing grace is needed and given. See §§36-37.

Note that there is no conflict between the necessity of grace and the reasonableness of faith. Healing grace is given for one to be reasonable, for unless a person is actually rendered reasonable, he or she will not be

led to faith by the reasonableness of faith. On the other hand, elevating grace is given to enable one to see the reasonableness of faith as acquired; for this reasonableness by which a person adheres to and relies upon God's knowledge is above nature.

47 The assent of faith is obscure.

The assent of faith is obscure by reason of its motive; for the motive of faith as acquired is the knowledge by which God knows, and humans do not have this knowledge.

It is obscure by reason of its principal object; this object is God himself enshrouded in those mysteries that only the beatific vision can penetrate (DB 1796, DS 3016; DB 1816, DS 3041).

But in itself faith is not obscure by reason of the motive of the psychological process by which one comes to faith, since it is founded upon premises that can be known by the light of reason alone.

The assent of faith is infallible.

The assent of faith is infallible because its motive is divine knowledge itself, while its object is that which God knows and truthfully reveals.

The assent of faith is supremely firm.

In the first place, the assent of faith is firm by reason of the infallibility inherent its motive and in its object. Secondly, it is firm by reason of divine grace which leads to it and enables one to persevere in it. Thirdly, it is firm by reason of the will, which is duty-bound to give God absolute service.

48 The assent of faith is irrevocable.

As long as a person believes, faith rests upon the highest motive, namely, the light of the divine mind, which can neither be deceived nor deceive. Besides, through the object of faith one learns that God exists, that God has revealed certain truths, that God has revealed those truths that are set forth by the living *magisterium* of the church. So long as there is faith, therefore, there is no room for doubt.

But if a doubt causes one to waver in one's faith, there is available as a counterargument the "sign raised aloft among the nations," namely, the church herself (DB 1794, DS 3014), supplemented by God's grace enlightening one's intellect to grasp the sufficiency of the evidence and to

will to have faith. God abandons no one unless he is first abandoned (DB 804, DS 1537; see also DB 1815, DS 3036).

THE NECESSITY OF FAITH

49 On the obligation to believe: DB 1789, DS 3008; DB 1810, DS 3031.

On the necessity of means: "... faith, without which no one ever receives justification" (DB 799, DS 1529); "faith is the beginning of salvation, the root and foundation of all justification, without which it is impossible to please God and be numbered among his children" (DB 801, DS 1532. See also DB 1793, DS 3012; DB 1645; DB 1172, DS 2122; DB 1173, DS 2123.)

The minimal object of faith must be explicitly believed: "...that God exists and rewards those who seek him" (Heb 11:6). See DB 1172, DS 2122.

Note that since what is implicitly believed must be contained in something else, it is impossible for everything to be believed implicitly.

50 The motive of faith is the authority of God who reveals (DB 1811, DS 3032). A decree of the Holy Office, March 4, 1679 (DB 1173, DS 2123) condemns the following proposition: "Faith in the broad sense, based upon the testimony of creation or some similar motive, is sufficient for justification."

Is the minimal object of faith a supernatural truth?

That God exists and rewards those who seek him can be understood in two ways. In the first way it is understood as a philosophical statement, and as such it is not the minimal object of faith; in the second way, understood as implicitly containing all that God has revealed, it is the minimal object.

Implicit belief in all that is revealed has as its motive the authority of God the revealer. This motive renders truth supernatural; for as we have seen, truth is natural or supernatural, not according to what is known, but according to the light by which it is known.

THE NECESSITY OF THE PREAMBLES OF FAITH

51 By the "preambles" we mean those foundations of faith that are known with certitude but not by divine faith.

Vatican I: "... faith rests on a most firm foundation" (DB 1794, DS 3014); "... right reason demonstrates the foundations of faith" (DB 1799, DS 3019). See also Pius IX, DB 1637, DS 2778.

What is mainly at issue here is the fact of revelation, a fact of which the church herself is "a powerful and permanent motive of credibility and an irrefutable testimony to its own divine commission" (DB 1794, DS 3013).

52 There are two cases to consider:

1- The case of those who go from being unbelievers to believers.

In their case it is sufficiently clear that the fact of revelation has to be known first from other sources before being believed by divine faith, for motion to a term precedes the attainment of that term. In this case, in moving towards the term one does not yet have divine faith, and yet certain knowledge of the fact of revelation is required for one to reach this term.

2- The case of those who have already accepted the faith on the teaching authority of the church.

These persons accept by divine faith the fact of revelation, for this fact is itself revealed. Hence three questions arise: (1) whether they have to know this same fact from other sources, (2) where they are to get such knowledge, and (3) whether in the absence of this knowledge they should doubt about faith itself.

53 As to the first question we note, first, that Pius IX, without making any distinction, insists upon a diligent inquiry into the fact of revelation so that faith itself might be a "reasonable service"¹³ (DB 1637, DS 2778); second, that Vatican I gives the same reasons for persevering in the faith as for embracing it (DB 1794, DS 3014); and third, that the same council refers to such preambles as foundations of the faith (DB 1794, DS 3013-14; DB 1799, DS 3019), implying that they ought to remain as a foundation even after one has accepted the faith.

The reason for this can be explained as follows. An act of judging or assenting is reasonable because it is preceded by another act in which one grasps the sufficiency of the evidence for making that judgment or assent. As the first assent of faith is reasonable because one has grasped the

¹³Romans 12:1, Vulgate, *rationabile obsequium*. (Tran.)

sufficiency of the evidence for it, so also are subsequent assents reasonable because of one's grasp of the sufficiency of the evidence for them. When we believe, we give assent to supernatural truths on account of the authority of God who reveals them. But in order to believe, in order to elicit such assent, we must grasp the sufficiency of the evidence for reasonably doing so. Hence the above argument concerning motion to and arrival at a term also applies here.

54 As to the second question, we note that according to Vatican I, first, the very fact of revelation is known through external signs, miracles, which everyone can understand (DB 1790, DS 3009; DB 1812, DS 3033; DB 1813, DS 3014), and also through the church herself as a sign and permanent motive (DB 1794, DS 3014); and second, in both cases God's grace is also present (DB 1790, DS 3009; DB 1794, DS 3014).

We affirm, moreover, that the fact of revelation can be known by the natural light of reason, but that the grace of God is required for that salutary thought-process whereby we examine the evidence and grasp that this evidence is sufficient for reasonably eliciting an act of faith.

55 Regarding the third question it must be said that faith is never to be doubted. First, because it is true; second, because it is necessary for salvation as a necessary means; third, because it is a gift of God, and is our possession more by his grace than by our natural knowledge of the preambles. In matters of faith, therefore, difficulties should not engender doubt: "Ten thousand difficulties do not make a doubt."¹⁴ But solutions to difficulties ought to be sought, while imploring God's grace that one's reason may be corrected to help it know the evidence, and that one's mind may be enlightened to help it grasp the sufficiency of that evidence. See DB 1794, DS 3014; DB 1815, DS 3036.¹⁵

56 Here one might make the following objection. The sufficiency of evidence cannot be grasped unless the evidence itself is known. But very few people seem to know this evidence. Catholic children, uneducated adults, persons learned in other fields of knowledge but ignorant of philosophy and fundamental theology – what do they really know about

¹⁴A well-known saying of Cardinal Newman, *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, Chap. 5, *init.* (Tran.)

¹⁵On Hermes's doubt, see Lennerz, *De virtutibus theologicis*, p. 17, note; on the errors opposed to this definition, Lennerz, p. 231.

the proofs of God's existence, about deductions concerning the divine attributes, about the authenticity of the New Testament, about the possibility of miracles and proofs of their occurrence, about the extraordinary spread of the church, the outstanding instances of holiness in her, and her unity and unshakable stability? Why, seminarians themselves are quite content with sketchy outlines of such proofs, while their professors have a more or less thorough knowledge of one or other part of this material but not the whole of it!

57 In answering this objection, we must first of all distinguish between the knowledge of something and the solution of difficulties. Take, for example, the certain knowledge of God's existence. It is easy enough to prove that God exists; but it is quite difficult to enter into the mind of Spinoza, Kant, Hegel, Heidegger, or Husserl and refute their errors fairly and accurately.

Next, we must distinguish between knowledge itself and the way it is expressed. This distinction is aptly illustrated by Newman's observation that although we are all absolutely certain that Britain is an island, we should nevertheless consider it a most arduous and troublesome task to produce a clear, cogent, and incontrovertible proof of its obvious insularity.

The reason for this is the fact that judgment proceeds from a reflective act of understanding, and that this act brings into synthesis many different elements according to their proportion to the judgment anticipated. This synthesis and this perceived proportion is neither a non-complex word nor a complex word and hence cannot be directly expressed either interiorly in the mind or exteriorly in speech; but by means of such expressions it can be indirectly communicated and is actually received in proportion to the intelligence, knowledge, wisdom, and prudence of the one receiving it.

58 Third, note that a similar difficulty arises when we wish to account for some knowledge that we have. We can do this by asking whether the thing is so or not, and simply answering, as the Lord said, Yes, yes, or, No, no. But if we ask how we come to know what we consider to be true, we get involved in the extremely difficult analysis of rational psychology,

and would do well to recall Aquinas's dictum that it requires a painstaking and subtle inquiry to come to know what the soul is.¹⁶

With the foregoing observations in mind, we make our argument against the objection by conceding the major premise but denying the minor. In proof of this, while granting that uneducated persons are unaware of subtly contrived difficulties, and granting also that both the learned and the unlearned are unable to explain in words the whole of what they know, we deny that they do not know with certainty that evidence the sufficiency of which can be grasped in order to make practical judgments.

59 Here we must add that knowledge of the evidence and the grasp of its sufficiency enter into the production of a judgment or assent in different ways. Knowledge of the evidence is as the material or as an instrument; and the grasp of the sufficiency of the evidence is as the form or as the principal cause. For evidence, however abundant and accurate and detailed it may be, is of no avail unless it is grasped as being sufficient. On the other hand, even scanty and scattered evidence, as long as it is sufficient and its sufficiency is grasped, validly grounds and by a certain rational necessity engenders a judgment.

It is for this reason that everyone, adults and children, and learned and unlearned alike, have the same proximate foundation for their faith, namely, a grasp of the sufficiency of the evidence which is had through God's grace of enlightenment. What is different in different persons is not this grasp of sufficiency but knowledge of the evidence.

60 We may further conclude to the reason why we need to rely upon external criteria.

The first reason is because God's grace enlightens us to inquire into and grasp the sufficiency of the evidence. The grace of God, therefore, is one thing, but quite another is that into which we inquire and whose sufficiency we grasp.

Next, what we inquire into are, appropriately, external realities, such as miracles, prophecies, and the sign raised aloft among the nations, since such things are clear and evident, almost palpable. But concerning the loftiness of the doctrine, each one makes a judgment in accordance with

¹⁶Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1, q. 87, a. 1 c.

his or her intelligence, knowledge, and wisdom, which are different in different persons. Interior psychological facts, although they could be miraculous, are not easily distinguishable from what is simply abnormal.

Third, as is established in the treatise on grace, supernatural grace itself is not within the scope of human knowledge. Although we may form a conjecture about our own supernatural condition, we cannot know that this same condition is supernatural; for acts are supernatural by reason of their supernatural objects, and these we understand only imperfectly (DB 1796, DS 3016).

THE FAITH OF HERETICS, OF DEMONS, AND OF THOSE WHO HAVE KNOWLEDGE

61 First, can heretics believe by divine faith?

Let us take the case of a man who is a heretic but affirms the truth of Christ's divinity. The question then is whether he can affirm that truth by divine faith.

In the first place, he affirms this truth inasmuch as he assents to what is divinely revealed on account of the authority of God who has revealed it. Secondly, if he does this, it would seem fairly easy to retrieve him from heresy, for his belief does not rely upon his own knowledge or natural inclination or his national culture but upon God's knowledge itself, and so the way is open for him to go on to embrace all the revealed truths. Thirdly, however, a heretic must not be said to believe by divine faith simply because he accepts the truths of faith as true; for he could be doing so not on account of the authority of God as revealing them but because of family or cultural tradition or other human motives.

62 Next, what about the demons who, according to James 2:19, "believe and tremble"? Aquinas interprets this as referring to the constraint of their intellects.¹⁷

Objective constraint comes from things themselves and the evidence for them. Subjective constraint results from the keenness of the diabolic mind; for demons are pure spirits and cannot indulge in silly human rationalizations.

¹⁷On intellectual constraint, see above, §12 and note. (Tran.)

This constraint follows upon the syllogisms with which we began our analysis of faith and leads to the truth of faith itself. By this analysis we have established that we come to an affirmation of supernatural truth from external signs through grace and in freedom. This is clear not only to us but to the demons also. They therefore by their own intellectual light can acknowledge the mysteries under the aspect of transcendental truth; but because they do not believe on the authority of God who reveals them, they do not attain supernatural truth, even though they may arrive at the notion of supernatural truth, a notion that does not exceed the natural proportion of the intellect.

Finally, faith in those who have knowledge, which is called "scientific" faith, is the same kind of faith. For it rests upon the assertion that what is true must be believed, and this assertion is based upon a knowledge of the nature of belief, both natural and supernatural.

THE MEANING OF "RIGHT REASON DEMONSTRATES THE TRUTH OF FAITH"

63 This statement is found in an encyclical of Pius IX, November 9, 1846 (DB 1635, DS 2776). The error the Pope was refuting was that of those self-styled philosophers who had the effrontery to teach openly and publicly that the sacred mysteries of our religion were fabrications and human inventions.

So much opposed was the Pope to the opinion of George Hermes that a few months later he took the occasion to reaffirm the condemnation of Hermes by Gregory XVI in 1835 (DB 1618-21, DS 2738-40). See DB 1639, note 1.

This passage, therefore, is not to be understood as if the assent of faith were not free or were arrived at by compelling reasons, or as if grace were not required for the act of faith itself (DB 1814, DS 3035). Nor is "right reason" to be taken as simply identical with that "human reason" which the Pope describes as having been wounded and weakened by original sin (DB 1643).

64 The Pope's meaning is quite clear from his very words:

DB 1636, DS 2777: The catholic religion derives its entire validity from the authority of God, and can never be deduced or perfected by human reason.

DB 1637, DS 2778: the Pope states the principle of credendity.

DB 1638, DS 2779: he applies this principle to the fact of revelation.

DB 1639, DS 2780: he concludes that it is to be believed.

From this it seems sufficiently clear that the Pope was speaking about the logical process in which a true conclusion is deduced from true premises.

THE PROBLEM OF DESIRE IN HUMAN KNOWING AND LIVING

Lonergan's Contribution to a Solution

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MOST RELIGIOUS AND philosophical traditions agree that desire plays a role in human knowing and living. Ancient ascetic and monastic traditions – Hindu, Buddhist, Greek, and Christian – have often understood desire as a potential obstacle to ethical living. Practitioners of these traditions have variously called for an elimination, redirection, or subordination of desire to a higher entity as the antidote to human suffering and conflict. Central thinkers in the modern Western tradition, most notably Kant, have understood eros to be too problematic, too self-referential, to merit inclusion in moral living. A great number of contemporary philosophers and theologians condemn these approaches as dualistic and disembodied and call for an elevation of desire over (what they see as) the manipulative, controlling reason of modernity. Such vast divergences of opinion lead one to wonder what is the proper role of desire in human living. Does desire impede or aid human beings in living ethically? Does desire need to be eliminated, ignored, limited, redirected, transformed, or liberated in order for human beings to live responsibly?

In *Insight* Lonergan develops some distinctions that could shed light on these issues. At first glance, Lonergan seems to contradict himself on the subject of desire. In one sense, desire is to dominate human living. In another sense, desire is to be excluded from human knowing and doing. How can desire be both requisite for and inimical to ethical living? Lonergan can make this assertion because he distinguishes several kinds of desire that shape the process of knowing and doing. The detached and

disinterested desire to know is the kind of desire that ought to dominate human living. The desire to know orders the other kinds of desire to ethical ends, unless "spontaneous desires and fears" intervene. In this paper I will analyze Lonergan's understanding of desire as articulated primarily in *Insight* and show how his differentiations bring much-needed clarity to the discussion of desire's role in human living.

In some ways, Lonergan's solution to this puzzle most resembles the Platonic solution: bring the passions under the control of reason. This resemblance makes sense in light of Lonergan's indebtedness to the Greek philosophical tradition. Lonergan reinvigorates and builds on this tradition, though, through his singular understanding of what is meant by "reason," developed at great length in *Insight*. In contrast to the Platonic solution, Lonergan's understanding of reason has everything to do with desire, for reason itself is the unfolding of the detached and disinterested desire to know. One is first struck by the paradoxical quality of this notion of desire. Is not detachment the very antithesis of desire? How can a person be both disinterested and desirous? Lonergan invites his readers to discover this dynamic orientation operative "deep within"¹ themselves, the "drive to understand" which emerges "when the noise of other appetites are stilled," which has the power to withdraw humans from "other interests, other pleasures, other achievements," send them on "dangerous voyages of exploration," and "demand endless sacrifices." This desire to know is "the dynamic orientation manifested in questions for intelligence and for reflection."² It is the "pure question" that gives birth to all questions. Lonergan repeatedly likens it to the wonder that for Aristotle is the beginning of all philosophy.

This desire is peculiar. Lonergan calls it "pure" because it "differs radically from other desire." The pure desire to know "is to be known, not by the misleading analogy of other desire, but by giving free rein to intelligent and rational consciousness." This desire "pulls man out of the solid routine of perception and conation, instinct and habit, doing and

¹Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 5th ed., ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 28.

²*Insight*, 373.

enjoying.”³ Though the pure desire to know does not unfold in sensual fields of enjoyment, it does demand satisfaction. But the kind of satisfaction it demands is different. The pure desire to know hungers for the correct content of the acts of knowing. It is not brought to rest by an initial satisfaction as are other desires, but it “heads beyond one’s own joy in one’s own insight to the further question [of] whether one’s own insight is correct.”⁴ This kind of desire is satisfied only with the attainment of the virtually unconditioned, which is “independent of the individual’s likes and dislikes, of his wishful and his anxious thinking.” And the objective of the detached and disinterested desire to know is nothing short of the totality of being.

The detachment of the pure desire to know is in some sense specified by the independence of its objective. Similarly, the unrestricted nature of the pure desire is specified by the unrestricted nature of being. Being includes all that is known and all that is unknown, as it is “what is to be known through the totality of true judgments.”⁵ Lonergan argues that the infinite nature of the pure desire to know anticipates the all-inclusive nature of being. The unrestricted nature of the pure desire to know means that it does not cease upon the answering of a single question, but rather that one answer may give rise to a whole new set of questions of equal or greater urgency. Positing Aquinas’s definition of God as an infinite act that understands everything all at once, that knows being in full, Lonergan argues that knowledge of God alone satisfies the unrestricted desire to know. This satisfaction is not ordinary, however, for satisfaction in an ordinary sense implies an end to desiring. The pure desire is satisfied through the vision of God, who himself is an unrestricted act. Hence, the satisfaction paradoxically involves a fulfillment that is itself infinite or unrestricted.

Intellectual eros is unique in another sense, in that it does not have a specific content. The pure desire to know is only anticipatory. Lonergan describes it as an orientation without content.⁶ Though it heads for a

³ *Insight*, 373-74.

⁴ *Insight*, 619

⁵ *Insight*, 374-75.

⁶ *Insight*, 379.

specific content, it does not know what that content will be, but only the form of that content, which is the virtually unconditioned. The pure desire is equally peculiar in the way it proceeds to its objective. Unlike other desires, the pure desire to know sets up a normative process for its satisfaction. It moves the individual from questions for understanding, to the answering of those questions, and onto questions for judgment and the grasping of the virtually unconditioned in the answering of those questions.

In contrast to empirically conscious desires like hunger, the pure desire to know is intelligently and rationally conscious. It proceeds to its objective "by desiring to understand and by desiring to grasp the understood as unconditioned."⁷ As intelligently and rationally conscious, the detached and disinterested desire knows when its objectives have been met. In defiance of empiricist assumptions about knowing, Lonergan locates the norms for objectivity in the pure desire to know – in authentic subjectivity. An empiricist would make the object of knowing like the object of experience by requiring it to be "already out there now." Lonergan draws a sharp distinction between the two kinds of objects, so that the pure desire to know seeks an object not found in experience but reached through the grasping of a virtually unconditioned by the answering of all further relevant questions. Hence the pure desire itself promotes objectivity by opposing obscurantism though its unrestrictedness and by countering the inhibitions and reinforcements of other desires through its detachment and disinterestedness.⁸ The objective rigor of the detached and disinterested desire to know is proven by the uneasiness that follows a hasty judgment. Uneasiness signals a failure to ask and answer every question relevant to the judgment at hand; failure to ask and answer all relevant questions increases the likelihood of erroneous judgments. Even in cases in which incorrect data causes error, such error is caused not simply by the empirical absence of data, but by the fact that the absence of data leads either to erroneous questions or to failure to ask and answer all relevant questions. The pure desire to know

⁷ *Insight*, 404.

⁸ *Insight*, 404.

sets up even the norms for questioning, so that no part of the cognitional process escapes its demands.

In reaching out for its objective, the pure desire to know may come into conflict with desires that spontaneously intrude as a result of dramatic, individual, group, and general bias. Again, Lonergan's call for the dominance of a "pure" and "detached" desire in and an exclusion of alien desires from cognitional process resembles philosophical and ascetic traditions that call for the rule of reason over the passions. But Lonergan's explanation of why the cognitional process must exclude other desires lends clarity to this ancient intuition. Lonergan does not denigrate bodily or sensible desire *per se*, as do some Platonic texts.⁹ Rather than viewing passionate attachment in bodily terms, Lonergan develops the psychological aspects of passion in his understanding of bias, which impairs cognitional process by interfering with the proper unfolding of the detached and disinterested desire to know. For example, individual bias or egoism causes one to be interested only in the solving of one's own problems. Lonergan calls this biased self-interest "spontaneous" desire, a description that points to its refusal to let go of the spontaneity and immediacy of intersubjective experience that "radiates from the self as from a center."¹⁰ Though spontaneous intersubjectivity is not in itself problematic, egoism wants to solve every problem from this spontaneous point of view, to judge the worth of a solution primarily in terms of the immediate advantage it fetches for the individual. As a result individual bias limits the detachment and disinterestedness of cognitional process to personal problem solving and excludes further relevant questions about whether solutions are compatible with the social order that exists, or with the human good as a whole.

Thus Lonergan's approach to the philosophical tradition on the passions would be dialectical. While he does call for a dominance of the pure desire to know in human intelligence, this dominance does not mean a denial of bodiliness or suppression of sensual desire but a liberation of the pure desire from the effects of bias. Lonergan, in contrast to Plato,

⁹ See Plato, *Phaedo* (Phaidon), in *Great Dialogues of Plato*, trans. W. H. D. Rouse, ed. Eric H. Warmington and Philip G. Rouse (New York: Penguin, 1999), 465-70.

¹⁰ *Insight*, 245.

does not see the material and spiritual elements of the human as antagonistic to one another. At the same time, Lonergan does not react to the dualistic aspects of Platonic and Cartesian thought by exalting eros over and against a reason stereotyped as conniving or manipulative. Rather than settling for such hyperbolic polarities, Lonergan affirms the unity and complementarity of the material and spiritual elements in the human. Of all things that exist in the known universe, human beings are unique in that their central form is both material and spiritual. Indeed the human is "the point of transition from the material to the spiritual."¹¹ The human's materiality, while intelligibly comprised of highly intricate conjugates, is not intelligent in Lonergan's strict definition of this term. He says that "as the center of sensitive experience, [man's central form] is material; as the center of the transformation of sensitive experience by the imposition of an intellectual pattern, and as the origin and ground of inquiry and insight, reflection and grasp of the unconditioned, it emerges as spirit."¹² For Lonergan, then, the emergence of the pure desire to know and its concomitant cognitional process are what constitute the human as spiritual. This spirituality does not imply a debasement of the human's materiality, but Lonergan does affirm that material reality, which is intrinsically conditioned by prime potency, is distinct from spiritual reality, which is only extrinsically conditioned by prime potency. This difference effectively means that "material reality cannot perform the role or function of spiritual reality but spiritual reality can perform the role and function of material reality."¹³ Spiritual reality can serve as the ground and center of material conjugates, but material conjugates are not capable of governing the spiritual ones. Thus the senses are not inherently antagonistic to reason, as some Platonic texts would imply. Nor does reason naturally suffocate or diminish the material element of the human. Reason does take a priority over the material element, but only in the sense that the conjugates of reason systematize material conjugates, and not vice versa.¹⁴

¹¹*Insight*, 542.

¹²*Insight*, 342.

¹³*Insight*, 543.

¹⁴*Insight*, 464.

Hence the dominance of the detached and disinterested desire in cognitional process does not amount to a dominance of mind over body or spirit over matter, for matter and spirit coexist in an intelligible unity. There is a danger, though, that those with postmodern sensibilities will equate Lonergan's call for the "dominance" of detached and disinterested desire with a Machiavellian or Baconian program of forcing nature to submit to reason. But those who read Lonergan closely will realize that he would see the latter project not as consonant with the dominance of the pure desire to know but as an instance of bias interfering with that desire. While powerful, the detached and disinterested desire to know is vulnerable to such interference, so that many humans only appropriate it to a limited extent. In contrast to the calculating, willful reason of modernity, the pure desire to know is "merely spontaneous" and may be "overruled by the will" if it is not supported by a "deliberate decision and a habitual determination of the will itself."¹⁵

This point helps to answer the objection that the detached and disinterested desire to know has little to do with human living. The pure desire to know may have a role in the laboratory, but does it not recede when met with the dramatic complexity of intersubjective and moral existence? To answer "yes" to this question is to underestimate the reach and urgency of this desire, which "grasps intelligently and reasonably not only the facts of the universe of being but also its practical possibilities."¹⁶ The will is the intellectual appetite that constitutes the means by which the detached and disinterested desire "extends its sphere of influence from the field of cognitional activities through the field of knowledge into the field of deliberate human acts." The will is not separate from, but an extension of the detached and disinterested desire into the realm of possibility. The pure desire to know does not terminate in fact, but through the capacity of the will it explores concrete possibilities for human living. The will, in receiving and undertaking the proposals of the intellect, is rational, and the intellect, in conceiving of and presenting these proposals, is practical.

¹⁵ *Insight*, 723.

¹⁶ *Insight*, 622.

Another way in which Lonergan explores the connection between intellect and will is by analyzing the structure of the human good, which he defines in three ways. The first definition of good is as the object of empirically conscious desire. This good includes all of the various desires that humans have as material beings; such goods bring elementary enjoyment and satisfaction, and their deprivation results in pain.¹⁷ The second kind of good is not available to empirical consciousness but is only recognized by intelligent and rational consciousness. Lonergan calls this good the "good of order." As spiritual reality orders the material manifold in human beings, so the good of order systematizes the first kind of goods into schemes of recurrence, so that "an otherwise unattainable abundance of satisfactions" becomes attainable.¹⁸ In contrast to empirical desire, which is not intelligently and rationally conscious, the detached and disinterested desire to know grasps the "formal intelligibility" of the good of order through raising and answering questions. Again, empirically conscious desires are not eliminated or demeaned, but rather they are subsumed and ordered by intelligent desire. But detached and disinterested desire does not stop at the good of order, for it is also able to deliberate between possible goods of order and to choose some over others according to a third aspect of the good, value. Lonergan defines value heuristically as what is grasped through deliberation, judgment, and choice. As understanding subsumes and orders the data of experience into an intelligible pattern, and the good of order is a further integration of the manifold of desires on the first level of the good, so also the good of value stands to the goods of order as an intelligible ordering and further integration of those goods. Without the various goods of order there would be no occasion for choosing between them, and hence no value. Value becomes intelligible only through the existence of several possible goods of order and deliberation over the differences between them.¹⁹

The detached and disinterested desire, then, has everything to do with human living, for it brings humans from an awareness of particular

¹⁷ *Insight*, 619.

¹⁸ *Insight*, 620.

¹⁹ *Insight*, 624, 629.

needs and wants, to a recognition of a possible ordering of those wants, and an identification of differing values among orders. The exigencies of the pure desire in questions for understanding and judgment apply equally in questions for decision. The relentless questioning that makes possible a virtually unconditioned in the realm of fact persists as human beings seek to discern the values by which they ought to live, for "rational consciousness demands in the name of its own consistency its extension into the field of doing."²⁰ For Lonergan it is the exigence of the pure desire to know operating in the field of doing that constitutes the moral imperative. While Lonergan uses Kant's language to name this dynamic exigence that is the root of ethics, Lonergan differs sharply with Kant on the content of the moral imperative. Whereas Kant secures the universality of the imperative by severing it from any specific content, Lonergan's imperative, the judgment of value, is inextricably bound to the concrete situation in which the judgment is made. The object of the judgment of value is the good, but the good for Lonergan — in contrast to Kant's abstract, stark notion — is concrete and complex. This complexity does not endanger the integrity of the pure desire that grasps it, however. For Lonergan the moral imperative is an extension of the already self-consistent, detached, disinterested desire to know. The pure desire to know is by its very nature detached, in the sense that it does not settle for half-truths or mistakes. The word "pure" connotes this aspect of intellectual eros, because of which it seeks not just universals, but a concrete content, and not just any content, but a correct content. Even more importantly, it seeks dominion not just in the field of human knowing, but also in the field of human acting, and in the latter its demands for correct understanding and affirmation are just as great.

At the same time, Lonergan acknowledges that the consistency of detached and disinterested desire does not always operate in human endeavors, intellectual or moral. In both intellectual and moral realms a person must be attentive to and cooperate with the exigencies of the pure desire to know. Even though every human being possesses this kind of desire, each must in some sense discover it amid the polyphony of his consciousness, which often resembles a cacophony more than a

²⁰*Insight*, 625.

symphony, especially when an individual has been subject to severe psychic trauma. Even if the pure desire to know is frequently recognized, humans find many ways to escape its demands, ways that Lonergan identifies as avoidance of self-knowledge, rationalization, and moral renunciation.²¹ Lonergan also describes this failure to live in accordance with the pure desire to know as the failure to reach full rational self-consciousness, and as the distortion of cognitional structure by the "intrusion of alien desires."²²

Lonergan's use of this phrase in *Insight* is reminiscent of ascetic texts that call for a conversion of desire from the ephemeral things of the world to the rewards of eternal life. Christian ascetics speak often in terms of a redirecting or conversion of desire, a retraining of the stream of desire toward its proper object.²³ Lonergan's analysis agrees with these approaches insofar as intellectual eros makes possible an ordering of empirically conscious desires in light of the good being sought. However Lonergan does not view this change as the elimination or redirecting of a single stream of desire, but rather he calls for the appropriation of intellectual desire. This process involves a significant shift in the subject's pattern of experience and may result in the reordering of many desires according to the judgments of the detached and disinterested desire.

In *Insight* Lonergan speaks of this shift as an achievement of a habitual orientation or decision to live in accord with the demands of intellectual eros. He describes this decision as a decision against the despair that "allows man's spirit to surrender the legitimate aspirations of the unrestricted desire and to seek comfort in the all too human ambitions of the Kantian and the positivist."²⁴ Counterpositions succeed by appealing to the tendency toward despair, not because of the "superficial confusion generated by the polymorphism of human consciousness." Platonic texts often blame human moral failure on the fragmentation of

²¹*Insight*, 622-23.

²²*Insight*, 626-27.

²³For an example of this approach see Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Loving God*, in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works*, trans. G. R. Evans, ed. John Farina (New York: Paulist Press, 1987).

²⁴*On Loving God*, 723.

consciousness among many desires, or on the misdirection of desire toward material, rather than spiritual objects.²⁵ While these factors may play a role in human moral disintegration, for Lonergan they are consequent to the original sense of despair that cripples the innate wonder that all humans have. Lonergan highlights the crucial role played by despair in causing a person to surrender their intellectual and moral integrity. The healing of despair also seems to be the source of healing the fragmentation and disordering of desire. When an individual's faith in the integrity of human knowing and in the capacity for humans to extend that integrity into doing is restored, that individual is more likely to create conditions conducive to the intellectual pattern of experience in which the detached and disinterested desire holds sway. When the pure desire to know is fully operative, fragmentation and disorder cease.

Perhaps Lonergan would acknowledge the possibility of an elemental healing or ordering of human feelings that would prepare the way for living in accord with intellectual eros. As a result of this kind of affective conversion, the "spontaneous desires and fears," to which he alludes several times in *Insight*, would cease to interfere with the functioning of detached and disinterested desire. Thinkers such as Augustine and Bernard of Clairvaux, and, in the contemporary context, Sebastian Moore and René Girard, attend more to this kind of conversion and its effects on human functioning. Lonergan himself gives greater attention to the significance of feelings in his later writings, such as *Method in Theology*, where, in a reversal of his earlier, Ignatian emphasis on the ability to love only what one already knows, he affirms the possibility of loving without having yet known. But one ought not draw too strong a distinction between Lonergan's early and later writings on this subject, because the pure desire to know, even as expounded in *Insight*, may still play a significant role in affective or moral conversion, by rousing the question, "Why is it that I know what I ought to do but am unable to do it?" Or, "Why did I do something that I knew ought not to have been done?" The contradiction between a true judgment about what

²⁵See Plato, *The Symposium and the Phaedrus: Plato's Erotic Dialogues*, trans. William S. Cobb, SUNY Series in Ancient Greek Philosophy (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993).

ought to be done or not done, and one's inability to do or to stop oneself from doing, could awaken the desire to know the cause of this contradiction or impotence. Even more basically, a person may notice the contradiction between the good that they claim to want, and what they actually seek, leading them to wonder what it is that they truly desire. Perhaps this incongruity gets at what Lonergan means by "spontaneous desires and fears." A person's desire may be fragmented, torn between contradictory desires or hampered by fear, despair, or bias, resulting in a half-hearted pursuit of the good.

Lonergan views despair and bias as obstacles to moral living because they interfere with the full flowering of the detached and disinterested desire to know. In concrete terms, they interfere by preventing human beings from asking and answering all of the relevant questions before reaching judgments and making decisions. Existential philosophers sometimes overlook the connection between the desire to know and ethical living, and in their well-placed emphasis on ethical living, they may even attribute human problems to an imbalanced emphasis on reason. Lonergan holds to the centrality of reason in ethical living, but this reason (in contrast to a Baconian conception of reason) is the flowering of the disinterested desire to know, a desire that carries human beings beyond the boundaries of self-interest to an apprehension of their desires as merely one component in a vast universe. In *Topics of Education* Lonergan describes the onset of the intellectual pattern of experience as a movement beyond one's private world, beyond the horizon of merely personal concern, to a horizon "orientated upon totality, being, everything."²⁶ In *Understanding and Being*, Lonergan conveys this movement through a use of Heidegger's terms, *Sorge* and *Welt*. *Welt* is the private world constituted by those persons and issues immediately related to an individual. For individuals not yet at home in the intellectual pattern of experience, the real is equated with their *Welt*. Anything outside their private world is shadowy and irrelevant, and, therefore, not really real. But Lonergan says that "the pure desire to know

²⁶Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 10 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 91.

can become a dominant *Sorge*, and then, though there will not be a complete elimination of merely personal concern, still this world of one's concern will move into coincidence with the universe of being."²⁷ One's scope becomes harmonious with the scope of the universe.

This movement is what constitutes human development for Lonergan. He recognizes that such development will occur dialectically, for the private world and the pure desire to know are always in tension. The movement beyond the world of private concern involves a reorganization of the subject, which the subject dreads and resists.²⁸ But, as stated above, this reorganization does not terminate in a replacement of the private world by the pure desire to know, but rather the latter increasingly becomes the "guiding and directing part" of one's life.²⁹ The pure desire to know "reveals to a man a universe of being in which he is but an item, and a universal order in which his desires and fears, his delight and anguish, are but infinitesimal components in the history of mankind."³⁰ This intellectual realization affects the individual's moral development, for the pure desire to know "invites man to become intelligent and reasonable not only in his knowing but also in his living, to guide his actions by referring them, not as an animal to a habitat, but as an intelligent being to the intelligible context of some universal order that is or is to be."³¹ This moral development parallels the movement from animal knowing to critical realism that is the central subject of *Insight*. Just as critical realism requires that one transcend the visceral attraction to the real as sensible, so also moral realism requires that one cross the dreaded frontier that lies beyond one's most tangible horizon of concern.

A person may scoff at the notion that his desires and fears are but a mere "infinitesimal component" in a vast universe, arguing that this notion implies that all humans are insignificant and their actions

²⁷Bernard Lonergan, *Understanding and Being*, 2d ed., ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 5 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 183.

²⁸*Topics in Education*, 90.

²⁹*Topics in Education*, 89.

³⁰*Insight*, 498.

³¹*Insight*, 498.

nugatory. Does not such a notion lead to irresponsibility and anarchy? he may ask. This sort of reaction may occur when a person's reception of this notion is not accompanied by the wonder of the pure desire to know, a wonder that inspires a profound sense of connection with and awe toward the universe of being, such that, when seen in the context of this universe, a person's actions assume a heretofore unknown significance. Whereas before the individual saw his actions within a limited network of relations, now he understands them to be part of the vast project of human history, which itself unfolds within the larger scheme of the finality of the universe. The wonder of the pure desire to know equips a person with a new orientation and exuberance, so that he can appropriate his new understanding of reality with joy, not terror. Lonergan says that it is only through the detached and disinterested desire to know that a person can belong to and function in the universe of being. The pure desire is the condition for developing beyond a limitingly self-referential horizon to the unlimited universe of being. If such a transition were made without this wonder, the person would likely collapse in the terror of his insignificance. Without this wonder, he has to prop up the illusion of a Ptolemaic universe in which all objects derive their meaning according to how much they enforce the good of the self as separate from or more important than the good of the whole. With the onset of wonder, the illusion of the self-centered universe vanishes, but the person's meanings and values expand exponentially in tandem with the infinite expansiveness of the universe of being. The person realizes that his own good is not in competition with, but is actually furthered by the promotion of the good of the whole universe. The true good of the universe is not in contradiction with the true good of any of its participants, and the pure desire to know makes possible the recognition of true good in every concrete situation. Put differently, the pure desire is the chief "operator" in human development, so that human development progresses inasmuch as humans orient themselves toward detached desire.

To prevent an imbalance or collapse, the detached and disinterested desire operates within a permanent tension between limitation and transcendence in the human subject, for the desire belongs to an organism that is organic and psychic as well as intellectual. Lonergan maintains that

"no matter how full the success" of the development toward intelligence and reasonableness, "the basic situation within the self is unchanged, for the perfection of the higher integration does not eliminate the integrated or modify the essential opposition between self-centeredness and detachment."³² The organic and psychic elements of the human remain the coincidental manifold, the empirical residue, the potency from which the pure desire emerges and on which it draws. Thus human development is both harmonious with and different from the development of the universe. It is different because it is intellectually and rationally conscious, but this difference emerges from the development of the universe and remains beholden to it, since intellectual development operates according to the same principles that structure the finality of the rest of universe: the higher systematizes the lower without destroying it. Human development takes place between the inertia of habits that integrate new developments and the constant transformation of those habits by the detached and disinterested desire to know that is the conscious part of the finality of the human being.³³ Hence humans exist in harmony with the "upwardly but indeterminantly directed dynamism of all proportionate being." Human consciousness emerges from and remains in harmony with the larger story of the universe. At the same time, intelligent and rational consciousness gives humans the possibility of appropriating and cooperating with their own finality. By becoming aware of the tension between limitation and transcendence within them, humans become capable of guiding the unfolding of their detached and disinterested desire in a way that promotes their own development without undue inertia or haste.³⁴ Humans have the unique capacity to become conscious agents in their own finality and promoters of the finality of the universe. Thus, while the pure desire to know "decenters" individual humans by contextualizing their concerns within the overall finality of the universe, the pure desire also marks humans as unique in relation to the rest of the universe.

³²*Insight*, 499.

³³*Insight*, 501.

³⁴*Insight*, 503.

Lonergan acknowledges, though, that humans are presently incapable of living in full accordance with the exigencies of the detached and disinterested desire to know. He says that "the pure desire to know can set up the good of order, and it can understand it, it can even understand suffering to a certain extent, but that eros of the mind, that pure desire to know, sets up exigencies that are beyond our capacity for fulfilment in our present state."³⁵ Lonergan ascribes this limitedness to the problem of evil, which, though inherited, is not an inherent limitation of human beings. In other words, evil is not a natural limiting factor in human development, as is the law of limitation and transcendence, but an unnatural pathogen that corrupts and deforms human development. It seems that even without evil, the development of humans and the universe would still be gradual, owing to the finitude of each in contrast to the unrestricted act of understanding that originates and upholds them. But evil stifles and distorts the operation of human intelligence, so that the good it identifies is disproportionate to human moral capacities.

In contrast to those who would judge the capacities of the human to be irreparably damaged by evil, Lonergan would maintain that the detached and disinterested desire to know, when allowed to operate without the interference of evil, is continuous with and an agent in the emergence of the universe. Thus Lonergan's heuristic outline of a solution to evil does not abrogate, but rather preserves and builds on the structuring role of the detached and disinterested desire to know. God comes to the aid of human beings with a solution that, though "universally accessible and permanent," is "continuous with the actual order of the universe, and realized through human acts of acknowledgement and consent...."³⁶ Often the yearning for a universal, permanent solution to evil leads to an apocalyptic or *deus ex machina* notion of salvation, in which God redeems human reality by imposing something alien upon it, or by working outside of or in spite of its present structure. This notion of salvation is not really a solution to the problem of evil in *this* universe, but rather it corresponds to a clumsy, imaginal notion of the universe and evil as objects "out there" that demand an equally "out

³⁵ *Understanding and Being*, 380.

³⁶ *Insight*, 750.

there" kind of solution. Lonergan argues that a true solution is at once universal and concrete, acting in and through the structures and exigencies of human development as it extends from the emergence of the universe. A true solution is "operative through conjugate forms of faith, hope and charity that enable man to achieve sustained development on the human level in so much as they reverse the priority of living over the knowledge needed to guide life and over the good will needed to follow knowledge...." The solution operates within human development by aiding the detached and disinterested desire to know with divinely infused habits.

But these habits, because divinely infused, add to the below-upwards development of human intelligence an above-downwards vector that makes possible a love that precedes knowledge, a consolation that has no apparent cause. Lonergan says that to the already challenging conflict between attachment and detachment, between limitation and transcendence, is added the conflict between strictly human ways and the divine life that takes root in humans as a result of the divinely infused habits. Ironically, the divine solution means that humans end up "going quite beyond" their humanity in order to be saved from "disfiguring and distorting it."³⁷ Hence redemption is far more than just restoration or healing of what would have been if not for evil. At the same time, redemption does not nullify the below-upward movement of the detached and disinterested desire to know. Redemption enables human beings to be attentive and faithful to that movement within themselves, even while experiencing an above-downward movement that in some sense reverses the order of cognitive process.

But even faith, hope, and charity respect the hegemony of the pure desire to know in human development. For "the conjugate form of willingness that aids and supports and reinforces the pure desire is a confident hope that God will bring man's intellect to a knowledge, participation, possession of the unrestricted act of understanding."³⁸ Possession of such knowledge is what "will supply the will's hope with its object and assurance and the will's charity with its motives." In *Insight*

³⁷ *Insight*, 750

³⁸ *Insight*, 724.

Lonergan maintains the Thomistic priority of intellect over will, for the will depends on the intellect for its choices. The priority of the pure desire to know ensures that faith, hope, and charity are not blind, but that they operate in the full light of human consciousness, even if they carry human consciousness beyond its natural capabilities. This paradox is incomparably subtle, for one has to hold onto the strictly disproportionate character of the theological virtues as well as the fact that they operate within an organism already oriented toward transcendence through the detached and disinterested desire to know. In *Insight* Lonergan seems to be reaching toward the formulation of this paradox, which he later clarifies in *Method in Theology* by identifying different kinds of conversion and articulating more definitively the sense in which love precedes knowledge in both the natural and supernatural dimensions of life. In *Insight*, though, Lonergan's main concern is to draw attention to the gift of wonder that is the fundamental operator in human development.

The theological virtues do not render the detached and disinterested desire to know, and human cognitional process, irrelevant. An understanding of the dynamics of human development remains crucial, for Lonergan understands a true solution to the problem of evil to be continuous with the actual order of the universe. The divine solution does not abrogate the order of human consciousness but enables it to reach a further integration. The will must reach a state of willingness that is as open as the pure desire to know. One's antecedent willingness must have the "height and breadth and depth of the unrestricted desire to know" or else one's freedom is restricted.³⁹ Lonergan says that "the good will follows intellect, and so it matches the detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire of intellect for complete understanding; but complete understanding is the unrestricted act that is God; and so the good that is willed by good will is God."⁴⁰ Just as the pure desire to know finds its adequate fulfillment only in God, the further reach of that desire in the deliberations and choices of the will finds its adequate source of value only in God. The divine solution is to enable the human will to reach the

³⁹*Insight*, 646.

⁴⁰*Insight*, 720.

expansiveness of the divine will, an expansiveness that is both continuous with and consummative of the natural infinitude of the pure unrestricted desire to know.

Lonergan's analysis of this detached and disinterested desire helps to resolve some of the problems outlined in the introduction. In Lonergan's understanding, the detachment implied in Kantian ethics and called for by ascetics of various traditions means neither an elimination of desire in the field of morality, nor a conversion of a single stream of desire from material to spiritual objects. Nor does this detachment amount to a disembodied, dualistic approach in which desire and the body are instrumentalized by a controlling, Machiavellian reason. Rather this detachment is reached through the appropriation of a certain kind of desire, the pure desire to know, which guides humans toward grasping virtually unconditioned judgments and values. Lonergan frees desire and reason from false dichotomization, showing that the two unite in the pure desire to know. At no point does ethical living require a rejection of desire or reason — the objective rigor and boundless wonder of the pure desire to know draw humans out of self-centeredness, expanding and harmonizing their sense of value with the good of the emergent universe.

LONERGAN AT THE EDGES OF UNDERSTANDING

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THIS ESSAY IS going to look a lot like a response from a Lonergan viewpoint to the challenge of postmodernism, so let me say at once that it is not such a response. It was, however, occasioned by that challenge. I find that my secondhand acquaintance with postmodernism has raised new questions on Lonergan, or new aspects of old questions, that I had not previously considered. I propose to consider some of them here, but insist that what I offer is strictly a collection of data from Lonergan, interpreted and sometimes carried forward in the momentum of his thought; if it happens to bear some relation to postmodernism, well and good, but that is not directly relevant to my purpose.¹

Using a metaphor I may later be pushing a bit far, I call the area of my study "the edges of understanding" (from the side of the object it could be called "the edges of the intelligible"). From somewhere in my past reading (in Sartre?) I retain a picture comparing intelligibility to the order of a well laid-out city where, however, the threatening jungle of the

¹For an extensive engagement of Lonergan with postmodernism, see Frederick G. Lawrence, "The Fragility of Consciousness: Lonergan and the Postmodern Concern for the Other," in *Communication and Lonergan: Common Ground for Forging the New Age*, ed. Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1993), 173-211, an expansion of an article Lawrence originally published in *Theological Studies* 54 (1993): 55-94; my essay may be regarded as complementary to the Lonergan side of his. I am in debt also to James L. Marsh, "Post-Modernism: A Lonerganian Retrieval and Critique," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 35 (1995): 159-83, to Jim Kanaris, "Engaged Agency and the Notion of the Subject," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 14 (1996): 183-200, to Elizabeth Morelli, "Oversight of Insight and the Critique of the Metaphysics of Presence," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 18 (2000): 1-15, and to manuscripts by Gordon Rixon and Gerald Walmsley.

absurd encroaches on every side. We shall see in a moment that that picture is too neat: besides the enemies without, there are fifth columns at work within the well-ordered city; but it will serve as a first approximation to the more accurate view I hope to delineate.

A point of entry for my essay is given by the charge that the philosophic effort to dominate cognitively the world and all reality is guilty of totalitarian hubris. Is such an effort in any sense true of Lonergan? That is my initial question, and my direct contribution, after examining some of the achievements he attributes to human understanding (section 1), will be to set forth the limits of those achievements (section 2). Next, I will consider a number of special questions that cluster around the main one (section 3). I conclude (section 4) with some reflections on the general value question: is the effort to understand all reality, is the refusal to exclude from consideration any aspect of reality, the arrogance it is sometimes made out to be? To put it in other words, are the totalitarian ambitions of knowledge totalitarian like the totalitarian nations and states? Or are they universalist like Michelangelo and the *uomo universale* of the Renaissance?² Or is there a third possibility, some distant counterpart of Michelangelo for our time?

1. The Pattern of Achievement

When in 1964 we put together some studies of Lonergan to honor him as he reached the age of sixty, and were considering a title for the proposed volume, he himself suggested "Spirit as Inquiry." It was quite apt for his thinking at the time and became in fact the title of the published volume.³ It seems a good place to start my study. At any rate it has the backing of Aristotle who made wonder the source of all science and philosophy.⁴

²See Joan Kelly Gadol, "Universal Man," *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, vol. 4 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 437-43; also Frederick E. Crowe, "Linking the Scattered Disciplines: Ideas from Lonergan," *Lonergan Review* 3 (1994): 130-43. Instead of the usual "universalist" I will use Lonergan's "generalist": see note 69 below.

³Frederick E. Crowe, ed., *Spirit as Inquiry: Studies in Honor of Bernard Lonergan S.J.* (Chicago: Saint Xavier College, 1964).

⁴Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1, chap. 2, 982b, 12-18; 983a, 12-18.

If inquiry is characteristic of human spirit, successful inquiry establishes the realm of understanding and the intelligible. It is the realm of what is properly human knowledge, the *quidditas rei materialis*, the what of a material being.⁵ But such a being is a composite of three elements: potency, form, and act. Correspondingly, human cognitional structure is a composite: potency is experienced in the here and now of individuating conditions, form is grasped by insight into the what and why, and the act of existence is affirmed in a judgment.⁶ It is form that is most specifically the object of human intelligence; potency is intelligible only in relation to the form it assumes; existence is intelligible only in its cause. In the Latin that was the vehicle for so much of Lonergan's early work, potency is intelligible only *in alio*, existence is intelligible only *in causa*, but form is intelligible *in se*.⁷

Widening the range of inquiry into the intelligible, though anticipating our next section, we may say that both sin and God are unintelligible to human minds, but sin is unintelligible by a deficiency of intelligibility and God is unintelligible by an excess of intelligibility.⁸

But the wonder in the question, and the answer to that wonder that insight is, are only the beginning of the effort of intellect to dominate reality. Insight is the pivot intrinsic to the process, but insight does not of itself give knowledge of the real. It is in itself an identity with the form that is grasped, but for knowledge of the real it must first be expressed in

⁵Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, 2d ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 168, 173-75, 200 [1967 edition: 158, 162-65, 193]; hereafter, *Verbum*, with the pagination of the 1967 edition (ed. David Burrell, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press) in brackets.

⁶On the correspondence of experience-understanding-judgment with potency-form-act, see Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 5th ed., ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992; hereafter, *Insight*, with the pagination of the 1958 edition in brackets), 424-45 [399-400] and passim (see the index, under Isomorphism; also note 31 below).

⁷Bernard Lonergan, *De Ente Supernaturali*, 1973 ed. (mimeographed at Regis College, Toronto), 64; quoted Bernard Lonergan, *Understanding and Being: The Halifax Lectures on INSIGHT*, ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990; hereafter, *Understanding and Being*), 418, note d; see also 428, note e. During the twenty-five years in which Lonergan taught theology, the medium of lectures, notes, and books for classroom use was Latin.

⁸Bernard Lonergan, "Analytic Concept of History," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11 (1993): 1-35, at 14.

a concept, and the concept be proposed conditionally, and the conditions be submitted to weighing of the evidence, and the conditioned statement become an unconditioned before being affirmed in a judgment.

The first step in that list is objectification of the insight. "For human understanding, though it has its object in the phantasm and knows it in the phantasm, yet is not content with an object in this state. It pivots on itself to produce for itself another object which is the inner word as *ratio*,"⁹ as a concept. But no more than insight does the concept give knowledge. That is established already in *Verbum*, though the objectivity of knowing was not the issue there. The focus was rather on the primary identity of understanding and the understood, and on understanding as the fertile source of the inner words of concept, judgment, and inference. Lonergan, however, acknowledged the distinct question of objectivity and brought it into relationship with that of identity. First, he assigned the limits of the identity principle.

Aristotelian gnoseology is brilliant but it is not complete: knowledge is by identity; the act of the thing as sensible is the act of sensation; the act of the thing as intelligible is the act of understanding; but the act of the thing as real is the *esse naturale* of the thing and, except in divine self-knowledge, that *esse* is not identical with knowing it.¹⁰

Then he added the transition from understanding as a subjective perfection to judgment as achieving objective knowledge: "Rational reflection has to bear the weight of the transition from knowledge as a perfection to knowledge as of the other."¹¹ "... the problem of knowledge, once it is granted that knowledge is by identity, is knowledge of the other."¹²

Thus far, the general pattern of coming to understanding and knowledge. As exemplified in modern science, it should present no

⁹ *Verbum*, 47-48 [34].

¹⁰ *Verbum*, 83 [71].

¹¹ *Verbum*, 85 [73].

¹² *Verbum*, 84 [72].

difficulty, and I would say the same of various extensions of the pattern, on which I will not delay: for example, in common sense, in hermeneutics, in ethics, in human studies. Two extensions, however, merit an extra word.

There is, first, metaphysics and its aspirations to go beyond the intelligibility of the many material things in their genera and species and essences. It is beyond science; it is analogous; it is an understanding of proportion.¹³ It is truly understanding but the understanding is of a heuristic structure; it does not grasp the whole determinately. So *Insight* gives Lonergan's definition of metaphysics as follows: "the conception, affirmation, and implementation of the integral heuristic structure of proportionate being."¹⁴

Next, there is our knowledge of God. For metaphysics, though it falls short of understanding God, does go beyond empirical science and is a pointer if not a bridge to knowledge of God. "Why is there something and not nothing?" We ask science, and science, unless it surreptitiously imports some metaphysics, is silent. My existence and the existence of the world itself is unintelligible except by reference to a cause outside the world, a cause of which science knows nothing. This simple reasoning could be developed to the dimensions of an encyclopedia, but in itself it is within the range of any intelligent person.

... because it is difficult to know what our knowing is, it is also difficult to know what our knowledge of God is. But just as our knowing is prior to an analysis of knowledge and far easier than it, so too our knowledge of God is both earlier and easier than any attempt to give it formal expression.¹⁵

¹³*Understanding and Being*, 200-202.

¹⁴*Insight*, 416 [391]: "proportionate being," that is, "proportionate" to our human intellects.

¹⁵*Insight*, 705 [683]. See also Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophy of God, and Theology: The Relationship between Philosophy of God and the Functional Specialty, Systematics* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973; hereafter *Philosophy of God*), 55-56: "I do not think it difficult to establish God's existence. I do think it a life-long labor to analyze and refute all the objections that philosophers have thought up against the existence of God. But I see no pressing need for every student of religion to penetrate into that labyrinth and then work his way out."

Such in briefest outline is the orderly city of human knowledge, the construction erected by spirit as inquiry. It seems a good launching pad for Lonergan's thought on the edges of intelligence. We are relatively secure within the orderly city but we stand at its boundaries, looking out over the encroaching forces of irrationality, the vast areas of the unknown, of what is in some sense unknowable.

2. The Limits of Achievement

The limits of understanding are so closely interwoven with its achievements that it is impossible to separate them. One can only emphasize one or the other; and as my first section emphasized the achievements while touching on the limits, so my second will emphasize the limits without ignoring the achievements. Continuing the metaphor I have been using, I will study areas of resistance that limit the imperialism of intellect and will divide these limits into those arising internally, that is, from within the cognitional realm, and those arising rebelliously in areas that refuse to be colonies of cognition.

2.1 Limits from Within the Cognitional

A first limit to intelligence is located in the occurrence of insight itself and might be regarded as a kind of fifth column within the citadel of knowledge. It has two aspects, one in the object of insight, the other intrinsic to the act of insight.

The first and simpler aspect regards the object. Here I enlarge a little the point made earlier on the empirical residue as a boundary for understanding. The here and now is simply discarded by understanding as unintelligible; it "cannot be an explanatory factor in any science; it is irrelevant to all scientific explanation; it is irrelevant a priori; time and place as such explain nothing."¹⁶ Yet it has to be named, and it has to be related to the directly intelligible, and so Lonergan develops his notion of

¹⁶ *Verbum*, 53 [39].

inverse insight, the insight that there is no insight into the empirical residue, into particularity.¹⁷

The other aspect is not so simple: intrinsic to insight is its own particularity, the particularity of the act itself, and not just of its object. The act of insight as an act cannot pretend to dominion over a universe of reality, or even claim wide-ranging validity as intelligence. It is always particular; not only insight into "these data," but also "this insight" into these data. In the language of Aristotle's knowledge-by-identity theory, in which insight is a subjective perfection identical with the form that is understood, insight into an eclipse means identity with this eclipse-form alone, not with some universal eclipse-form, still less with the multitude of actual eclipse-forms. It is only the concept emanating from insight that releases the insight from its particularity and objectifies it as a universal.

If from single insights we turn to their combinations, these seem to push back the boundaries of intelligibility and conquer larger areas of reality. It is true that insights coalesce and bring together further and further areas of intelligibility,¹⁸ but even then they have no pretensions to dominion over the whole of reality. That is a goal, but one that will never be realized. The intending of human intellect is without limit; the achievement is limited on all sides. We make limited gains on a limited front, and there is always a beyond.¹⁹

Further, the great advances in knowledge are like an inverted pyramid, erected on a narrow base. (And sometimes some great inverted pyramid of science or philosophy topples over, to be abandoned or rebuilt on a new base.) Insights coalesce, and do so again and again, so that the

¹⁷ *Insight*, 43-50 [19-25].

¹⁸ *Verbum*, 61-71, 76-78 [48-59, 64-66].

¹⁹ Repeatedly Lonergan contrasted Aristotle's notion of science as knowledge of the necessary, and the modern notion of science as continually undergoing revision and so satisfied with the best available opinion at the time. See Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975; reprinted Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996; hereafter, *Second Collection*), 47-48, 72, 103-104, 112, 139-40. Also, Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd; New York: Herder and Herder, 1972; 2d ed. 1973 [hereafter, *Method*]), 191: "as in natural science, so too in critical history the positive content of judgment aspires to be no more than the best available opinion."

resultant is far removed from its modest beginnings. For example, my personal history is a basis for local history, and this in turn for that of my country, that of my country for that of the West, and so on, so that the most profound and comprehensive view of world history is tied by an umbilical cord to the minute world of the author's own experience in the here and now. Even the great sweeping judgments that we find, say, in Lonergan's stages of meaning, rest on the coalescence achieved on the second level, the conceptual, and that in turn falls back on the first level, particular representations. Judgments are always linked to the here and now.²⁰ The here and now that we had to discard in order to achieve an understanding of form, returns to effect the application of abstract form to concrete reality.

There is a further barrier to any imperialist project intellect might conceive. Intrinsic to the reflective insight that enables us to make a judgment there is another fifth column. For the key word here is "is," and the key act is the unconditional positing of that "is." But the "is" of existence, the *esse reale* denoted by the "is" of affirmed judgment is not the direct object of insight. Though the question is warmly debated, with the school of the highly respected Gilson affirming an intuition of being, it is Lonergan's position that we have no such intuition,²¹ that existence is in itself above our understanding, and like matter below is not intelligible to us except in another.

At this point the impasse for intelligence becomes absolute in ways that extend the two ways pointed out earlier. Going beyond the empirical and the existential, the impasse may regard sin, the objective falsity, the absolute denial of intelligibility.²² On the other side, beyond the edge at which we can only assert that God is, without knowing what God is, there

²⁰ *Verbum*, 75-76 [63-64]; hence judgments made in sleep are irrational.

²¹ Bernard Lonergan, "Metaphysics as Horizon," *Collection*, 2d ed., ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988; hereafter, *Collection*), 188-204.

²² Sin is objective falsity: Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000; hereafter, *Grace and Freedom*), 113-16, 148, 329, 331-33, 341, 344. Part 1 of this volume is a second edition of *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas*, ed. J. Patout Burns (London: Darton, Longman & Todd; New York: Herder and Herder, 1971).

is the higher edge attained by the mystics. Lonergan seems to recognize this as an intermediate state, where there is an understanding of things divine that is beyond the human, but short of that ultimate understanding where edges vanish in the knowledge God shares with creatures.²³

I have been dealing mainly with the limits of individual understanding. But does not the human community achieve much more than we have granted to the individual? Besides the coalescence of insights in the person there is the enormous strategic advance achieved by the human race through education. There is a vast difference between the infant world and that of the adult; the latter adds past and future to the present; it adds an imagined spatial complex to the immediate space of the nursery; it retains the past and builds an enlarged future; and so on. And it is education that allows each generation to take possession of their accumulated heritage in a few years instead of in long millennia.²⁴

Yes, all that is true, but the enlargement of the heritage only accentuates the fact that there is an unconquered area for the individual; the great whole is parcelled out among many, each of whom knows something and believes the rest, so that there is a sacrifice of knowledge to belief, and while knowledge grows ever greater so too does the sacrifice. In the optimism of the Renaissance they spoke of an *uomo universale*, but now we regard Michelangelo as the last of those giants.²⁵ Today the idea of someone omniscient in all the arts and sciences, in technology as well as in philosophy, in theology and the unconscious, in the many languages of humankind — the idea is ludicrous. For this is the age of specialization, in which we know more and more about less and less.²⁶ This is not just a matter of quantitative division. There are

²³ *Verbum*, 102-104 [91-94]. *Method* 29, 58-59, 77, 106 note 4, 107, 266, 273, 341, 342.

²⁴ See the several occurrences of "socialization, acculturation, education" that describe the passage of the infant to the adult world, Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1985; hereafter, *Third Collection*), 119, 122, 156, 181, 197, 217.

²⁵ See note 2 above.

²⁶ For Lonergan on specialization, see *Third Collection*, 36-40, in "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation," 35-54.

"differentiations of consciousness" that effect the style and character of the differences; we shall return to this point.

I have spoken of the limits of understanding in some of their more general manifestations. A number of particular cases may be simply mentioned. There is insight into phantasm but no insight into insight.²⁷ History can be understood only after it has left our life and time.²⁸ Statistical science predicts nothing determinate with surety.²⁹ Much of our understanding, not only of God's existence, but of things in this world, is only by analogy.³⁰ And so on, in a list that considerably restrains any imperialist ambitions from the cognitional side.

2.2 Limits Imposed from Without: Rebellious "Colonies"

It is time to raise a new question. To say that the cognitional is limited in its own empire does not attack the question at its root, for is not that empire itself but one aspect of human operations, and so but one empire among others? Must not meaning be given a wider compass than its cognitional application? That question opens up a new horizon altogether, within which two areas of limitation need special discussion: feelings, and freedom. I speak of them as "colonies" of the cognitional empire because these two areas emerged under the tutelage of cognition and attempts are continually made to subsume them under the cognitional hegemony; hence, "colonies." But there has been ongoing resistance to that subsumption — justified resistance, in my opinion; hence, "rebellious" colonies.

We come then to the recalcitrant area of feelings, the first "colony" whose rebellion against the hegemony of the cognitional I shall consider. Feelings accompany the cognitional on every level. They are as all-pervasive as the cognitional. Animals seem to feel pain and satisfaction in

²⁷Frederick E. Crowe, "For a Phenomenology of Rational Consciousness," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 18 (2000): 67-90, at 71-83.

²⁸*Method*, 177-79.

²⁹*Insight*, chap. 2, note 4.

³⁰See Analogy in the indices of *Insight* and *Method*; notice also the title of the work *Divinarum Personarum Conceptio Analogica*, note 44 below.

the way the rest of us do: feelings occur, then, on the first level of intentionality analysis. Again, there is a thrill in gaining an insight, whether it be the minor insight on how to catch my opponent's king in a bridge game or the major one of understanding the ideas of a great thinker: feelings, therefore, on the second level. When we come to the level of judgment, the matter is not so simple, but there is a security in reaching judgment after a long and painful search, say, about one's religious beliefs or the results of a laboratory experiment, that show feelings on the third level. But the prime exhibit belongs on the fourth level. One cannot speak with full detail on such personal matters, but perhaps readers will have experienced the torment of a bad conscience, and the peace that follows on setting right what was wrong.

In all four cases feelings are known and so are brought somehow under the dominion of knowledge. But then the cognitional emperor would instinctively take a further step: so ingrained is the attitude that makes the cognitional supreme in human activity that, not satisfied with knowing feelings, the cognitional would also assimilate them to itself, reducing them to some type of cognition. That reduction does not work; it ends in frustration; feelings simply do not comply.

I suggest, then, that we abandon altogether the effort to make feelings a subdivision of knowledge and take another approach: namely, to regard feelings as a distinctly different area, isomorphic indeed with the cognitional the way the ontological is (and, as we shall suggest, the voluntary also is) but independent and self-governing. The ontological has its own independent realm of potency, form, and act, isomorphic with experience, understanding, and judgment; it is known to us and so is included in the wide sweep of the cognitional; but it retains its independence: potency, form, and act are not cognitional activities. I suggest that we regard feelings as another such realm, parallel to the cognitional, known like the ontological through experience, understanding, and judgment, and thus also included in the wide sweep of the cognitional, but like the ontological an equal partner in the human

enterprise, having its full autonomy.³¹ Like the ontological elements, feelings are not cognitional activities.

This may be related to meaning. We are apt to think of meaning as correlative with knowledge, but that view can be challenged. The realm of feelings is also meaningful; it has a plenitude of meaning, only it is a meaning not reducible to the cognitional. Then, an immediate question is to find terms proper to the structural elements in the domain of feelings: proper, that is, not cognitional, not transferred from the cognitional, but its own. Above I used "satisfaction" for the positive side on the first level, "thrill" for the second, "security" for the third, and "peace" for the fourth, but they were meant only to illustrate the variety of feelings on the different levels; no doubt better terms can be found.³²

A tableau would help here. An older tableau had one panel, namely, the cognitional, with its three levels of experience, understanding, and judgment, and sometimes a fourth added for decision. At each level a horizontal arm could be extended, like the arm on some computer screens, to bring form, say, into the embrace of understanding. But the one panel was considered a sufficient basis for listing all human activity. In the tableau I am proposing, it is nowhere near being sufficient for that; there are three panels, with a fourth to be added, rotating side by side round one vertical spindle, each with its own independent life and character, and none subordinate to another.

One can start with the cognitional, twirl the panels to come to the ontological and the others, or start with the ontological and go on to the others, or start with the felt, and go on to the others. The original cognitional panel remains; the ontological panel, isomorphic with the

³¹On isomorphism of cognitional and ontological structures, see note 6 above. For agreement of Lonergan with Aquinas on this point, see Frederick E. Crowe, "St. Thomas and the Isomorphism of Human Knowing and Its Proper Object," chap. 7 in *Three Thomist Studies, Supplementary Issue of Lonergan Workshop*, vol. 16, 2000, ed. Michael Vertin (hereafter, *Three Thomist Studies*). I here and there omit the fourth level for the sake of simplicity.

³²As an adjective for the whole realm, I will use the "felt," corresponding to the "cognitional," the "voluntary," the "ontological." A further need is to establish interstate relations among the "powers"; a simple illustration: feelings are "known"; knowledge is "felt"; and both belong to the universe of "being"; all three can be approved or disapproved and so related to the "voluntary."

cognitional, makes a natural second; what we need to add is the concept of a third panel exclusively for feelings, also isomorphic with the cognitional, but like the ontological totally its own. If my suggestion about the voluntary and the good is accepted there will be a fourth panel swinging on the same hinge.

We come, then, to our second rebellious "colony": the realm of the voluntary. The will is a faculty that follows the direction of intellect. Few doctrines of Aquinas seem better established than that.³³ No doubt it is true, but it is not the whole truth. Ever since Pascal's "The heart has reasons that reason does not know," there has been a growing movement to explore those reasons of the heart that are not reasons in a strictly cognitional sense. But for now I remain within the thought patterns of Scholasticism, where the general schema for free acts is: judgment (intellect) of the good end, orientation (will) to the good end, deliberation (intellect) on means to that end, choice (will) of a particular means in a free decision.

My remarks center on that act of deliberation. It is a cognitional activity, but under the control of the will in two ways that limit cognitional ambitions. First, it is the orientation of will that sets deliberation on its course; and next, it is the intervention of will that puts an end to deliberation and thus is responsible for free choice.

Take that second factor first. Deliberation may be a cognitional activity, but as cognition it has no term; it could go on for forever, did not will intervene to put a stop to deliberation and make a choice. In the language of Aquinas: "Choice then follows the final judgment [of deliberation] and the will brings it about that [the judgment] is final." In that of Kierkegaard: "As soon as Roetscher sets himself the task of explaining Hamlet, he knows that reflection can be halted only by means

³³Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1, q. 87, a. 4 c.: "actus voluntatis ... inclinatio quaedam consequens formam intellectam"; *Summa contra Gentiles*, 2, c. 48 (ad finem): "cum intellectus per formam apprehensam moveat voluntatem." See the Leonine Thomist indices under *voluntas*; for example "bonum intellectum est obiectum voluntatis," with a wealth of references. This is a key point in Lonergan's Trinitarian theology; see Bernard Lonergan, *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964), 92: "cum voluntas sit appetitus intellectum sequens," and 246: "voluntas est appetitus intellectum sequens." I use the terms of faculty psychology (intellect and will), as did Aquinas, and Lonergan in his earlier writings.

of a resolve."³⁴ Aristotle's dialectical syllogism bears on the same point: "in working out a course of action ... the intellect does not move in the mold of the scientific syllogism but on the model of the dialectical syllogism or the rhetorical persuasion."³⁵

This gains clarity in Lonergan's doctrine that foundations are found in what we are rather than in propositional first principles, and that it is conversion that makes us what we are.³⁶ It gains further clarity from the proverb that doctors could use the same knowledge to kill you that they can use to cure you. How will they use their knowledge? It depends on what they are: "the end appears to each man in a form answering to his character."³⁷ Such choices are the work of will imposing its good or evil orientation on the workings of mind and indeed in the last analysis becoming responsible for that orientation.

In the tussle of intellect and will, then, it seems to be will that finally controls my life. Of course, we recognize the power of ideas. Over and over Lonergan referred to Marx in illustration of that. But it was passion that drove Marx to set forth his ideas, and that fact reveals the respective roles of ideas and passion. The ideas of a thinker are set forth for all the world to ponder to the end of time; the passion of the thinker is interior from the start and may lose much of its power when the thinker has disappeared from the human scene.

We have still to deal with the first of the two points I made a moment ago. Closer to our experience than conflict of intellect and will is their cooperation, and here too knowledge is subordinate to will as its instrument. When applied to the exercise of virtue, this cooperation

³⁴Both quotations in *Three Thomist Studies*, 48, note 38. For a schema of the process: *Three Thomist Studies*, 90. A useful set of ideas in Aquinas is the *duplex via*: from *res* to *anima*, and from *anima* to *res*, *Three Thomist Studies*, 81-91.

³⁵*Grace and Freedom*, 97, 300.

³⁶*Method*, 267-68.

³⁷Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 3, chap. 5, 1114a, 30; translation taken from Richard McKeon, ed., *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (New York: Random House, 11th printing, 1941). In Aquinas: book 3, lect. 13, *In decem libros Ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nicomachum*, Marietti edition, 1934, #516; or *Summa Theologiae*, 1, q. 83, a. 1, ob. 5: "Qualis unusquisque est, talis finis videtur ei." In Thomist thought God gives the initial orientation to good in the non-free will of the end; but acts contrary to that end can lead to a rationalization in which a good end is rejected for an evil one.

results in various forms of asceticism or principles for a good life. When linked with technology, the will has power to change the world that initially we just contemplate.³⁸ Here we are dealing with the "engaged" subject and not with the aloof scholar. But just here we find another failure of intellect. A better world may be willed and willed most intensely, but will has no power to create; it can only urge intellect to find ways and means to the end; intellect, however, must deal with refractory materials and through them find a way to the desired end. It works as the "hired help," the proletarian work force, the instrument of will; this is the ultimate in cognitional failure to dominate reality.

Let us return to our tableau of panels rotating as equal partners on the one spindle. The good that is the object of willing is structured the way knowledge is; that is, there is the good of sensitive appetite, the good of order, the good of value, to which we may add as a fourth level the good to be done. The same structure must be found in the activity of will. This suggests that we add to the tableau described above a fourth panel of the good and of willing which, along with the ontological, stands side by side, integral and autonomous, with the cognitional panel and the panel for the felt.³⁹

It does seem, on the basis of all we have found explicit or implicit in Lonergan, that his thinking, while it gives full value to the cognitional, is far from a cognitional imperialism.

3. Special Questions

A flock of special questions appears on the scene now. We may select five of them for brief consideration. Though they perhaps relate more directly to current debates, my focus remains a study of Lonergan.

³⁸"Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," *Third Collection*, 169-83, at 176: "I have said that people are responsible individually for the lives they lead and collectively for the world in which they live them."

³⁹In a further refinement we might make separate panels of the voluntary and the good, related to one another the way the cognitional and the ontological are. For the structure of the good, see *Insight*, chap. 18, #1.1, "Levels of the Good," 619-21 [596-98]. For more on the mutual influence of intellect and will, see the *duplex via* of note 34 above.

1. Immediacy of Being. There is a question about the immediacy of being. In general, experience for Lonergan is immediate and there is a world of immediacy, but its main inhabitants are infants. "A first world is the world of immediacy: it is the world of the infant ... the world of immediate experience ... A second world is the world mediated by meaning ... the world of grownups ... It is a universe of being, that is known not just by experience but by the conjunction of experience, understanding, and judgment."⁴⁰

In particular, the pure desire to know, when it is functioning, is immediate; likewise the levels of consciousness, when they are functioning, "are immediate in their content though mediated by reflection in their formulation."⁴¹ "... it is not true that it is from sense that our cognitional activities derive their immediate relationship to real objects; that relationship is immediate in the intention of being; it is mediate in the data of sense and in the data of consciousness ... similarly, that relationship is mediate in understanding and thought and judgment ..."⁴² Still more in particular, "... the main method in metaphysics is a mediation of the immediate."⁴³

Thus it is not at all the thought of Lonergan that being is immediate. On the contrary, as I said in section 1, being is reached at the term of a long and complex process of thinking, forming concepts, reflecting, weighing the evidence, and finally, in a true judgment, attaining being, the real. What is immediate is the question, the intention of being, but being is remote from understanding, it lies beyond the edges of understanding and has to be mediated.

2. Presence. Presence is a term that occurs in different contexts in Lonergan. A useful place to start is the schema on the question of the divine persons inhabiting the just and thus present to them. The schema has four steps. There is an approach to presence in spatial propinquity,

⁴⁰ *Collection*, 224-25.

⁴¹ *Collection*, 185-86.

⁴² *Collection*, 218. See also *Second Collection*, 75: "The notion of being first appears in questioning. Being is the unknown that questioning intends to know ..." (in "The Subject," 69-86).

⁴³ *Collection*, 189.

but this is not enough; we do not say that two stones side by side are present to one another. In animals, however, a psychic adaptation follows spatial propinquity, the latter being only a condition of presence. A third point is the human capacity to form free images, and thus through memory of the past or imagination of the future, we can be moved strongly. "Presence," then, turns out to be a term of various meanings; already we have a presence based on spatial propinquity, and another based on the sensitive and human freedom of imagination.

But human beings can go farther still; they are persons in that they operate according to their intellectual nature; here person is joined to person, as one who is known is present in the knower, and as the one loved is present in the one loving; so the poet spoke of a friend as the very half of his soul.⁴⁴ Presence to another had already been touched on in the *Verbum* studies, where the dynamic presence of the beloved in the intellect and will of the lover is affirmed also of the presence of God to the soul; but as well there is added the new and important notion of the presence of the soul to self.⁴⁵ To complete the sketch in *Verbum* particular mention is made there of the experience of the mystics.⁴⁶

That presence to self which had merely been mentioned in the *Verbum* study receives extensive treatment in Lonergan's Christology and the question of the consciousness of Christ, for consciousness is the presence to oneself in the internal experience of self.⁴⁷ Further, besides the presence of Christ to himself in consciousness, there is the presence of

⁴⁴Bernard Lonergan, *Divinarum Personarum Conceptio Analogica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1956), 230-32; a second edition of this work, under the title *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica* (note 33 above), repeats this passage without change, 250-52.

⁴⁵See the index to *Verbum* under Presence.

⁴⁶*Verbum*, 102-104 [91-94].

⁴⁷Bernard Lonergan, *De Constitutione Christi Ontologica et Psychologica*, 4th ed. (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964): Part 5, *De Conscientia Humana*; Part 6, *De Conscientia Christi*. For a brief survey of Lonergan on consciousness as presence, see *Collection*, 293, note *n*, but add Bernard Lonergan, *De Verbo Incarnato*, 3rd ed. (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964) which carries forward his thought on presence. Note that consciousness of self is not knowledge of self; there is a useful parallel with the mediation of being: as the intention of being is immediate while the actual judgment of being is the term of a long process, so internal experience of self is immediate, but knowledge of self comes as the term of a long and difficult process.

Christ to us, and here the ambiguity of the term must be kept in mind. The distinction of the infant's world and the adult's requires similar discrimination in speaking of presence: "Besides the presence of parents to their infant child, there also is the presence of the parents to one another" – a different matter. Now "the presence of Christ to us is not presence in the world of immediacy ... divine revelation comes to us through the mediation of meaning."⁴⁸

3. Decentering. The role of decentering is patent in Lonergan. It appears in a general way with his emphasis on intentionality, for the whole thrust of intentionality is away from a center in the subject. It is illustrated in the shift from description (things in relation to "me" as center) to explanation (things in relation to one another quite apart from their relation to "me"). Lonergan actually uses the term "decentering" in this connection: unless we "decenter" our apprehension of space, we have to think of those at the antipodes as standing on their heads.⁴⁹

But decentering is illustrated par excellence in self-transcending love. Stages on the way are the following: cognitional, moral, and religious self-transcendence.⁵⁰ The transcendence achieved in knowledge took Aquinas beyond Aristotle's knowledge by identity: "Aquinas transposed this appeal (that is, Augustine's appeal to eternal reasons) ... to secure for the Aristotelian theory of knowing by identity the possibility of self-transcendence in finite intellect."⁵¹ But the stages culminate in love. One can hardly think of a more decentering factor. As Paul's hymn to love declares, love seeks not its own.⁵² Hence Lonergan's repeated assertion that when the transforming love given through the Spirit is ours, "it takes over. One no longer is one's own."⁵³

⁴⁸*Third Collection*, 77-79.

⁴⁹Bernard Lonergan, "The Notion of Space," in *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 162-65.

⁵⁰*Second Collection*, index under Self-transcendence.

⁵¹*Verbum*, 197 [188-89].

⁵²1 Corinthians 13:4-7; New English Bible, v. 5: "is never selfish."

⁵³For example: *Third Collection*, 77.

Decentering, however, did not eliminate Lonergan's keen interest in the subject. Early on he handled the pseudo problem of epistemology in regard to the subject-object relation: "the critical problem... is not a problem of moving from within outwards, of moving from a subject to an object outside the subject. It is a problem of moving from above downwards, of moving from an infinite potentiality ... towards a rational apprehension that seizes the difference of subject and object in essentially the same way that it seizes any other real distinction."⁵⁴

Some twenty years later, in a lecture specifically on the subject, we get a wider view. The lecture deals first with the neglected subject and the attitude that truth is so objective it can get along without minds.⁵⁵ Then, there is the truncated subject that does not know himself or herself and so has an impoverished account of human knowledge.⁵⁶ There is, thirdly, the immanentist subject unable to achieve intentional self-transcendence.⁵⁷ There is the existential subject who is not only a knower but a doer affecting the world of objects and even more affecting the subject.⁵⁸ Finally, there is the alienated subject who has to discover that "this world is good, worthwhile, a value worthy of man's approval and consent."⁵⁹

Decentering for Lonergan was never, then, a rejection of subjectivity. How could it be, given his deep study of interiority and consciousness? The subject is "the experienced center of experiencing, the intelligent center of inquiry, insight, and formulations, the rational center of critical reflection, scrutiny, hesitation, doubt, and frustration."⁶⁰ The subject and

⁵⁴ *Verbum*, 98-99 [88]; date of quotation: 1946.

⁵⁵ *Second Collection*, 69-73; meanwhile he had adopted the current turn to the subject, *Second Collection*, 69-70, and in particular the move from substance to subject, *Collection*, 222-24; *Topics*, 81-82; Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 71, 107.

⁵⁶ *Second Collection*, 73-75.

⁵⁷ *Second Collection*, 75-79.

⁵⁸ *Second Collection*, 79-84.

⁵⁹ *Second Collection*, 85-86.

⁶⁰ *Insight*, 434 [409].

his or her world live in symbiosis both in actual fact and in Lonergan's thinking.

4. Giving. The position on love as self-transcending has implications for the notion of giving. The supreme gift of God's love is hidden in mystery, but we can draw up a series, Thomist fashion, that points beyond itself to that mystery. There is the very low form found in the *do ut des* exchange (I give that you may give), which is little more than bargaining. An imperfect form is supposed in the biblical "Who has ever made a gift to him, to receive a gift in return."⁶¹ The Lord's injunction "when you give a party, ask the poor ... For they have no means of repaying you," would take us a step higher.⁶²

On this intermediate level one may very well feel unable to make a true gift, for always the giver puts the recipient in his or her debt. But then we have to rise with Lonergan to the perfect gift which is God's gift of divine love: "he whom God sent utters the words of God, so measureless is God's gift of the Spirit."⁶³ This measureless gift becomes visible in the way Paul declares: "He did not spare his own Son ... and with this gift how can he fail to lavish upon us all he has to give?"⁶⁴

In the technical language of Lonergan's theology, this giving without measure is unrestricted love. What is unrestricted, after all, has no restrictions: it rises above all thought of return. No theologian would suppose God to have "ulterior motives" in the divine giving, even though we do love in return and ought to do so. But is it possible for us to give in a way that participates in the way God gives? One can only use analogies in approaching mystery, but such analogies for divine giving can be

⁶¹Romans 11:35, New English Bible. This denial of such "agreement" of Creator and creature supposes that this sort of giving does actually take place between creatures.

⁶²Luke 14:13-14, New English Bible.

⁶³John 3:34, New English Bible.

⁶⁴Romans 8:32-33, New English Bible. My strategy follows that of Aquinas in *Summa contra Gentiles*, 4, c. 11, where in one of the finest passages in the whole Thomist corpus he goes through deepening types of procession pointing finally to the eternal procession of the Word; as with Newman's polygon which does not attain circularity no matter how often the sides are multiplied (John Henry Newman, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* [London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1930], 320-21), you do not attain the perfection of the divine procession; you see that as the goal of the series, but the goal remains mystery.

found. A novel I read seventy-five years ago (the title, I think, was *The Master Revenge*) has the protagonist, at considerable cost to himself, saving the life of an enemy who had treated him unjustly, when the enemy not only did not know of the donor's act, but did not even know that the danger had existed; it was quite impossible for him to feel in debt to the donor – a revenge truly worthy of the "Master." What we can realistically imagine in fiction can actually happen in human lives.

5. Retortion. Much attention has been given to the argument from retortion, the argument, namely, that any attempt to refute Lonergan's position on human knowing inevitably makes use of that position. To the question, Is the argument valid? one can only answer yes. But to the question, Has it any positive value or is it a sterile pursuit? I would answer that it is sterile in itself but has the positive effect of freeing thought from handicaps and allowing it to grow in freedom. It is a weed-killer in the vegetable garden of thought; it can perform a useful service in eliminating the weeds; but with that done, the argument loses its point, so stow it away in the potter's shed till it is needed again. In fact, in *Insight* retortion gets only brief attention: two paragraphs in a long chapter.⁶⁵ It appears repeatedly in the Lonergan literature in answer to repeated attempts to find a valid refutation of his position.

4. The Dynamism of Inquiry

Questions multiply, but the time and space allotted us do not, and I must conclude. The question that gave me an entry to the series of topics discussed was: Is the effort to understand all reality, is the refusal to exclude from consideration any aspect of reality, the arrogance it is sometimes made out to be? My answer began with human spirit as inquiry, and to that I return, for the Lonergan position is based on questions as given, and on our attending to them not only for the sake of knowing but also for our involvement in the individual and collective enterprise of building a better world. I conclude with a few reflections on the relevance of this to the total divine-human enterprise.

⁶⁵ *Insight*, 359-60 [335-36].

That questions are "given" is already significant. They are "given" in the sense that they occur spontaneously. It is not a matter for deliberation, as if we had a choice. Questions occur whether we will it or no. Some are matters of everyday life, too trivial to spend time on. Some occur only to deeper minds, as the question what God is occurred to Thomas Aquinas, and the question why there is something and not nothing occurred to Leibniz. Of course we are free to ignore them, to brush them aside, as we are free to attend to them, to develop them, to pursue lines of thought that promote their occurrence; but the basic occurrence is a given, in the sense not only of a datum for thought but as a gift from a giver.

Questions are given, however, only to those to whom they occur. The persons are few, I would guess, to whom the question what God is has occurred, or the question why there is something and not nothing. No one will blame those to whom the questions do not occur; considerable blame, however, is meted out to those who, when questions do occur, welcome them and pursue an answer to the limits of understanding and beyond.

Instead of trading epithets here, it is better to make this difference itself a question and try to understand it. To that end I invoke and expand Lonergan's differentiations of consciousness. That phrase refers, of course, to differentiations on the side of the subject; but other differentiations occur on the side of the subject's world, and so we have the genera and species of the physical and bio-universe, the social institutions and cultural achievements of the humanly constructed world, and so on. This suggests the need of a wider umbrella that would cover differentiations across the confines of world and subject, differentiations on the whole human scene, differentiations throughout the creation enterprise. Under that wider heading I have assigned a separate territory to four such differentiations: the cognitional, the ontological, the felt, the voluntary.

But how do the differentiations arise? What differentiating forces are at work? On the infrahuman level there are the forces of evolution; these are well enough known, so it will be more interesting to take them for granted and consider instead the differentiating forces in the human world.

First of all, an initial plasticity found in the infant but not in the puppy is open to an enormous development in the infant, a development

denied the puppy.⁶⁶ More positively, the source of difference may be found in "the locality, the period, the social milieu"; again, the variation will depend "upon native aptitude, upon training, upon age and development, upon external circumstances, upon ... chance." And further, in the drama of life, each person will find and develop "the possible roles he might play."⁶⁷

That provides a wide scope indeed for the emergence of the four main divisions I suggest for the world enterprise. Then, within the cognitional realm there are subdivisions. Some people are interested in geometry, some in the knowledge of God, some in the family tree. Our interest in this article regards subdivisions in the category of "philosophy," where that term is taken in a wide sense to include empiricist, idealist, realist, and other branches. More to the point, it is also taken to include opponents of philosophy, for to oppose philosophy and offer reasons for that opposition is to be a philosopher.

That last group is the presently relevant one: those who charge it is hubris to attempt to control all reality through knowledge. It is these who might be partners in dialogue with Lonergan, were not that dialogue contrary to their principles. Still, half at least of the dialogue must be attempted from the side of Lonergan and like thinkers. We speak of bridging a gap, as cities on opposite sides of a river might do. But in that example each side can see the other and build so as to effect a union. If there is permanent fog on the river they can still reach out tentatively and eventually meet through trial and error. But what if the other side doesn't want a union? One can only add to the charge of hubris by trying to understand even hostility to understanding, as Lonergan has done,⁶⁸ and as this essay itself tries to do with its dogged pursuit of his thought.

⁶⁶*Third Collection*, 38, 119, 133.

⁶⁷Frederick E. Crowe, "Origin of Differentiations of Consciousness," *Lonergan Workshop* 10 (1994): 80. The mention of "chance" reminds us of the role Lonergan over and over assigned to luck in the work of scholars.

⁶⁸Chapter 17 of *Insight* opens with the remark, "If Descartes has imposed upon subsequent philosophers a requirement of rigorous method, Hegel has obliged them not only to account for their own views but also to explain the existence of contrary convictions and opinions."

The study I have made identifies Lonergan's approach clearly enough as what he calls generalist.⁶⁹ He is not a generalist in the way Michelangelo is said to have been a *uomo universale*. The advance of learning and its dispersion among specialties makes Michelangelo impossible today. Still the questions continue to occur, and will continue as long as Aquinas and Leibniz find successors. A way to handle them has to be found. Lonergan found his generalist approach in the study of method as pertinent to all learning. No questions are to be brushed aside, but instead of answers a way of approach is defined: the way of method. Whether or not that will eventually yield a distant counterpart to the *uomo universale* remains to be seen.

Meanwhile what is to be said on the general charge of the "totalitarian" ambitions of knowledge? In a sense an answer is beside the point both for defenders and for accusers. For defenders, because inquiry for them is less an argued position than it is a compulsion.⁷⁰ For accusers, at least those most thoroughly antirational, because reasoned argument is on principle ruled out of order. It may be necessary to wait for the experiment of history to decide for one side or the other by retiring its opponents from the scene — a rather unphilosophic way to deal with matters philosophic but no doubt effective in the long run.⁷¹

⁶⁹Bernard Lonergan, "Questionnaire on Philosophy," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 2,2 (October 1984): 1-35, at 32-33; and see note 2 above.

⁷⁰*Insight* 28 [4]: "... the fact of inquiry is beyond all doubt. It can absorb a man. It can keep him for hours, day after day, year after year, in the narrow prison of his study or his laboratory."

⁷¹This is said to be the case in science: "As Max Planck testified, a new scientific position gains general acceptance, not by making opponents change their minds, but by holding its own until old age has retired them from their professorial chairs," *Insight* 549 [526]. On the "experiment of history," see *Insight*, 779, editorial note c.

MODERN PHILOSOPHY AND THE FLIGHT FROM THE SUBJECT

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THE FLIGHT FROM the conscious subject in modern analytical philosophy proceeds down two distinct though related avenues, Humean empiricism on the one hand, and scientism and behaviorism on the other. Humean empiricism yields a truncated subject, while scientism and behaviorism eliminate the subject entirely.

The classical empiricist argument against the existence of the subject, due in the first instance to David Hume,¹ may be set out as follows. "If there were a subject [that is, over and above the stream of impressions and ideas] it would be introspectible. But a conscious subject is not introspectible. Therefore there is no conscious subject." The minor premiss is impeccable; but one may usefully take issue with the major. Though one's substantial self may not be available to introspection, one can hardly argue soundly to the effect that one is not an arguer. Another related oversight, typical of Hume and of subsequent empiricists, is of the fact that one is aware not only of the data of consciousness, but of the operations of oneself as subject on these data — that is, of one's questioning, hypothesizing, marshalling evidence, judging, deciding and so on. This had been acknowledged by Hume's empiricist predecessor John Locke,² who maintained that we have "ideas of reflection" as well as of "sensation," but was overlooked by Hume himself.

¹ David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, book I, part IV, section VI.

² John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, book II, chap. 1, section 4.

I.

Early in the twentieth century, both of Hume's oversights were taken over by Bertrand Russell, who espoused the general philosophy of a "neutral monism" of experience with material objects and minds as "logical constructions" out of it. It is said that the young Russell, when he first began to take an interest in philosophical questions, was put off by well-meaning adults with the silly epigram, "What is mind? No matter. What is matter? Never mind." Materialists (says Russell), who have often been scientists but less often philosophers,³ have sought to analyze mind in terms of matter; idealists, to analyze matter in terms of mind. Those metaphysicians who have believed in both mind and matter have argued endlessly about how they act upon one another; so far as Russell is concerned, modern psychophysical parallelism is not essentially different from the views of the "Occasionalist" followers of Descartes, who concluded that they did not really interact at all. (On their account, God, in the infinite divine wisdom and goodness, set things up, at the Big Bang or whatever, in such a way that my arm is physically preprogrammed to go up when I want to raise it in order to make a point; but my wanting to make the point has no real causal influence on the raising of my arm. On psychophysical parallelism as being much the same as Occasionalism, and no less absurd, I completely agree with Russell.)

But as Russell saw it by the time he came to write *The Analysis of Mind* (which was first published in 1921), these interminable disputes about the nature of mind and matter, and their relations with one another, have been vitiated by the fact that the parties assumed that they knew what was meant by the terms in question. They were mistaken, however, on this crucial point. The "world of our experience," according to him, is in fact composed of "neither mind nor matter, but something more primitive than either."⁴ "Mind and matter alike are logical constructions";⁵

³In our own time, materialist philosophers have become quite a common breed.

⁴Bertrand Russell, *The Analysis of Mind* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1956), 10; compare with 101, 108, 287.

⁵Russell, *Analysis*, 307.

they "are neither of them the actual stuff of reality, but different convenient groupings of an underlying material."⁶

This underlying material consists of sensations and images. Images are usually less vivid than sensations, but not invariably so (as Hume thought⁷); they can be distinguished strictly speaking only by their different causation. Images as distinct from sensations "are caused by association with a sensation, not by a stimulus external to the nervous system."⁸ When a sensation is closely correlated with similar sensations in people who are physically close to us, we take it as providing knowledge of an external world.⁹ While there remains on this view a kind of dualism of causal laws, which may be either physical or mental, this does not apply to the actual stuff of which the world basically consists;¹⁰ whether physical or mental causation applies in any particular case is to be decided by trial and error.¹¹ But it should be added that "the stuff of our mental life ... is not possessed of any attributes which make it incapable of forming part of the world of matter";¹² and in fact, it seems probable that the laws underlying our mental life are "derivative from ordinary physical causation in nervous (and other) tissue."¹³

Any aspect of our mental life that may seem to consist of other than sensations and images belongs not to its actual stuff but rather to its structure and relations.¹⁴ Introspection, as has been notorious to philosophers since Hume¹⁵ and was stressed by many psychologists of

⁶Russell, *Analysis*, 35.

⁷See David Hume, *An Inquiry into Human Understanding*, section II, para. 12.

⁸Russell, *Analysis*, 109. One might accuse Russell of making unwarranted assumptions here; but I think this would be unfair. Perhaps, strictly in accordance with his views, he should talk of sensations as opposed to images being related to other sensations in such a way as to make us talk in terms of influence by an external world. But this would certainly be cumbersome.

⁹Russell, *Analysis*, 110.

¹⁰Russell, *Analysis*, 137.

¹¹Russell, *Analysis*, 35.

¹²Russell, *Analysis*, 108.

¹³Russell, *Analysis*, 307.

¹⁴Russell, *Analysis*, 109.

¹⁵Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, book I, part IV, section VI.

the early twentieth century, does not reveal a unified substantial self. It is illegitimate to assume "that thoughts cannot just come and go, but need a person to think them ... [T]he person is constituted by relations of the thoughts to each other." Some have sought to make distinctions between the act, content, and object of thought. But it is difficult to see in this "act" anything other than "the ghost of the subject, or what was once the full-blooded soul." Rather than saying "I think," it would be less misleading to say "'it thinks in me', like 'It rains here'; or better still, 'there is a thought in me'."¹⁶ One should not be misled by one introspective psychologist who says of his work, "'The most important drawback is that the mind, in watching its own workings, must necessarily have its attention divided between two objects.'" Russell cites with approval another psychologist, who comments that this way of speaking illegitimately drags in the notion of a single observer; and maintains that what is called introspection really consists of awareness of "images", visceral sensations, and so on.¹⁷

"Belief," says Russell roundly, "... is the central problem in the analysis of mind." Indeed, one may go further, and say that a person's philosophical outlook largely depends on the account she gives of the nature of belief. Beliefs are characterized by truth or falsehood, just as words are by meaning.¹⁸ What Russell calls the "objective" of a belief, that which renders it true or false, is not generally something under the believer's control, or internal to the believer; for example, the fact that Columbus first reached America in 1492, which renders the belief that he did so then true, the belief that he did so in 1066 false.¹⁹ There are three essential elements to be distinguished in belief, the believing, what is believed (the "content"), and the objective; the first two, as opposed to the last, "must both consist of present occurrences in the believer." Thus, when I believe Caesar crossed the Rubicon, "[i]t is not correct to say that I

¹⁶Russell, *Analysis*, 18.

¹⁷Russell, *Analysis*, 116.

¹⁸Russell, *Analysis*, 231.

¹⁹Russell, *Analysis*, 232. Russell talks of Columbus discovering America, but I prefer to prescind from the controversial ramifications of this way of talking.

am believing the actual event."²⁰ Given that knowledge is nothing other than belief which is at once true and well-founded, the wide gulf which often yawns between belief and objective "may, when it is first perceived, give us a feeling that we cannot really "know" anything about the outer world," but only what is now in our thoughts. But the ideal of knowing that underlies the feeling, once it is thought out, turns out to be "something like the mystic unity of knower and known," which Russell considers to be quite mistaken. In his view, "knowing ... [is] a very external and complicated relation, incapable of exact definition, dependent upon causal laws, and involving no more unity than there is between a signpost and the town to which it points."²¹

II

Nearly everyone, I take it, would concur with Russell in rejecting pure Cartesian dualism, where there is an otherwise unbridgable gulf between mind and matter that can be overcome only by special divine dispensation. And he also seems right in finding materialism, idealism, and psychophysical parallelism all unsatisfactory in their attempted solutions to the problem. Whether his own solution is an improvement on them is moot. There is a crucial difference between Russell's doctrine that minds and material objects are logical constructions out of sense-contents (or whatever one calls them), and Lonergan's view that sense-contents are clues to the rest of reality, which we come to know by intelligent and reasonable inquiry into them. Russell's account leads to howling paradoxes when it comes, for example, to our knowledge of the past. In fact, our apparent knowledge of the past turns out not to be of the past at all, but of present and future experiences. Henry VIII, as known by me, becomes a logical construction out of images as of marks on paper and noises emitted by sixteenth-century historians.²²

²⁰Russell, *Analysis*, 233.

²¹Russell, *Analysis*, 234-35.

²²In *Language, Truth and Logic* (New York: Dover Publications, n.d.), at the end of chap. 5, A. J. Ayer confronts this paradox for a moment; and then hurries on to the more congenial topics of the meaninglessness of morality and religion.

And there remains always for Russell the spectre of solipsism; logical constructions out of my sensations can get no further than my sensations and can never put me in touch with an external world or other people. A quarter of a century after he published *The Analysis of Mind*, Russell was still saying that he thought that the problem of our knowledge of the external world had never been satisfactorily solved by philosophers.²³ But on Lonergan's account I myself, as an embodied conscious subject, am only one, and a rather insignificant one, of the beings that I can get to know about by inquiry into my experience. As to my substantial unity, I can get to know about beings like the Eiffel Tower and Monica Lewinsky and the fact that I am distinct from them. However, I do not get to know, by pursuing my inquiries, that I am in the same sense distinct from the individual that I was five years ago.

Lonergan would concede to Hume and Russell, I think, that the self is not a potential direct object of introspection, which we may be aware of in the same sort of way as we may be aware of the blue patches in our visual fields or the itches in our toes. But a follower of Lonergan can only find it astonishing that Russell is professedly unaware of the activities of his own prodigiously active mind. The original British empiricist, John Locke, maintained that we had ideas not only of "sensation," but of "reflection"; that is to say, of the activities of our own minds in asking questions, envisaging possibilities, marshalling evidence, coming to conclusions, and so forth, with respect to our ideas of sensation;²⁴ and he is surely right. (*Insight*, of course, represents perhaps the most impressive exercise on record of "reflection" in Locke's sense; though I do not know of any evidence that Lonergan was closely acquainted with Locke's writings.)

I mentioned that Russell had taken to task an introspective psychologist who remarked on the difficulty of at once performing mental operations and attending to them. I am sure that the psychologist had a point here; it is surely rather difficult at once to work out a mathematical problem and to attend also to the experience of working it out. (It is

²³Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1946), 635.

²⁴Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, book II, chap. 1.

probably most effective to do the latter while the memory of the former is fresh in one's mind.) Russell objects that this is in itself to be committed to the idea of a substantial self. Now I think it is true that it is just these active exercises of the mind that make it most difficult not to think in terms of a self; it is almost as though Russell, and those contemporary psychologists to whom he feels most sympathetic, are so averse to the idea of "the soul" that they shut out those aspects of everyone's experience which are apt most strongly to suggest it. Images and sensations may just come and go, but putting questions, forming hypotheses, and making judgments about them are hardly so lackadaisical a business; and it seems very odd that a coauthor of *Principia Mathematica*, of all people, should have been unaware of this.

When one discusses the relationship of Lonergan to the analysts on the nature of belief, it is as well to bear in mind a possible terminological pitfall that might be confused by the unwary with a matter of substance. From the point of view of the analysts, Lonergan uses the term "belief" in an eccentric sense; for him, one "believes" what one accepts on the authority of others, as opposed to what one has established by the exercise of one's own attentiveness, intelligence and reason. In this sense, all of us believe, and ought to believe, and cannot but believe, the vast majority, but not all, of the things that we believe in the typical analytical sense. To believe something in the analytical sense, is, in more Lonerganian terms, merely to have a disposition to judge that it is so. And that it is a disposition is important; belief itself, whether in the analytic or the Lonerganian sense, is not of itself a conscious state. A child does not have to be thinking of Father Christmas all the time that it can be truly said of her, both in the analytic and the Lonerganian senses, that she believes that there is such a person as Father Christmas.

Having disposed of the terminological difficulty, we may come to the matter of substance. The effect of Russell's analysis, as he frequently insists, is to render very remote the connection between any belief, or disposition to judgment, and the object believed in. It verges on the counterposition that there is no connection whatever; that whatever it is one can mean, it is not something in the real world. One is left with "the Pole Star," as my thought or utterance, having almost nothing to do with

the Pole Star as the object so designated. On Lonergan's account, of course, where the real world is nothing other than the term of what is mediated by meaning so far as our judgments are rationally arrived at there is no difficulty here; the Pole Star is just what is meant by "the Pole Star," and is real so far as thought or talk of it as real would survive indefinitely stringent rational investigation.

Russell says that the gulf between what he calls the "content" and the "objective" of a belief, "when at first perceived gives us the feeling" that it renders knowledge of the real external world impossible. Here he lets himself too easily off the hook; that is the actual consequence of his account, and his self-reassurances ring hollow. He has put asunder with a vengeance what he is in no position to join together again. For a Lonerganian, one inevitable corollary of a satisfactory theory of human knowledge is, that the real world is nothing other than the "to be known"; this is of course rather more than a step closer than Russell would like to what he calls "the mystic unity between knower and known." It shows the sense of Aristotle's curious doctrine that "the soul is in a manner all things"; to know reality, the mind has as it were to develop its own interior principles rather than, as Lonergan would say, just to "take a look" at what is outside itself. Even worse for Russell, the satisfactory account of knowledge, once found, turns out to be essentially friendly to a theistic worldview. As philosophers from Descartes to Richard Taylor²⁵ have noted, there is a plausible connection between belief in God on the one hand, and our confidence on the other that our mental processes put us in touch with an independently existing world.

III

Quine regarded himself as an empiricist; but his empiricism is holistic. "In science," in the words of his expositor Alex Orenstein, "one cannot empirically test isolated hypotheses ... [T]he vehicles of empirical content

²⁵Richard Taylor, *Metaphysics* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963), chap. 6.

are whole systems of sentences and not isolated individual sentences."²⁶ To quote Quine himself, "The totality of our so-called knowledge or beliefs, from the most casual matters of geography and history to the profoundest laws of atomic physics or even of pure mathematics, is a man-made fabric which impinges on experience only on the edges ... [T]he total field is so undetermined by its boundary conditions" in experience "that there is much latitude of choice as to what statements to re-evaluate in the light of any single contrary experience. No particular experiences are linked with any particular statements in the interior of the field, except indirectly through considerations of equilibrium affecting the field as a whole."²⁷ Our acceptance of an ontology ought not to be different in principle from our acceptance of a system of physics; we should adopt "the simplest" set of ideas "into which the disordered fragments of raw experience can be fitted and arranged."²⁸ The criteria to be used are "generality, simplicity, and precision."²⁹ Quine's "maxim of minimum mutilation"³⁰ is to the effect that we should retain the hypotheses that clash least with the rest of our network of beliefs; so have a certain leeway in this matter.³¹ This maxim explains why we are least inclined to revise the statements of logic or mathematics, as this would have a destructive effect on so many of the rest of our beliefs.³² (Quine is famous for rejecting the dichotomy between analytic and synthetic judgments that is so important to many philosophers.) Some would say that such statements as those of logic and mathematics are true by virtue of the meanings of their terms; but Quine says that one may equally well insist that they express something self-evident about the nature of the

²⁶Alex Orenstein, *Willard Van Orman Quine* (Boston: Twayne Publications, 1977), 18-19.

²⁷"Two Dogmas of Empiricism," *From a Logical Point of View* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), 42-43; quoted by Orenstein in *Quine*, 86-87.

²⁸Quine, "On What There Is"; quoted by Orenstein in *Quine*, 53.

²⁹Orenstein, *Quine*, 54.

³⁰See Quine's *Philosophy of Logic* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 19), 100; Orenstein, *Quine*, 83.

³¹Orenstein, *Quine*, 83.

³²Orenstein, *Quine*, 85.

world. His point is that these two claims are empirically indistinguishable.³³

In Quine's view, philosophy should be continuous with science, and of a piece with it. We cannot do what so many philosophers have purported to do, stand outside our scientific worldview to make judgments about it.³⁴ That there is no "first philosophy," or foundational way of thought independent of science by which we might criticize or even justify it, is one good reason for approaching epistemology through psychology and linguistics.³⁵ We do not have recourse to any "special vantage point outside science."³⁶ Otto Neurath's famous parable is used on several occasions by Quine;³⁷ Neurath compares human knowledge to a ship afloat on the high seas, which we continuously have to repair, though it can never be brought into dry dock.

Traditional empiricists, including Russell, have been preoccupied with the question of how we get from our experience, which seems ineluctably private to each of ourselves, to knowledge of a public world. Though Quine considers himself an empiricist, his view is that philosophers should regard their work as continuous with science, and indeed to presuppose it. This clearly presupposes in turn that we have knowledge of the external world, as few people believe all scientists to be discoursing exclusively about the contents of their own consciousness. Now Quine, unlike Russell, was a strict behaviorist. (He was a close friend of the renowned behaviorist psychologist B. F. Skinner; but he first espoused the doctrine as a result of reading J. B. Watson's pioneering exposition while still a student.³⁸) As a good behaviorist, furthermore, Quine prefers to eschew mentalistic ways of talking.³⁹ He regards the traditional empiricist account as ontologically deficient, as committing its exponent to "the existence of private, non-scientific (that is, nontestable),

³³Orenstein, *Quine*, 107.

³⁴Orenstein, *Quine*, 152.

³⁵Orenstein, *Quine*, 152.

³⁶Orenstein, *Quine*, 152.

³⁷Orenstein, *Quine*, 153.

³⁸Orenstein, *Quine*, 16-17.

³⁹Orenstein, *Quine*, 150.

difficult to identify and possibly mentalistic objects." Quine's ontology, on the other hand, requires only "physical events, that is, nerve hits, and linguistic entities, that is, observation sentences." These last, as assented to with minimum background information, are among the least likely of our statements to be revised; and yet at times at least we may have occasion to edit them.⁴⁰ These observation sentences (for example, "There is now a pink rat in the center of my visual field") are causally proximate to such stimuli and can be learned entirely ostensively.⁴¹ As to the question of "meaning," which may seem ineluctably mental, Quine follows the physicalist and behaviorist route so far as to talk of dispensing with it altogether.⁴²

Epistemology, for Quine, is a branch of empirical psychology, which of course is itself a branch of natural science. It is evident that, on the basis of a restricted input of stimulation of our nerve endings, we human beings respond with an extensive output of language that expresses concepts, theories, worldviews, and what have you,⁴³ and it is the task of the epistemologist to study how and why we do this. Traditional epistemology, as Quine sees it, errs as being part of a "first philosophy," an enterprise that to him is impossible.

"Epistemology, or something like it, simply falls into place as a chapter of psychology and hence of natural science. It studies a natural phenomenon, namely, a physical human subject. This human subject is accorded a certain experimentally controlled input – certain patterns of irradiation in assorted frequencies, for instance – and in the fullness of time, the subject delivers as output a description of the three-dimensional external world and its history. The relation between the meager input and

⁴⁰Orenstein, *Quine*, 150.

⁴¹Orenstein, *Quine*, 150-51.

⁴²Orenstein, *Quine*, 113.

⁴³I am one kind of object in the physical world, some of whose forces impinge on my eyes, eardrums, and fingertips. "I strike back, emanating concentric air waves. These waves take the form of a torrent of discourse about tables, people, molecules, light rays, retinas, air waves, prime numbers, infinite classes, good and evil" ("The Scope and Language of Science," in *The Ways of Paradox*, ed. Willard Van Orman Quine [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976], 215; Orenstein, *Quine*, 151.) Like Russell, Quine is among those philosophers who can write very well; a recent collection of his essays was described by a reviewer as "vintage, sparkling Quine."

the torrential output is a relation that we are tempted to study for somewhat the same reasons that always prompted epistemology; namely, in order to see how evidence relates to theory, and in what ways one's theory of nature transcends any available evidence ... The old epistemology aspired to contain, in a sense, natural science; it would construct it somehow from sense-data. Epistemology in its new setting, conversely, is contained in natural science, as a chapter of psychology." He goes on to admit that in a sense the containment of science by epistemology still applies, since the whole of science "is our own construction or projection from stimulations like those we were meting out to our epistemological subject."⁴⁴ At this rate, one's account of language acquisition will be of primary importance for epistemology.⁴⁵

IV

The most telling objection to Quine's account is just the obvious one; that the normative element in traditional epistemology is and must be lacking in it. It is one thing to explain, in a manner that is proper for empirical psychology, how people in fact derive their concepts, theories, and worldviews from experience; quite another to indicate how they ought to do so, if what they come up with is to come somewhere near the truth about the world. And it is only so far as its practitioners have exercised their minds in this way that the theories and judgments about the world that they come up with are worthy of being dignified by the name of "science." What is more, it seems to me that any account of knowledge of sufficient generality to bring out what makes science "science" must be of the nature of "first philosophy." I take it that it would be generally conceded that the mere fact that a set of ideas is prestigious within a society is not sufficient grounds for calling it a science. After all, there have been many sets of ideas that have prevailed in different societies,

⁴⁴Willard Van Orman Quine, "Epistemology Naturalized," in *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*, ed. Willard Van Orman Quine (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 82-83; quoted by Orenstein in *Quine*, 152.

⁴⁵Orenstein, *Quine*, 149.

and in the same society at different times, and these have flagrantly contradicted one another. It is the business of a general theory of knowledge to set out how we can come to know about the real world by the appropriate exercise of our minds, and why such exercise tends to culminate in knowledge of the real world; the sciences give us the results of this exercise as carried out so far.

Quine is perfectly aware that what he is offering is not the traditional epistemology but only something like it. And the trouble is that it is not enough like it to do the job that epistemology traditionally did. Moreover, this is something which, for all the subtlety of Quine's arguments to the contrary, needs doing. Short of it, after all, science itself lacks justification. And to do the job is necessarily to attend to the question of when the subject who sets out to acquire knowledge is acting properly and authentically, and when she is not. Trying to get at the truth, or at least nearer to the truth, is one essential characteristic of an authentic human being; and science is one application of this.

It looks as though, on Quine's view, we cannot even stand outside the scientific worldview sufficiently to say why it is better than any other, more likely to bring us closer to stating the truth about the world. One can, of course, just state or assume its superiority, as Quine frequently does; but it is difficult to see why such a move should be more preferable in this context than in any other, like the truth of Mormonism, Roman Catholicism, or the flat earth theory. If one is not too fastidious for "first philosophy," it is not really difficult to show the special excellence of science, at least within the range of matters with which it is fitted to deal. To put the matter very briefly and schematically, it is self-destructive to deny that we sometimes make true statements, and sometimes make statements for good reason. The real world is, and can be in the last analysis, nothing but what true statements are about, and statements made with good reason tend to be about. To make statements for good reason is to have been attentive to the relevant experiences; to have thought up a range of possibilities that may account for them; and to judge that that possibility is so which seems best to do so. (Every sane human being effectively assumes this in her interactions with the world; but it is one thing to do it, another thing to notice that one does it, and yet

a third to spell out the implications for the nature of oneself and of the world of the fact that one does so.)

The "sciences" bear that honorable name on the assumption that their practitioners have applied that method over generations to the topics with which they deal. Unfortunately, such an account, in however exhaustive detail it is elaborated, cannot be reduced to the sort of precision that would placate the tidy-minded. Quine was one of the world's foremost logicians; and it is notorious that, though logic in the strict sense is of very great assistance in deriving knowledge from experience, the process can by no means be reduced to logic. There is no strictly valid deducing of general propositions from particular, of the statement that all ravens are black from any number of statements that one has observed a black raven, and no raven that is not black. And even once one has excogitated one's theories, deductions from them have to be matched with observations by a nonlogical process. (Of course, on a broad sense of "logical" which includes what is sometimes misleadingly called "inductive" logic, logic and experience alone are the best path to knowledge; but this is only because by "logic," in this sense, one effectively means whatever it is that has to be added to experience in order to attain knowledge.)

The inevitable lack of precision in these matters makes for a rude awakening from the positivist dream and provides an easy bridge to postmodernist scepticism. Quine has rightly insisted that one can save any proposition about the world at the bar of experience if one is able to make enough adjustment elsewhere in one's system of propositions; it is easy to draw from this the inference of Rorty, that all claims that science is better founded in experience than other systems of ideas are essentially a sham. Postmodernism is a legatee of the disappointment of positivist hopes; from that perspective, Quine can seem a transitional figure.

How can one avoid the transition from the difficulties in empiricism to postmodernist scepticism? I believe that the best means of avoidance is to bear in mind the following distinction. It is one thing to say that a statement of common sense or of science must be such that, if it were true, you would expect to make certain observations and obtain certain experimental results; another thing to say that the truth of the statement

could not be rescued, even if none of the observations were made and all the experiments came out wrong, by making enough adjustments in the rest of one's system of beliefs. In demonstrating the falsity of the second thesis, Quine has not done the same for the first. The fact that there is no logically tight connection between the truth of statements and the obtaining of experienced states of affairs supposed to corroborate them, does not imply that there is no corroboration of particular statements by experience at all. In Lonerganian terms, one may say that a statement of science or common sense is to be justified as the most reasonable option given the totality of the relevant evidence in experience; but this is not to say that there is a relation of strict entailment between the statement in question and other statements directly anticipating or recording observations.

There is a nice analogy here with the case of the paranoid. It may be most reasonable, on the basis of all the relevant evidence, to deny that a particular racial minority, whom we may call the Ruritarians, have a stranglehold on the Canadian economy. But the paranoid can always insist that the ability of the Ruritarians to conceal all evidence of this itself indicates the extent of the stranglehold that they have.

According to Quine, no particular sets of observations are directly linked with particular statements close to the center of the system of our beliefs. I doubt this, if the connection between our beliefs and our experiences is taken in the manner that I have suggested. "Water consists of hydrogen and oxygen" is fairly central to our system of scientific beliefs, and it is linked in this manner to a huge number of observable states of affairs that you would expect if it were so, and would not expect otherwise. To show how one might "save the phenomena" on some alternative theory would be an exhausting but perhaps instructive exercise

I am sympathetic to Quine's denial of the absolute nature of the distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments but do not think that it is relevant to our present concerns to go deeply into the matter. I do however think that there may be a difference in kind, for all that there are probably borderline cases, between statements that are merely corroborated by an enormous tract of our experience, and those that are such

that their denial would make nonsense of all our efforts to get to know the world. In Lonergan's terminology, of course, such statements are those that express or entail counterpositions. Hume was gesturing at such cases, apparently, in his argument against miracles.⁴⁶ "If one is going to allow exceptions to laws of nature," he seems to be saying, "then all our reasoning about matters of fact is put at risk."

The best reasons for not approaching epistemology through psychology and linguistics is that such an approach clearly does not work, if epistemology is to do the job traditionally assigned to it – and the job, for all the copiousness and subtlety of Quine's argumentation to the contrary, does need doing; and second, that there is a first philosophy, which provides an obviously convincing approach to it. The trouble is that, though the essence of scientific method is quite easy to articulate, it has been disappointingly resistant to strictly logical accountability.

Considering Neurath's analogy from the point of view of an adequate first philosophy, I think human knowledge is like a boat that is easily and frequently returnable to dry dock; and the wise skipper will every now and then heave it out of the sea and inspect it for actual or potential leaks. To put the matter literally, scientists, or philosophers who are seriously concerned with scientific work, should sometimes ponder whether they are using the right methods to get at the truth; whether, for example, they are attending to evidence that is inconvenient for their pet theories, or are properly considering alternatives rather than silencing or persecuting those who have the temerity to put them forward, and so on.

It seems to follow from Quine's view that we are in no position to say why the scientific worldview is better than any other that might be proposed. Someone could say that the articulation of scientific method, and its justification as yielding knowledge of what exists prior to and independently of us, is itself part of science; but this would surely be very misleading. And whether it is a part of science or not, Quine in fact may be thought constantly to evade this point rather than to answer it.

For a Lonerganian, Quine's move to eliminate meaning is as nice an example as one could wish of a counterposition bringing about its own reversal. It follows from it that, in the last analysis, no one, Quine

⁴⁶David Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, section X.

included, ever really means anything by what they say or write. It is important to note, too, that the elimination of meaning is no incidental feature of Quine's thought, but ineluctably follows from his resolute repudiation of "mentalism." An epistemologist of the traditional kind, which in this context includes Lonergan, is concerned with the fact that, on the basis of our experience, we appear at least to "mean" actual or conceivable things and events in the public and external world; and it asks how it is we can do this. There is really no difficulty from the point of view of Lonergan's "generalized empirical method," whereby the public world with all the things in it is "mediated by meaning," to be known through intelligent and reasonable inquiry into experience that is private in the last analysis. And, as a result of inquiry into this world, we find that it includes other intelligent and reasonable beings with private lives like our own.

I agree with Quine about the importance of science for philosophy, and in a sense about the continuity of philosophy with science. Where we part company is on the nature and implications of this continuity. Very roughly, as I see it, and I think most Lonerganians would, science is the means par excellence of finding out what is the case in detail about the world; and a main task of epistemology and metaphysics is to show why this is so, and to work out the consequences of the fact that it is so. Quine writes of "a natural phenomenon, a physical human subject." Doesn't this phrase rather craftily insinuate physicalist reductionism? Wouldn't an attentive, intelligent, and reasonable being who turned out to be irreducibly so, still be a perfectly "natural phenomenon"?

Quine is of course quite right that any view we may have of the world, both generally and in detail, "transcends any available evidence" that we could have for it. The basic evidence is after all in the here and now; whereas what is known is often in the there and then, and frequently, as in the examples of nuclear particles and other minds, of what couldn't be an object of our experience. To put it in specifically Lonerganian terms, in finding out what really is the case, intelligence and reasonableness have to add something to the results of mere attentiveness. Quine describes the conceptual structure that we impose upon experience

as "man-made,"⁴⁷ which appears to me ambiguous in an important way. Literally speaking it is made by human beings, as human intelligence is creative; but it is the office of reasonableness progressively to determine which parts of this human-made structure belonged to the world prior to and independently of human investigation of it. This of course is just a corollary of the old saw, "an (humanity) proposes; God disposes." God is the intelligent will that is responsible for the intelligible state of affairs that is the world; we get to know about this, both generally (metaphysics) and in detail (science), by attentive, intelligent, and reasonable inquiry.

⁴⁷I note the exclusivity of the language, but it seems inconvenient in the present context not to stick with it.



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