

# METHOD

*Journal of Lonergan Studies*

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# METHOD

## *Journal of Lonergan Studies*

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## CONTENTS

- |                          |            |  |
|--------------------------|------------|--|
| <i>Frank Budenholzer</i> | <b>127</b> | What Is Life?—Current Scientific and Philosophical Perspectives                              |
| <i>Robert M. Doran</i>   | <b>149</b> | Imitating the Divine Relations: A Theological Contribution to Mimetic Theory                 |
| <i>Philip McShane</i>    | <b>187</b> | Obstacles to Metaphysical Control  |
| <i>Michael Sharkey</i>   | <b>197</b> | Heidegger, Lonergan, and Self-Presence   |
| <i>Michael Vertin</i>    | <b>211</b> | Human Flourishing after 9/11: Contextualizing One of Lonergan's Central Philosophical Claims |

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## WHAT IS LIFE?— CURRENT SCIENTIFIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES\*

*Frank Budenholzer, SVD*

*Fu Jen Catholic University*

*Hsinchuang, Taiwan*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

**W**HAT IS LIFE? *Life* seems to be one of those things that we all know more or less what it is but seem quite at a loss to define it. A quick look at the definition in the *Oxford English Dictionary* seems to back up this statement. “*Life* – The condition or attribute of being alive; animate existence; Opposed to *death*.” While we recognize that sometimes it is hard to know for sure if something is alive (a coral, a virus, an animal or plant near death), we generally are quite confident in our judgments of the presence of life.

One of the reasons for this “feeling for life” is that we ourselves are living beings. We experience ourselves as living unities in relation to an environment. We feel a kinship with other living things and dread the loss of life, which we call death. Because life is the basic fact and condition of our being human, we also use the word in many metaphorical and analogical senses to describe the exuberance that we feel about many things. This exuberance can vary from the mundane, “She was the life of the party,” to our deepest religious experiences, “I am the resurrection and the Life [John 10:24].”

\*First presented at the *International Conference on Cosmology: Religion and Science in Dialogue*, Fu Jen Catholic University, Hsinchuang, Taiwan, November 26-28, 2004.

But while life seems to evade simple definition, it is clearly something that can be studied through the methodologies of the physical and life sciences, primarily biology and chemistry. This study already has its roots in pre-Christian times (think of Aristotle's writings on biology) but has seen its greatest flowering in the last one hundred years with developments in physiology, genetics, biochemistry, and molecular biology. Biologists and those in related disciplines are gradually teasing out the mechanisms and processes by which life differs from nonlife.

Many in the biological community would argue that the question "what is life?" is simply a biological question for which we either already have or soon will have rather complete answers. What possibly can the philosopher bring to the discussion? To ask this question dredges up a whole raft of questions upon which there is little consensus. It involves the classical philosophical questions of the possibility of human knowing and the nature of human knowledge. More recently, such questions have re-emerged in the somewhat different context of the philosophy of science. What are the goals of the physical and life sciences? What does science have to tell us? Does science in some sense describe the "real world"? And finally, what is the relationship of philosophy to science? Is philosophy primarily a way to tidy up scientific statements and language, as some of the earlier analytic philosophers would seem to suggest? Or does philosophy provide a sort of "separate window" on the world, which can then be brought into dialogue with the results of the physical and life sciences?<sup>1</sup>

In the course of this paper, some of these questions will be dealt with in at least an indirect manner. However, it is not my intention to spell out a full philosophy of science or philosophy of biology. To clarify matters, let me make some comments on my personal philosophical starting point. These points will be made with minimal argumentation. For those interested in the background I would suggest consulting the author who has had the greatest impact on my own thinking, Bernard Lonergan. For my own slant on Lonergan's thought and especially on how it relates to

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<sup>1</sup>Nicholas Maxwell, *The Human World in the Physical Universe: Consciousness, Free Will, and Evolution* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

problems in the contemporary physical and life sciences, you may wish to consult my own papers listed in the footnotes.

(1) Both the physical and life sciences and philosophy are, in a generalized sense, empirical.<sup>2</sup> Both science and philosophy begin with experience. Philosophy begins with the experience of the human person in the process of knowing and deciding. Science begins with either the direct or indirect experience of the material things that science studies.

(2) This experience of either myself or the things around me is only the first component of human knowledge. Knowledge implies further questions coming out of that experience and the answering of those questions in a reasonable and coherent way. A true increment in knowledge is had only when the adequacy of those answers is confirmed in judgment. Knowledge implies a triple cord – experience, understanding, and judgment.<sup>3</sup>

(3) The special role of philosophy, especially in relation to the sciences, is to experience ourselves as knowers, to understand ourselves as knowers, and finally to judge whether our understanding of ourselves as knowers is correct or incorrect. In this sense, philosophy has its own role, one that cannot be simply subsumed under the sciences. It is not because philosophy gives us some "superview," but because philosophy examines human knowing and, for better or worse, knowing is the only way we know things.

(4) So far so good. What we have said seems reasonable and would even have its points of contact with later linguistic philosophy.<sup>4</sup> There is, however, a further step, which is clearly more difficult. Does the nature of human knowing tell us anything about the nature of what is known? Kant's preliminary answer was "yes," but then he realized that the a priori categories fatally prejudiced the possibility of true knowledge. All we can know with certitude is the phenomenal world; the deeper noumenal

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<sup>2</sup>Joseph Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge: An Essay in Lonergan's Philosophy*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 268.

<sup>3</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Collection:: Papers by Bernard Lonergan, SJ*, ed. F. E. Crowe. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), 230 (ch. 14, Cognition Structure).

<sup>4</sup>Joseph Fitzpatrick, "Lonergan and the Analytical Tradition." Paper presented at the Second International Lonergan Workshop, Regis College, University of Toronto, August 1-6, 2004.

world remains, at best, obscure. Lonergan's answer to the same question is a clear, but limited affirmative. The structure of human knowing reveals something about the structure of the real.

This is not the place to unpack this assertion. But let me give an example by which everyday science makes the same kind of assertion; the way we ask questions already tells us something about the way we presume things really are. When I teach elementary quantum mechanics, I tell my students that the time-dependent wave function describing a particle is a function of space and time, in one dimension we write  $\psi = \psi(x, t)$ . Why a function of  $x$  and  $t$ ? Maybe another choice of variables would be better? OK, check it out. But why use a functional relationship at all? I would suggest that it is because the things that physics studies are intelligibly related and that mathematical functions are a good way to represent those intelligibilities. (We could conceivably use geometry the way poor Galileo did before the development of algebra. But most would argue that there is an intelligible isomorphism between the geometric and algebraic ways of expressing the relationships.) Some philosophers of science would suggest that this is the reason why a denial of scientific realism is the only course. I would suggest, and I think most scientists would agree, that we are justified in presuming intelligible relationships at least between some variables. In other words, we make presumptions about the nature of reality based on the way we know.

Lonergan describes this isomorphism between cognitional structures and the object of our knowing in terms of "heuristic structures." The nature of human cognition tells us something about the nature of what is known.

(5) If knowing is all we have, then we should be very careful to limit our knowledge to what we can know – nothing more and nothing less. Knowing reality is about experience, understanding, and judgment. Lonergan's nemesis is that most of us tend to truncate our knowing to the level of experience. Or to put it in other terms, we make the criterion of reality our ability to imagine it or what we might call a "hard sense of reality." Our knowledge begins with experience, but the real is ultimately verified intelligibility.

Enough of this for now, let's get back to the question of this paper, "What is life? – Current scientific and philosophical perspectives."

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## 2. LIFE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE LIFE SCIENCES

The life sciences obviously have a great deal to tell us about the particulars of living systems, but what do they have to tell us about the more general question, "what is life?"

In general the life sciences have been extremely successful in explaining more complex entities in terms of what are usually referred to as more basic entities. Thus the macroscopic phenomenon of reproductive inheritance is explained in terms of the laws of genetics and basic units referred to as genes, which in turn are explained by the chemistry of DNA and associated molecules, which is explained in terms of the chemistry of large polymers, and so down the line. Erwin Schrödinger in his 1944 classic *What Is Life?* stated the basic presupposition of many scientists very clearly, How can the events in *space and time*, which take place within the spatial boundary of a living organism, be accounted for by physics and chemistry? The preliminary answer, which this book will endeavor to expound and establish, can be summarized as follows:

The obvious inability of present-day physics and chemistry to account for such events is no reason at all for doubting that they can be accounted for by those sciences.<sup>5</sup>

Schrödinger wrote this statement in 1944 before the discovery of the structure of DNA and the many subsequent advances in molecular biology and biochemistry. Sixty years later one would be hard pressed to deny the chemical and physical basis of all living systems. But is biology just chemistry? Is there something about life that goes beyond the chemistry?

Most biologists and biochemists would probably argue for some variety of *physicalism*.

*Physicalism* claims that all living things are physical objects. If you take an organism, no matter how complex, and break it down into its constituents, you will find matter and only matter there. Living

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<sup>5</sup>Erin Schrödinger, *What Is Life? The Physical Aspect of the Living Cell (with Mind and Matter and Autobiographical Sketches)*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992 [1944], 3-4.



things are made of the same basic ingredients as non-living things. The difference is in how those basic ingredients are put together.<sup>6</sup>

The physicalist stance is usually contrasted with what is called *vitalism*. Definitions of vitalism vary, but in general they argue that living beings require something more than just the right combination of molecules and atoms.<sup>7</sup> Henri Bergson referred to this something more as the *élan vital*, a “vital force” responsible for the dynamism seen in evolution.<sup>8</sup>

We will later comment further on the physicalist-vitalist dichotomy. However, as mentioned above, most biologists would argue for the physicalist account of life. But all would agree that there are problems. One way to approach these problems is to ask a simple question. If biology is really just chemistry and physics, then can all biology be fully explained in chemical or physical terms? This is the so-called problem of epistemological reductionism. Can statements made in the science of biology – physiological explanations, evolutionary theory, ecology, whatever – be fully reduced to statements in chemistry or physics?

In some cases it may be true that a biological explanation is fully reducible to a chemical or physical explanation. For example, such and such an illness is always due to a defective gene at such and such a position in the DNA of the human person. However, most situations are not so simple. Take for example the concept of evolutionary fitness.<sup>9</sup> The particular biological and chemical trait that makes for fitness in one organism will be very different from that in another organism. And even the same organism, under different environmental pressures, may have a different genetic makeup that we would describe as fit. Clearly there is no one-to-one mapping from biology to chemistry to physics. Examples could be multiplied at will.

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<sup>6</sup>Elliot Sober, *Philosophy of Biology: Dimensions of Philosophy Series*, ed. Norman Daniels and Keith Lehrer. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 22.

<sup>7</sup>Sober, *Philosophy of Biology*, 22.

<sup>8</sup>Sober, *Philosophy of Biology*, 22.

<sup>9</sup>Sober, *Philosophy of Biology*, 57-87; Ansgar Beckman, Hans Flor, and Jaegwon Kim, ed., *Emergence or Reductionism: Essays on the Prospects of Nonreductive Physicalism* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter), 1992.

This situation is logically referred to as *supervenience*. Supervenience implies a nonsymmetric hierarchy of explanation. Properties at the lower level are presumed to determine the higher-level properties, but not viceversa. Higher-level properties do not determine lower-level properties in a deterministic way. A certain genetic trait, with its corresponding physical trait, determines the fitness of a particular animal. However, the biological trait of fitness can be embodied in innumerable ways in various animals and in various environments.<sup>10</sup>

Supervenience allows a more nuanced understanding of physicalism and also indicates why the higher-level sciences such as biology or psychology are important, even in an essentially reductionistic account of living things. The well-known theologian Nancey Murphy argues that the concept of supervenience allows for a "non-reductive physicalism." Her main concern is whether the human mental states can simply be reduced to neurobiology. However, similar arguments would hold for the relationship of biology to chemistry or chemistry to physics.<sup>11</sup> As a logical concept that helps clarify explanatory relationships at various levels, it seems uncontroversial. Whether it can bear the weight of allowing a truly "nonreductive" physicalism when considering the relationship between conscious states and the neurological substrate or between living and nonliving things is a more controversial question.<sup>12</sup>

The question of what is the "something more" that distinguishes life from nonlife (or more importantly for us, the human from other animals) will not go away. The problem with vitalism is that it seems too much like a magic something added to a chemical system to make it come alive. Biologists are slow to accept it, because it seems almost by definition to be outside the gamut of their investigation.

A concept that is used with increasing frequency in theoretical biology and in philosophy is that of *emergence*. It is a slippery concept, but

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<sup>10</sup>Sober, *Philosophy of Biology*, 73-77.

<sup>11</sup>Nancey Murphy, "Non-reductive Physicalism: Physical Issues," in *Whatever Happened to the Soul? Scientific and Theological Portraits of Human Nature*, ed. Warren Brown, Nancey Murphy, and H. Newton Malony (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 129-31.

<sup>12</sup>Donald H. Wacome, "Reductionism's Demise: Cold Comfort," *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 39 (June 2004): 321-37.

its proponents want to recognize that there are really new things that emerge without denying the physical and chemical basis of living things and of human persons.<sup>13</sup>

The root of the concept of *emergence* is the perceived complexity of the universe we inhabit. Complex things exist that are on the one hand based on lower-level things (molecules are made of atoms) but at the same time involve a clearly defined subset of all possible variations at the lower level. This rule of limitation is described by Harold Morowitz as a “pruning rule” or “pruning algorithm.” The most commonly given example of this pruning algorithm is the *Pauli principle* which allows the emergence of the periodic table and chemistry from a much larger possible range of subatomic entities.<sup>14</sup> It is suggested that the emergence of life must involve similar pruning algorithms. What constrains the chemistry in a living cell such that only a certain subset of possible chemical behaviors are present in living systems?<sup>15</sup>

On a physicalist understanding, emergence would seem to simply point to the appearance of new entities through a rearrangement of the component parts. These new entities are explained by concepts that supervene on lower levels of explanation. Molecules are a certain arrangement of atoms that allow a new class of entities to be studied. This new emergent science (chemistry) has many explanatory concepts that do not simply correspond one-on-one with the concepts of atomic physics. Chemical concepts such as valence, reactivity, and isomerism supervene on the lower-level atomic and physical concepts. However, on this understanding of emergence, ontological priority is still given to the smallest element. Many, though not all, would presume that the lower levels completely determine the higher-level emergent properties.

There are problems with this simple physicalist understanding of emergence. One problem is “Where to put the pruning algorithm?” To what level should we assign the capacities that allow integration at a higher level – to the lower level or the higher level? For example, the Pauli principle is often cited as the principle that allows the emergence of the

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<sup>13</sup>Beckman, Flor, and Kim, *Emergence or Reductionism*.

<sup>14</sup>Harold J. Morowitz. *The Emergence of Everything*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 54-57.

<sup>15</sup>Morowitz, *The Emergence of Everything*, 76.

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periodic table, which is basic to chemistry and ultimately biology. Does the need to deal with higher-level entities lead to an "enlargement of the lower-level science?"<sup>16</sup> Is the Pauli principle, which allows the formation of atoms, a basic property of subatomic matter or an emergent property of chemical systems? The position argued in this paper is that (a) there are truly emergent properties that can only be understood at the higher level of integration and (b) to learn at what level a certain scientific principle is active is primarily a question for science to determine.

There are also emergent phenomena that seem difficult to understand in the pure physicalist framework – life on the level of organism and cognition and consciousness on the level of the human person. Terrence Deacon, a physical anthropologist now at Berkeley, is concerned with the development of the human mind.<sup>17</sup> He argues for three categories of emergence.<sup>18</sup> The first level involves the emergence of higher-order collective properties, which can be explained in terms of the component parts. Using statistical thermodynamics, the properties of liquid water can be explained in terms of the collective properties of the water molecules. Second-order emergence adds in a feedback mechanism that will amplify certain properties and diminish others. Oscillating chemical reactions and developments studied in chaos theory would come under this rubric.

First-order emergence is essentially independent of time. In second-order emergence, the emergent properties are a function of time and in more complex (chaotic) systems, the longer the period of time, the less the possibility of predicting future states of the system. The third category of emergence adds development and/or evolution to the second category.

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<sup>16</sup>Ernan McMullin, "Biology and the Theology of the Human," in *Controlling Our Destinies: Historical, Philosophical, Ethical, and Theological Perspectives on the Human Genome Project* (Notre Dame, Ind.: 2000), 373.

<sup>17</sup>Terrence Deacon, *The Symbolic Species : The Co-evolution of Language and the Brain* (New York: W.W. Norton), 1997.

<sup>18</sup>Terrence Deacon, "The Hierarchic Language of Emergence: Untangling the Interdependence of Evolution and Self Organization," in *Evolution and Learning: The Baldwin Effect Reconsidered*, ed. Bruce Weber and David Depew (Cambridge: MIT Press), 2002; Arthur Peacocke, "Emergence, Mind, and Divine Action: The Hierarchy of the Sciences in Relation to the Human Body-Brain-Mind." Lecture given at Fu Jen Catholic University, December 2, 2003.

Information at one level of development is “remembered” and acted upon in such a way that it may either be amplified or lost, with the resulting divergence of new types of entities. Evolution is the primary example of third-order emergence. Because of the global nature of the evolutionary process, except in very controlled experiments, it will be impossible to predict the products of third-category emergence. As is often noted, neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory is explanatory but in most cases not predictive. This is in contrast to the properties of liquid water, which can, in principle, be determined from a study of the collective properties of H<sub>2</sub>O molecules.

So what is life? As suggested above, this is primarily a scientific question. First of all, essentially all scientists would agree that it is the result of an extremely complex process, what we might call layered third-category emergence. And what are the unique properties of living systems as opposed to other complex systems? This again is a scientific question. Schrödinger in his 1944 lectures stressed the order that is maintained in living organisms despite the randomness of physical processes. He had only vague hints of DNA and RNA and so suggested a-periodic crystal structures as the basis of the stability and evolutionary development of living things. His lectures are an amazing, if still vague, prediction of what molecular biology would bring to light during the second half of the twentieth century and right up until our own time.

Beyond the tension between stability and the possibility of evolutionary development, organisms require an energy-processing mechanism. This is usually referred to as *metabolism*. For essentially all living systems, bacteria to human beings, the key molecule in this complex process is usually identified by a three-letter acronym – ATP (adenosine triphosphate). But just as DNA by itself explains very little but is at the heart of a very complex web of chemical reactions, so ATP is at the heart of the complex chemical processes usually referred to as the “metabolic pathways.”<sup>19</sup>

Stuart Kaufmann, a theoretical biologist and complexity theorist, while recognizing the tremendous strides that have been made in biochemistry and molecular biology, argues that a real answer to the

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<sup>19</sup>Morowitz, *The Emergence of Everything*, 70-77.

question "what is life?" still alludes us. Kaufmann understands living things as "autonomous agents." "An autonomous agent must be an autocatalytic system able to reproduce and to perform one or more thermodynamic work cycles."<sup>20</sup> The definition essentially retains the two key notions in the above paragraphs, reproduction and metabolism. But to this it adds the concept of "autonomous agent." There is a certain "selfness" in any living thing. Living things are unities that are somehow separated from their environments and can thus develop in unique ways.

Kaufmann then asks if there are laws for the emergence and evolution of biological systems, somehow analogous to the Pauli principle in chemistry. In his most recent book he suggest four candidate laws for the construction of a biosphere.<sup>21</sup> We will not review these suggestions here, but only note that they are attempts to understand the constraints (pruning algorithms) that allow the emergence of living things from their chemical precursors.

### 3. WHAT DOES PHILOSOPHY HAVE TO TELL US?

So far much of what we have said seems to be more science than philosophy, even if it is not the detailed science that is moving forward in laboratories all over the world. The title of this paper suggests that we consider philosophical as well as scientific perspectives.

I suggested earlier that at least one of the purposes of philosophy was to consider the very process by which we can know anything at all – DNA, ATP, autonomous agents, and so forth. Is any of this stuff really true? How do we know it is?

There are many good philosophers who would deny the possibility of really knowing the truth of modern biology. They doubt not only the possibility of knowing whether current theories are true, but even the possibility of there being any kind of process by which incorrect or incomplete understandings can be improved upon.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Stuart Kaufman. *Investigations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 49.

<sup>21</sup>Kaufmann, *Investigations*, 160.

<sup>22</sup>Arthur Fine, "The National Ontological Attitude," in *The Philosophy of Science*, ed. Richard Boyd, Philip Gasper, and J. D. Trout (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), 261-77.

Given this situation, can philosophy give us some clue about what we can know and what we can't? Many of those with a scientific bent have argued that sense knowledge is the one thing that is common to all of us – if we can all agree on certain sensible phenomena there is some hope of saving objectivity. The problem, of course, is that science, whether physics, chemistry, or molecular biology, is not just about sense knowledge but also about very complex understandings and equally complex ways of verifying these understandings.

Here I now return to the five points I made at the beginning of the article, which outlined my personal philosophical starting point. Knowledge is based on the triple cord of experience (both experience of the “outside” world and experience of myself), understanding that experience, and finally judging the adequacy of that understanding. Each level calls forth the next. The process of knowing is all we have, and we affirm it even when denying the possibility of knowledge. For even the most adamant relativist will argue that his particular understanding of the nature of reality is somehow verifiable.

Science is an extremely complex web of knowledge where much of what we know is dependent on other areas of science. This weblike nature of scientific knowing imparts a tentativeness to scientific knowing that is not present in commonsense knowing. However, when all is said and done, science does tell us something about the real world. During the last fifty years humankind has gained real knowledge of the mechanism of living things.

But what does it mean to say that I know something? Does it mean that we have a picture, something like a photograph? Does it mean that we use some kind of inner model to correlate various sense impressions? Lonergan's work reveals that when we say we know something about subatomic particles, quarks, strings, atoms, molecules, metabolic pathways, and other objects of scientific knowledge, we are simply answering questions and then doing our best to verify that those answers are correct. In saying this we are broaching a topic, which sets Lonergan's thought apart from our normal intuitive feelings about knowing. Because all of our knowing begins from experience, we tend to make experience – a sense of hardness or imaginability – the criterion of reality. But what

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scientific practice reveals is that the criterion of reality is verified intelligibility, nothing more and nothing less.

Now what does this have to do with biology? If the imaginability of certain objects of knowledge is the criterion of their reality, then the smallest pieces will have ontological priority. A next step is often to presume that these smallest components (quarks, strings, or whatever) completely determine the reality of larger things. We are left with a strong mechanistic determinism.<sup>23</sup> Ontological priority is given to the smallest chunks of matter, which determine the nature of all complex systems. This kind of thinking is behind the "physical monism" that is presumed by most to be implied by contemporary physics, chemistry and biology.

But what is the alternative? Who could deny that physics is the basis of chemistry and that chemistry is the basis of biology and that biology is the basis of human psychology? Are we to return to vitalism, the idea that "something new" is added for life to emerge from nonlife or for the human person to emerge from the biological matrix?

To answer this question we must ask about the nature of the tiered levels of reality that are the objects of our science. As argued above, all knowing, at least in the universe in which we live, involves a triple cord: experience, understanding, and judgment. We experience data, whether its size, shape, weight, color, and so forth. From this experience we seek to gain understanding. We may seek to understand the way things operate, either in an explanatory mode (things in relation to each other), or in a descriptive mode (things in relation to us). In the explanatory mode, we are ultimately seeking to understand the basic laws of physics, chemistry, biology and so on. We also attempt to understand things – unity, identity, wholes such as atoms, molecules, living organisms, or human persons, which we experience and ultimately understand in their oneness. Finally, we may attempt to understand the complex arrangements of things in both space and time – what Lonergan refers to as "schemes of recurrence." Such schemes of recurrence would include everything from our solar system, to social and economic systems, to the complex artifacts of human ingenuity. However, not all understandings are correct,

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<sup>23</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) [1957], 153-54.



whether of scientific laws, our understanding of the nature of the things that make up our universe, or complex schemes of recurrence. Ultimately our knowing requires verification in judgment.

To describe the properties of things and events, Lonergan uses the technical term “conjugates.” “Experiential conjugates are correlatives whose meaning is expressed, at least in the last analysis, by appealing to the content of some human experience.”<sup>24</sup> Colors and tastes, as well as the categories of descriptive science, such as anatomy or geology, are examples of descriptive conjugates. “Pure (or explanatory) conjugates, on the other hand, are correlatives defined implicitly by empirically established correlations, functions, laws, theories, systems.”<sup>25</sup> Explanatory conjugates, since they involve things in relation to each other, are implicitly defined by the equations and explanatory networks of the sciences.

Lonergan defines the notion of a thing “as an intelligible, concrete unity differentiated by experiential and explanatory conjugates.”<sup>26</sup> Things exist on various levels and are the unities, which are explained – subatomic particles, atoms, molecules, cellular organisms, sensitive organisms, human persons that can transcend themselves in knowing and loving. Science knows each level through the descriptive and explanatory conjugates correlative to the thing under study. The criterion of reality of both conjugates and things is simply their verified intelligibility.

Each level of reality has its own set of explanatory conjugates, which are the particular subject of the science of that level – physics, chemistry, biology, sensitive psychology, and so forth. No set of conjugates or any level of things is more real than any other. The real is verified intelligibility at whatever level one is operating. Having said that each level is equally real is not to deny the clearly verified conclusion of levels of reality. At each level the random conjugates of the lower level are unified in a higher integration. Chemistry systematizes what would be merely coincidental events on the atomic level allowing the emergence of an autonomous science of chemistry. Biology is an autonomous science

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<sup>24</sup>*Insight*, 102.

<sup>25</sup>*Insight*, 103.

<sup>26</sup>*Insight*, 280.

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integrating what would be merely coincidental events on the level of chemistry. The integration of coincidental manifolds at a new level does not take away the autonomy of the lower levels. The reality of the biological organism includes the conjugates of chemistry and physics. Because of this, the most exciting areas of science will be the cross disciplinary areas – molecular biology, chemical physics, and so forth. Here science attempts to understand how those lower-level conjugates are systematized at the new level.

As noted above, a thing for Lonergan is an "intelligible, concrete unity differentiated by experiential and explanatory conjugates."<sup>27</sup> Experiential conjugates refer to the properties of the thing in relation to the knower, while explanatory conjugates refer to properties implicitly defined by scientific laws and correlations, which consider things in relation to things. Lonergan then makes use of the traditional categories of potency, form and act. In keeping with Lonergan's starting point of cognitional analysis, these three are related to each other, as are experience, understanding, and judgment. Thus central form refers to the intelligible unity of a given thing, while conjugate form refers to the intelligibility of its properties (that is, conjugates). Central and conjugate acts refer to the in-principle verifiable existence of the thing itself (central act) or of the properties of the thing (conjugate act).

With these definitions we are now ready to define "emergence." Lonergan defines emergence as the process by which "otherwise coincidental manifolds of lower conjugate acts invite the higher integration effected by higher conjugate forms."<sup>28</sup> For example, on the level of subatomic physics there exist things such as protons, electrons, and neutrons. Lower conjugate acts here refer to the existing properties of these things on this level. These conjugate acts are intelligible, and this intelligibility is in accord with what Lonergan describes as both classical and statistical laws of physics. However, there exists a basic randomness, which on one level a physicist might describe as a collection of random particles or events, and what Lonergan describes as a "coincidental manifold." However, given the right set of initial circumstances, in other

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<sup>27</sup>*Insight*, 280.

<sup>28</sup>*Insight*, 477.

words, the right probabilities, from this random situation (what Lonergan calls “coincidental manifolds of lower conjugate acts”), there may emerge a higher integration with its own conjugate forms. What is the nature of these emergent entities?

Here Lonergan distinguishes between two levels – schemes of recurrence and new things. As noted above, schemes of recurrence refer to intelligible systems that circle in on themselves. If A occurs then B occurs, if B occurs then C occurs, and so to the point that A recurs and the circle begins again<sup>29</sup>. Lonergan likes to use the example of the planetary system. Somehow in the development of our corner of the Milky Way, there emerged a group of planets that orbit around our sun. The recurring pattern of the orbits leads to the emergence of a degree of stability in what otherwise would be random movement. Examples of schemes of recurrence are essentially infinite – from the subatomic through the artifacts of human industry to human society and economics. In the emergence of schemes of recurrence, new conjugate forms will arise. We can describe the mechanics of the solar system, the nature of phase changes in chemistry, the symbiotic relationship of plant species, or the nature of business cycles in economics. Yet, as can be seen from the examples given, schemes of recurrence are ontologically reductive. Given the right circumstances, the classical and statistical laws governing the elements of the scheme will allow us to predict the nature of the scheme of recurrence.

But besides the emergence of new schemes of recurrence, there is also the fact of the emergence of truly new things – things now used in Lonergan’s technical sense. As noted above, Lonergan defines the notion of a thing “as an intelligible, concrete unity differentiated by experiential and explanatory conjugates.”<sup>30</sup> In what many consider one of Lonergan’s more puzzling chapters, he argues that there are no things within things. This seems to be at odds with atomic and molecular theory of matter, which is now part and parcel of contemporary science. To understand we must return to our understanding of the real as verified intelligibility. An animal is a concrete unit whose basic conjugates are the subject of

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<sup>29</sup>*Insight*, 141.

<sup>30</sup>*Insight*, 280.

zoology. The lower-level conjugates of atomic physics (atomic mass and number, electronic structure) are integrated at the new level of chemistry. And the conjugates of chemistry (valence, reactivity, and so forth) are integrated at the level of the biological. Thus an animal, say a rabbit, is a unity in which each of the various levels of matter are integrated to form a unity-identity-whole. On the level of bodies, of course the rabbit has various organs – heart, liver, brain, and so forth – but these are all integrated in one living unity, the rabbit. Terms like respiration and metabolism refer to ~~this~~ the unity-identity-whole that is the particular rabbit.

Above I noted that when talking of schemes of recurrence, or more simply when talking of simple aggregates, the new properties (conjugates) that emerge are in principle reducible to the lower-level properties. I can explain the movement of the planetary system solely in terms of the laws of physics. However, when we speak of the emergence of new "things" – atoms, molecules, bacteria, animals, persons – "the higher integration effected by higher conjugate forms" is indicative of a new central form, a new center of intelligibility.

#### 4. WHAT IS LIFE?

So what is life? From the point of view of science, we argued that life must involve metabolic processes for the utilization of energy and some form of hereditary reproduction. The organism must also be set apart from the rest of the world, a certain "selfness" for which Stuart Kaufmann coined the term "autonomous agents." This is not meant to be an exhaustive definition. Other characteristics could be added, for example, a system far from equilibrium, which obtains its sustenance from the environment, or we could add laws similar to those suggested by Kaufmann and alluded to earlier.

From the point of view of philosophy, life is a higher integration of chemical conjugates with the corresponding emergence of a new central form and a new unity – the living organism. As a higher integration of chemical conjugates, the laws of chemistry remain in tact. To understand the organism, one has to know chemistry, and for that matter atomic physics and subatomic physics and on down the line. But at the same time

the organism is a unity-identity-whole (“unity-identity-whole” is a technical term in Lonergan, perhaps use hypens.), unifying the chemistry under higher level biological conjugates such as metabolism and reproduction. The nature of these conjugates is a matter for the sciences to explore. Philosophy will not provide a short cut.

And where does this put us on the physicalism-vitalism continuum discussed earlier? I would suggest that neither alternative will do. Physicalism, at least in most of its forms, is dependent on what Lonergan calls the myth of “knowing as looking.” For something to be real, beyond the somewhat spartan categories of verified intelligibility, the physicalist adds the criterion that the real must be analogous to the objects of sensation. In this scenario ontological priority is given to the smallest particles – little solid chunks – and the hierarchy of complexity that the sciences reveal is simply due to increasingly complex combinations of the fundamental building blocks. My contention is that at each new level there emerge truly new unities that integrate the lower-level conjugates.

Vitalism is mistaken in that it more or less presumes the physicalist interpretation – the real is ultimately comprised of little chunks of matter – and then finds itself at a loss on how to explain living things. So at the last minute an unimaginable “vital force” is added. The suggestion here is that at each level there emerge new unities that integrate the lower level conjugates. The new central form is not an extra something added to a set of lower-level building blocks but rather the central reality of the integrated unit.<sup>31</sup> There exist on these various levels different categories of things and these categories imply both experiential and explanatory conjugates at the level at which they are understood. Thus there are the relatively autonomous sciences of subatomic physics, atomic physics, chemistry, biology, and sensitive psychology. At any level, including the macroscopic level of sciences such as physiology and anatomy, the criterion of the real is not ultimately the ability to experience the organism as a unity but to gain verified understanding of the organism as a unity.

Having said the above, I should add that there is a sense in which physical monism is correct. Abstaining for the moment on the subject of the human mind and human intentionality, the various levels of things are

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<sup>31</sup>*Insight*, 505.

all material. Their materiality consists not in their ability to be felt or imagined – what does it mean to “feel” a quark or a string? – but in their being individuated objects in space and time.<sup>32</sup> The nature of space and time are primarily physical questions currently understood in terms of the theories of special and general relativity.

The emergence of a new thing requires a subtle interplay of classical and statistical laws. The term Lonergan uses for this engine of emergence is “emergent probability.” Given the right set of conditions, there will emerge new schemes of recurrence and new things. The only way to understand the details of the process of emergence is to do the interdisciplinary science – in the case of living things, molecular biology is the key to understanding the emergence of life in terms of the chemical conjugates.

A question that is often asked is whether scientists will be able to create life forms in the laboratory. My own belief is that sooner or later, scientists will be able to tweak probabilities so that a living thing will emerge from the chemical matrix. This has already been accomplished twice with viruses.<sup>33</sup> Scientists still argue whether viruses can be described as living things. They do not seem to fit the definition quoted earlier from Kaufmann above. But they are very close to being living things, and while the simplest bacteria are far more complex, all indications are that sooner or later living things will be “created” in the laboratory from organic starting materials.

## 5. RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND PHILOSOPHY

This paper was originally presented at the conference “Cosmology – Religion and Science in Dialogue.” What does all this have to do with the religion and science dialogue? First, it must be stated that the really key question for the religion-science dialogue is the nature of the human

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<sup>32</sup>*Insight*, 50.

<sup>33</sup>Jeronimo Cello, Aniko V. Paul, and Eckard Wimmer, “Chemical Synthesis of Polio Virus cDNA: Generation of Infectious Virus in the Absence of Natural Template,” *Science* 297 (August 9, 2002): 1016-18; Hamilton O. Smith, Clyde A. Hutchison III, Cynthia Pfannkoch, and J. Craig Venter, “Generating a Synthetic Genome by Whole Genome Assembly: ΦX174 Bacteriophage from Synthetic Oligonucleotides,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA* 100, no. 26 (2003): 15440-45.

person. All religious traditions are concerned with the human person and his or her relationship with ultimate reality. Believers in the monotheistic traditions share the belief that the human person is created in the image of God. Christians believe that the person Jesus is God incarnate – God among us. In one sense what has been presented here is preparatory for the larger question of the nature of the human person and what is referred to in many religious traditions as the human soul. But to say that this work is preparatory is not to say that it is not important. The human person is also an emergent reality. Just as there is an autonomous science of biology, there also exist autonomous sciences of the human person. But also just as a complete understanding of life must include an understanding of the lower-level conjugates of chemistry and physics, so a complete understanding of the human person requires an understanding of the lower-level biological, chemical, and physical conjugates.<sup>34</sup>

Thus the answer to the question “what is life?” provides the framework for what Christians would call theological questions. Human persons are part and parcel of the material world. They are emergent entities of this world and not just some sort of spiritual beings acting out their lives on a material stage. Christians believe that God entered this material world in the person of Jesus. As emergent unities – and not just a clever combination of the basic constituents – human persons stand apart and transcend other organisms. As individuals who are capable of knowledge and love, we, are truly “autonomous agents.” Our dignity is to know and love and to be known and be loved as the emergent unities that we are.

#### NOTES

The Pauli principle is a basic principle of quantum statistics. “When the labels of any two fermions are exchanged, the total wave function changes sign. When the labels of any two identical bosons are exchanged, the total

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<sup>34</sup>Frank Budenholzer, “Christian Philosophy, the Natural Sciences, and Human Dignity.” Paper presented at the Second International Lonergan Workshop, Toronto, 2004. [An earlier version was presented at the International Conference on Christian Philosophy and Human Dignity,” Fu Jen Catholic University, Hsinchuang, Taiwan, December 13-15, 2002.]

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wave function retains the same sign." While seeming quite abstract, it is this principle that allows the existence of complex structures such as atoms and molecules.<sup>35</sup>

Much of the material in section three is taken from my earlier article "Emergence, Probability, and Reductionism."<sup>36</sup> (This was originally note 2, page 11.)

(In the original text, there were two notes, the first explaining the Pauli Principle, referred to on page 8, and the second stating that part of section three, beginning on page 11, is taken from an earlier paper "Emergence, Probability, and Reductionism.")

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<sup>35</sup>Peter Atkins and Julio De Paula, *Atkins' Physical Chemistry*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 385

<sup>36</sup>Budenholzer, "Emergence, Probability, and Reductionism," 339-56.





# IMITATING THE DIVINE RELATIONS: A THEOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION TO MIMETIC THEORY<sup>1</sup>

Robert M. Doran  
Marquette University  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

IN SEVERAL RECENT writings I have called attention to a four-point systematic-theological hypothesis suggested by Bernard Lonergan that aligns the four divine relations with four created participations in the relations. Lonergan calls the participations modes of grounding imitations *ad extra* of divine being.<sup>2</sup> The four-point hypothesis is itself a differentiation of the medieval theorem of the supernatural.<sup>3</sup> My concern in other essays has been to specify the place of the hypothesis in a contemporary systematic theology. My claim has been that it could play a role in contemporary systematics analogous to that which the theorem of the supernatural played in Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*. I need not repeat those arguments here, for in the present article I am limiting my concern to the central issue of the imitations of divine being that Lonergan says are

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<sup>1</sup>I wish to acknowledge the helpful suggestions offered by the editors of *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*.

<sup>2</sup>For details, see Robert M. Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005) ch. 7, "Structure." The hypothesis begins as follows: "...there are four real divine relations, really identical with divine being, and therefore four quite special modes of grounding an imitation *ad extra* of divine being." This is my own translation of Lonergan's Latin text in *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964), 234-35. A more literal translation may be found in Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 47154rt. Unless otherwise indicated, translations of *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* will be those to appear in *The Triune God*. v

<sup>3</sup>On the theorem of the supernatural, see Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 14-20.

grounded in graced participations in the divine relations. I wish to speak to this issue in the context of the mimetic theory of René Girard. I will argue that the theological notion of imitating God through graced participation in the divine relations makes a contribution to mimetic theory, but also that Girard's work contributes to the diagnostic that will enable a clear discrimination of genuine from inauthentic religion, and so ultimately of genuine from inauthentic mimesis, including mimesis of the divine. More precisely, the theological contribution may help to strengthen the theoretical status of Girard's view of mimesis<sup>4</sup> by inserting it into a systematic-theological hypothesis; and conversely, this enhanced systematic status might strengthen mimetic theory's contribution to the clarification of both bias and authenticity. What I have spoken of as psychic conversion is relevant to the dimension of bias that Lonergan calls dramatic bias, and Girard, in my view, makes a profound contribution to illuminating both dramatic bias and the dynamics of psychic conversion.

My argument is thus complex. It attempts to strengthen the theoretical status of the mimetic paradigm by relating it to Lonergan's four-point systematic-theological hypothesis, and it attempts to release the potential of mimetic theory to clarify the constitution of both dramatic bias and psychic conversion.

### 1. THE RELATIONS AND THEIR IMITATIONS

The four divine relations are, of course, paternity, filiation, active spiration, and passive spiration. What, then, are the four imitations of divine being that participate in the relations?

First, the secondary act of existence of the incarnation (*esse secundarium incarnationis*) is a created participation in divine paternity. "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). The proceeding Word as such does not speak but is spoken; the incarnate Word, the proceeding Word as sent, speaks, but he speaks only what he has heard from the Father. The man Jesus participates in divine paternity, in the Father's act of uttering the divine Word, because he has his identity not in

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<sup>4</sup>For a claim that Girard's paradigm is a model or ideal type rather than a theory, see Charles C. Hefling, "About What Might a 'Girard-Lonergan Conversation' Be?", *Lonergan Workshop 17*, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Lonergan Institute, 2002), 97-98.

himself but in the divine Word uttered by the Father. His act of existence is that of the divine Word. But he is substantially a man, a human *being*, and what is called the secondary act of existence is an act of existence of the Word precisely as a human being. As a created participation of divine paternity, the *esse secundarium* bears a special relation to the Son.

Second, sanctifying grace or, in a transposed set of categories, the dynamic state of being in love in an unqualified and unrestricted fashion giving rise to the horizon that is born of such love, is a created participation in the active spiration by Father and Son of the Holy Spirit. "...in God the origin is the Father, in the New Testament named *ho Theos*, who is identified with *agapē* (1 John 4:8, 16). Such love expresses itself in its Word, its Logos, its *verbum spirans amorem*, which is a judgment of value. The judgment of value is sincere, and so it grounds the Proceeding Love that is identified with the Holy Spirit."<sup>5</sup> The analogy in the creature is expressed by Lonergan as follows:

The psychological analogy...has its starting point in that higher synthesis of intellectual, rational, and moral consciousness that is the dynamic state of being in love. Such love manifests itself in its judgments of value. And the judgments are carried out in decisions that are acts of loving...There are then two processions that may be conceived in God; they are not unconscious processes but intellectually, rationally, morally conscious, as are judgments of value based on the evidence perceived by a lover, and the acts of loving grounded on judgments of value.<sup>6</sup>

Lonergan's sketch of a trinitarian analogy that begins with the dynamic state of being in love does not necessarily imply a supernatural analogy, the analogy of created participations in active and passive spiration, but neither does it exclude the possibility of a supernatural analogy, and it is the latter possibility that I wish to pursue here. It is not at all clear that this was Lonergan's intention, and in fact we may surmise that it was not. But that does not prevent us from suggesting such a possibility. Lonergan writes:

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<sup>5</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 93.

<sup>6</sup>"Christology Today: "Methodological Reflections," 93.

...we distinguished different kinds of love: the love of intimacy, of husband and wife, of parents and children; the love of mankind devoted to the pursuit of human welfare locally or nationally or globally; and the love that was other-worldly because it admitted no conditions or qualifications or restrictions or reservations. It is this other-worldly love, not as this or that act, not as a series of acts, but as *a dynamic state whence proceed the acts*, that constitutes in a methodical theology what in a theoretical theology is named sanctifying grace.<sup>7</sup>

Any of the three kinds of love may function in an analogy that starts from the dynamic state of being in love. In the case of the first two, the analogy is from nature. In the case of the third, the analogy is from grace. In all three instances, being in love gives rise to judgments of value, and these judgments “spirate” commitment. But it is the third kind of love, precisely as providing a trinitarian analogy, that I wish to pursue in the present context.<sup>8</sup>

When the person in love grasps evidence that only a lover can grasp and utters yes on that basis, he or she spirates proceeding love. When the dynamic state of being in love that is the origin of the process is being in love with God’s own love, the process from grasp of evidence and judgment of value to proceeding love participates in the divine active spiration of the Holy Spirit by the Father and the Son and grounds an imitation of God precisely in this relation. As such, this created participation in active spiration bears a special relation to the Holy Spirit.

Third, the habit of charity that cumulatively emanates from this dynamic state through repeated acts of love is a created participation in the passive spiration that is the Holy Spirit, and as such it bears a special relation to the Father and the Son. It grounds an imitation of the divine precisely in the relation of passive spiration within the Trinity. It is a

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<sup>7</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (latest printing, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 289, emphasis added.

<sup>8</sup>I have attempted to provide a fuller analysis of this process in the case of the third kind of love, or in what I am calling the supernatural analogy, in “The Starting Point of Systematic Theology,” *Theological Studies*, December 2006. The analogy is developed further in a lecture delivered at Marquette University in October 2006, “Being in Love with God: A Source of Analogies for Theological Understanding” and now published in the *Irish Theological Quarterly* 73 (2008): 227-42.

created supernatural spirated proceeding love, just as the Holy Spirit is the uncreated spirated proceeding Love in God.

And fourth, the light of glory making possible the beatific vision of the saints is a created participation in divine filiation, leading the children of adoption perfectly back to the Father. As such it bears a special relation to the Father.

Such, in very brief compass, is the four-point hypothesis, embellished a bit in the present context in order to indicate the emphases of this paper.

## 2. AUTONOMOUS SPIRITUAL PROCESSIONS

Theological understanding of the divine relations is grounded in an understanding of the divine processions. The relations are identical with the processions, of course, but it has been common currency at least since Aquinas that in the order of our systematic conceptions the first step is to understand how there can be processions in the utterly simple God. For Lonergan the movement from processions to relations is taken by asking what kind of reality is to be accorded to the processions, what kind of being divine generation and the divine procession of love are. The answer is given in terms of mutually opposed relations. And it is in terms of that being that the four-point hypothesis proceeds. Participations in or imitations of divine being are, at their root, ontological determinations of human being. The *esse secundarium* of the incarnation is in the substantial order. The entitative habit called sanctifying grace, as radicated in the essence of the soul, elevates the central form of the human being.<sup>9</sup> The habit of charity that flows from that change in our being is an absolutely supernatural conjugate form.<sup>10</sup> The ontological status of the light of glory in whose splendor we will know and love even as we are known and loved is a question to which I hope to return soon.

For Lonergan, as for Aquinas, the key to reaching an obscure and analogical understanding of the divine processions lies in what Aquinas

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<sup>9</sup>See Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer, "Sanctifying Grace in a 'Methodical Theology,'" *Theological Studies* 68 (2007): 52-76.

<sup>10</sup>See Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 720-22, 747.

called *emanatio intelligibilis*.<sup>11</sup> The literal translation of *emanatio intelligibilis* is, of course, “intelligible emanation.” One problem with this translation, though, is that the Latin word *intelligibilis*, at least in its medieval Scholastic context, meant more than the English word “intelligible” usually means. The Latin word includes in its meaning “intellectual” or “intelligent.” That is, it bears a reference not only to the object that is understood and so intelligible in the ordinary sense of the word, and that also is affirmed and perhaps decided upon, but also to the subject who is doing the understanding, judging, and deciding, the subject who, while being intelligible, is also intelligent.

Because this is part of the connotation that Aquinas intended, the translator and editors of *The Triune God: Systematics* have chosen the translation “intellectual emanation” for most of the occasions where *emanatio intelligibilis* occurs in Lonergan’s text. But I now wish to transpose that translation to the phrase “autonomous spiritual procession.” The transposition has grounds, as we will see, in Lonergan’s work, but my main reason for resorting to it is to facilitate discussion with Girard. In fact, the key to the present discussion with Girard will be the meaning of the word “autonomous” in this context, for Girard speaks of the illusion we entertain regarding the autonomy of our desires, and I wish to suggest an alternative meaning to the word “autonomous” that will permit us to speak of the authentic autonomous unfolding of a set of human desires that, while they may be activated by mimesis, far from being infected by mimetic contagion, are the condition for transcending it.

I begin, however, by clarifying the meaning of the word “spiritual,” for it is essential to my argument that spiritual and psychic dimensions of consciousness be distinguished. In *Insight* Lonergan draws a distinction between

...the intelligible and the intelligent. ...[I]ntelligibility is intrinsic to being [in the sense that being is the objective of the desire to know, and so whatever is intelligently grasped and reasonably affirmed is being]. There is in the universe of proportionate being a potential intelligibility that makes experience a necessary component of our

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<sup>11</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1, q. 27, a. 1: “...accipienda est processio...secundum emanationem intelligibilem...”

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knowing, a formal intelligibility that makes understanding a necessary component, and an actual intelligibility that makes judgment a necessary component. But we too are. Besides the potential intelligibility of empirical objects, there is the potential intelligence of the disinterested, detached, unrestricted desire to know. Besides the formal intelligibility of the unity and the laws of things, there is the formal intelligence that consists in insights and grounds conceptions. Besides the actual intelligibility of existences and occurrences, there is the actual intelligence that grasps the unconditioned and posits being as known. Finally, we not only are but also know ourselves. As known to ourselves, we are intelligible, as every other known is. But the intelligibility that is so known is also intelligence and knowing. It has to be distinguished from the intelligibility that can be known but is not intelligent and does not attain to knowledge in the proper human sense of that term. Let us say that intelligibility that is not intelligent is material, and that intelligibility that is intelligent is spiritual. Then, inasmuch as we are material, we are constituted by otherwise coincidental manifolds of conjugate acts that unconsciously and spontaneously are reduced to system by higher conjugate forms. But inasmuch as we are spiritual, we are orientated towards the universe of being, know ourselves as parts within that universe, and guide our living by that knowledge.<sup>12</sup>

Lonergan then refines the initial distinction of intelligible and intelligent, so that it becomes a distinction of spiritual intelligibility, which also is intelligent, and material intelligibility, which is not. Thus Thomas's *emanatio intelligibilis* has to do with what in *Insight* Lonergan calls spiritual intelligibility.

Next, there is the meaning of the word "autonomous." The English word "intelligible" in its present, more usual meaning is appropriate in the translation of *emanatio intelligibilis* in at least one sense, in that what proceeds proceeds *because of, in accord with, in proportion to* that from which it proceeds. This relation of "because," this direct accord or proportion, is known to the subject in whom the procession or emanation occurs, and so is intelligible. Thus, for example, a sound judgment is sound because it proceeds from a grasp of sufficient evidence known to be sufficient, and

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<sup>12</sup>*Insight*, 539.



because of, in accord with, and in proportion to the evidence that has been grasped precisely as sufficient. There is an intelligibility in the “because of” and “in accord with” and “in proportion to,” precisely as these are known in the very acts entailed, that makes the word “intelligible” quite appropriate.

But that relation of “because of,” “in accord with,” “in proportion to,” as known to the acting subject is precisely what enables us to speak of *autonomous* spiritual processions. It is important for dialogue with Girard and his students to emphasize that in the expression “autonomous spiritual procession,” the word “autonomous” refers precisely to the “because of” and “in accord with” and “in proportion to” aspect of the procession *as that aspect is known by the subject to constitute the relation between the principle and what proceeds from it.*

Thus, if the key to some analogical theological understanding of the divine processions and relations lies in what Aquinas called *emanatio intelligibilis*, it lies in processions that occur in our own intelligent, rational, and deliberative or existential activity, processions that form the basis of an analogy that gives us a glimpse of what the divine processions might be; but it does not lie in all the processions that occur in this realm, for there are spiritual processions that are better called spontaneous than autonomous. These will not provide a fitting analogy for divine procession for, in Scholastic terms that remain valid today, spontaneous processions even in the realm of spirit are processions of act from potency, the emergence of form from coincidental aggregates of occurrences, whereas the autonomous processions are processions of act from act in the spiritual realm of human consciousness. A clear example of a spontaneous spiritual procession is the emergence of insight from data organized by phantasm under the dynamism of inquiry. The corresponding autonomous spiritual procession is the emergence of an objectification or conceptualization from the insight itself, which is the emergence of act from act. Since there is no movement from potency to act in God, what I am here calling spontaneous processions will not provide a fitting or suitable analogy for understanding divine processions. The processions in human consciousness that will provide such an analogy must be processions of act from act.

What is meant by a procession of act from act? Formal intelligence, Lonergan writes in the quotation cited a bit back from *Insight*, "consists in insights and grounds conceptions." Actual intelligence "grasps the unconditioned and posits being as known."<sup>13</sup> And in another place he writes that the "development that reaches its goal in the existential decision and in fidelity to that decision is the emergence of the autonomous subject."<sup>14</sup> In each of these instances, "autonomy," as I am using the word, is located in the procession of act from act on the basis of a grasped relation of "because of," "in accord with," "in proportion to": in intellectual consciousness (concept from insight), in rational consciousness (judgment from grasp of evidence), and in existential self-constitution (decision from an authentic judgment of value). And it is in the latter dimension of spiritual autonomy, namely, existential self-constitution through decision proceeding from grasped evidence and a judgment of value consequent on that grasp, that Lonergan finds the appropriate realm in which to locate an analogy for the trinitarian processions. It is a realm in which the evidence grasped by the person in the dynamic state of being in love is first and foremost evidence regarding one's own existential self-constitution. The consequent judgment of value is an assent to that grasped ideal. The proceeding love flows from the grasped evidence and consequent judgment. In analogous manner, the divine Word is a judgment of value resting on *agapē*, Loving Intelligence in act, originatively constituting divine being. Divine Proceeding Love, the Holy Spirit, is spirated from such a dual origin: from Loving Grasp and the divine "Yes, this is very good!"

Now, as I have already indicated, I wish to suggest that the four-point theological hypothesis refines this notion of a "psychological analogy" for the divine processions by providing us with a new set of created analogues for the divine relations. That is to say, in addition to the natural analogues found in cognitional and existential process, including the dynamic state of being in love, there are created analogues that are also participations in the divine relations that ground imitations of those

<sup>13</sup>*Insight*, 539.

<sup>14</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer," *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 171.

relations in history. These analogues are already in the supernatural order. Thus:

(1) The secondary act of existence of the incarnate Word provides a supernatural analogue of divine paternity. But it is also a created participation in divine paternity, and as such it grounds an imitation *ad extra*, beyond divinity and in history, of that relation of Father to Son, Speaker to Word, within divinity.

(2) The dynamic state of being in love in an unqualified fashion, grasping evidence that only a lover can grasp and uttering an unconditional assent to a particular mode of existential self-constitution,<sup>15</sup> is a supernatural analogue of active spiration. But it is also a created participation in that divine active spiration, and as such it grounds an imitation *ad extra*, beyond divinity and in history, of that divine relation of Father and Son to the Holy Spirit, of “breathing” or “spirating” to “what is breathed or spirated,” of Notional Loving (*notionaliter diligere*) to Proceeding Love (*amor procedens*).

(3) The acts of love that cumulatively and progressively proceed from such a dynamic state are a supernatural analogue of the passive spiration of the Holy Spirit from Father and Son in God. But the habit of charity is also a created participation in divine passive spiration, and as such it grounds an imitation *ad extra*, beyond divinity and in history, of the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son, a relation of receiving what is breathed forth from Father and Son in divine eternal procession. I am reminded of the beautiful first stanza of a hymn:

Breathe on me, breath of God,  
 Fill me with life anew,  
 That I may love the things you love,  
 And do what you would do.<sup>16</sup>

(4) Finally, the light of glory that is the created condition of beatific vision in the glory of the saints is a supernatural analogue of filiation. But it is also a created participation in divine Sonship, and as such it grounds

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<sup>15</sup>That mode of self-constitution will be specified further in what follows, with the help of René Girard.

<sup>16</sup>Hymn for Midmorning Prayer in the *The Liturgy of the Hours*, as in book III, Ordinary Time (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1975), 659.

an imitation *ad extra*, beyond divinity but also beyond history, of another divine relation, that of the Son to the Father.

The four created supernatural realities are so intimately linked with the divine relations that we may say that they are the created consequent conditions that allow us to speak truthfully of the presence of the divine Trinity in history and in its fulfilment.

Of course, in this supernatural order, a *psychological* analogy for the divine processions and relations can be had only from the created participations in active and passive spiration, since we have no access to the data of consciousness of the incarnate Word or of the saints in glory. But all four of these created supernatural realities are more than analogues; they are, Lonergan says, participations that ground imitations.

In itself the notion of spiritual autonomy is fairly simple. I will give more rudimentary examples that are effectively used by Lonergan, drawing upon Aquinas, to identify the analogy in the order of nature. While these examples are not what I am concentrating upon in this paper, since I wish to speak of graced imitations of the divine relations themselves, nonetheless we can understand the supernatural equivalent of a grasp of evidence regarding what it would be good for me to be, the consequent assent, and the love that flows from both, only by analogy with what we know of our nature precisely by using our natural intellectual abilities. In this sense, even when we acknowledge, as I wish to suggest, that the supernatural analogy is the more satisfactory analogy for the Trinity, we can still vindicate the tradition's insistence upon basing theological understanding in analogies from nature.

At the level of factual judgment, then, what is the difference between a rash judgment and a reasonable one? A rash judgment is rash because it is offered without sufficient evidence. A reasonable judgment is one that is so grounded in sufficient evidence that by a kind of intellectual necessity or, perhaps better, exigency – what in *Insight* Lonergan calls an immanent *Anankē*<sup>17</sup> – the judgment inevitably issues forth in a mind that is open to truth. The difference shows precisely what is meant by *emanatio intelligibilis*, by one instance of autonomous spiritual procession, for this is precisely what is lacking in a rash judgment and what is present in a true

<sup>17</sup>*Insight*, 356.

judgment. Whoever grasps sufficient evidence for a judgment, precisely by so grasping, proffers a true judgment with an intellectually conscious exigency. But Lonergan's point is that we all know *from experience* the difference between a rash judgment and a sound judgment.<sup>18</sup> And so we can grasp by reflection on experience what is meant by a procession of act from act: in this case, a procession of the act of judgment from grasp of evidence.

Again, on the level of understanding and conceptualization, what is the difference between parroting a definition from memory and proposing one because one has understood something? This difference, too, is something we all know from experience. It is the difference between uttering sounds based on sensitive habit, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, expressing what one has understood and doing so in different ways and by the use of examples, where everything that is said is directed and even, as it were, necessitated by the act of understanding. Again from experience, we can know what is meant by a procession of act from act: in this case, a procession of concepts from understanding.

Finally, we also know from experience the difference between an inordinate act of choice that is repugnant to reason and one that is ordered, correct, obligatory, even holy. When we intelligently grasp and reasonably approve something that we know is good, we are obliged to it in such a way that, should we choose against the dictates of reason, we would be irrational and irresponsible, and should we follow these dictates, we would be rational and responsible. In this case there would be an autonomous spiritual procession of good decision from an authentic judgment of value.

What, then, is the generic character of the procession in our own consciousness that we experience and that subsequent reflection upon our experience enables us to recognize as the differential between being intelligent and being stupid, being reasonable and being silly, being responsible and being irresponsible? How is it to be defined? Lonergan's definition of "*emanatio intelligibilis*" is: *the conscious origin [that is, procession] of a real, natural, and conscious act from a real, natural, and*

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<sup>18</sup>"*Omnes enim experiendo novimus...*" Bernard Lonergan, *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* 70, emphasis added. See *The Triune God: Systematics*, 134-37.

*conscious act, both within intellectual consciousness and also by virtue of intellectual consciousness itself as determined by the prior act.*<sup>19</sup> I will suggest one change in this definition, but it occurs twice: rather than speaking of "intellectual consciousness," I will speak of "the spiritual dimension of consciousness." Thus I would define "autonomous spiritual procession" as *the conscious origination of a real, natural, and conscious act from a real, natural, and conscious act, both within the spiritual dimension of consciousness and also by virtue of the spiritual dimension of consciousness itself as determined by the prior act.* (The reason for preferring to speak of the spiritual dimension will perhaps become clearer in the next section, where we emphasize that there are two dimensions to consciousness.) The same definition applies to the order of grace that is referred to by the four-point hypothesis, in that there we find the procession of loving assent from loving grasp and the procession of acts of love from grasp-and-assent considered as the one principle of love. The three examples that I provided from Lonergan's Latin text are taken from the order of natural spiritual process: understanding, judging, and deciding. The examples that are derived from spelling out the created participations in active and passive spiration are taken from the order of grace, but again they consist in acts equivalent on the supernatural level to grasping evidence (understanding), assenting (judgment of value), and loving (decision).

The psychological analogy...has its starting point in that higher synthesis of intellectual, rational, and moral consciousness that is the dynamic state of being in love. Such love manifests itself in its judgments of value. And the judgments are carried out in decisions that are acts of loving. Such is the analogy found in the creature.<sup>20</sup>

One instance of the dynamic state of being in love is the gift of sanctifying grace that the four-point hypothesis construes as a created participation in divine active spiration. From that love there flows evidence perceived by a lover, from which one's judgments of value proceed as act from act. What proceeds from this created participation in active spiration are the decisions that are acts of loving, and as such created participations in

<sup>19</sup>*The Triune God: Systematics*, 141.

<sup>20</sup>"Christology Today: Methodological Reflections," 93.

passive spiration. The supernatural analogy found in the creature imitates by participation the entire life of the triune God.

If it is only by the grace of this created imitation that the natural transcendental unfolding of our spiritual aspirations remains authentic, still this supernatural *imitatio* is understood by analogy with an imitation in the very order of nature, an imitation that lies, first, within actively intelligent, actively reasonable, actively deliberative consciousness. Here Lonergan draws a distinction between the fundamental light of human consciousness and the further determinations of that same light. In the context of cognitional process, that fundamental light is what Aristotle and then Aquinas called agent intellect, which Lonergan explicitly identifies with the desire to know. The desire to know is a created participation of uncreated light and is the source of all our wonder, inquiry, and reflection. In its authentic functioning it is pure, detached, disinterested. Built into its constitution, as it were, are the most general principles that are operative independently of any determination from experience: identity, non-contradiction, and sufficient reason. But it is also the transcendental notion of value, setting the criterion not only for cognitional process but also for decisions. And the "precept" that is built into it at that level is, in Thomist terms, that good is to be done and evil to be avoided. The entire reality of this fundamental light in its active or intentional dimensions is expressed in the transcendental precepts or imperatives that Lonergan expresses thus: "Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible." Thus the "principles" constitutively built into this fundamental light function not deductively but heuristically in actively intelligent and deliberative consciousness. They are not principles in the sense of premises from which conclusions are drawn in a logically consistent manner. While we have to articulate them in premises if we are to talk about them, the premises simply express universal features of intellectual, rational, and existential dynamism that function spontaneously in all genuine inquiry and deliberation.

Our definition of autonomous spiritual procession contains the phrase *by virtue of the spiritual dimension of consciousness itself as determined by the prior act*. The fundamental light of the spiritual dimensions of consciousness is the "by virtue of the spiritual dimension of consciousness itself" referred to in this definition. But what is consciously operative in us

lies not only in this light. It is also further determined by our conscious acts themselves. We are determined as intellectually, rationally, and morally conscious and consciously active and operative: materially or potentially by the objects of sensation, with an incipient and devalued formal and actual intelligibility in the reception of meanings and values,<sup>21</sup> formally by our own acts of understanding as a release to our own inquiry, more formally still as these acts of understanding give rise to the act that is the first inner word (act from act), then actually by our own grasp of evidence and the judgments that proceed from that grasp (again, act from act), and effectively and constitutively by our deliberations and decisions flowing from our judgments of value (act from act once more). Thus, if the dynamism of the spiritual dimension of consciousness lies in the light of intelligence, reasonableness, and moral responsibility within us, the further determinations added by our own activities are in part what the definition refers to when it describes this consciousness as determined by the prior acts from which, by *emanatio intelligibilis*, by autonomous spiritual procession, there proceed other acts. Thus the notion of *emanatio intelligibilis* is what Aquinas is illustrating when he writes, "Whenever we understand, by the mere fact that we do understand, *something proceeds within us*, which is the conception of the thing understood, issuing from our intellective power and proceeding from its knowledge."<sup>22</sup> Lonergan expands:

Accordingly, when we understand and by the very fact that we understand, from our intellective power, which is the general light of intellectual consciousness, and from the knowledge contained in the act of understanding that adds a determination to the general light, *there proceeds within our intellectual consciousness a conception or definition of the reality understood*. Similarly, when we grasp that the evidence is sufficient, by the very fact that we grasp it, and from the exigency of intellectual light as determined through that grasp, *there proceeds within our intellectual consciousness either a true affirmation or a true negative assertion*. Similarly again, when we

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<sup>21</sup>On this suggested refinement of Lonergan's cognitional theory drawing largely on Heidegger, see Robert M. Doran, "Reception and Elemental Meaning," in *Toronto Journal of Theology* 20, no. 2 (fall 2004): 133-57.

<sup>22</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1, q. 27, a. 1.



judge some good as obligatory, by the very fact that we so judge, through our intellectuality, our rationality, *we spirate an act of will*.<sup>23</sup>

As within intellectual consciousness (Lonergan's expression), or within the order of spirit (my preferred more generic way of speaking), the procession is constituted by intellectual, rational, and existential acts, not by sensitive acts. The latter are not left behind, of course, but sublated into the richer context furnished by intelligent, reasonable, responsible acts. "Sublation" is a term that Lonergan adopts from Karl Rahner, where its meaning is not the Hegelian sense of *Aufhebung* but something much more straightforward:

...what sublates goes beyond what is sublated, introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, yet so far from interfering with the sublated or destroying it, on the contrary needs it, includes it, preserves all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context.<sup>24</sup>

Our one consciousness is not homogeneous, but is diversified in accord with the diverse nature of its acts.

The emanation is not only conscious; it is a conscious procession (*origo*), and it occurs in virtue of the dynamism of consciousness itself. The emergence of one real, natural, and conscious act from another real, natural, and conscious act is itself conscious and occurs in virtue of conscious dynamism itself. Here we need only revert to the examples that Lonergan provides: the difference between a rash judgment and a reasonable one, the difference between repeating a memorized definition and uttering it as something one has understood, and the difference between disordered and responsible choices. In this way consciousness *mediates* the procession. But the mediation that renders possible an autonomous *spiritual* procession or emanation is a mediation that occurs in virtue of the dynamism of the spiritual dimension of human consciousness itself, a dynamism in the order of spirit, and not in virtue of the dynamics of sensitive consciousness. We will see more momentarily

<sup>23</sup>*The Triune God: Systematics*, 139, emphasis added.

<sup>24</sup>*Method in Theology*, 243.

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about the two dimensions of consciousness, but suffice it for now to say that one act can proceed from another within sensitive consciousness as well, but the procession does not possess the characteristics constitutive of an *emanatio intelligibilis*. From seeing a large, fierce-looking animal on the loose there spontaneously arises in sensitive consciousness a sense of fear, precisely *because* one has seen the animal; and so one conscious act proceeds from another *because of and in accordance with* the first act. But in sensitive consciousness this occurs by some automatically functioning law of a particular nature. (The same may be said of the triangular nature of mimetic desire, which, as I will emphasize, functions precisely in this sensitive, psychic, and now intersubjective or "interdividual" domain.) But when one real, natural, and conscious *intelligent* or *reasonable* or *responsible* act proceeds from another real, natural, and conscious *intelligent* or *reasonable* or *responsible* act, the link is constituted not by an automatically functioning law or mechanism of human sensitivity and intersubjectivity but by the *self-governing, autonomous, and transcendental* exigencies of intelligence and reasonableness and responsibility, according to which our integrity as human subjects is a function of our ordered allegiance to complete intelligibility, truth, being, and goodness. The transcendental laws of human spirituality commit us to a set of objectives that embrace everything, the concrete universe of being. Our fidelity to these exigencies can be violated, for our performance in this realm is not a function of specific and automatically functioning laws but is such that in the relevant acts the human spirit is determinative of itself and in that sense autonomous. That performance can be cut off, strangled, rendered impotent, by one's own existential decisions, by major defaults in one's cultural and social situations, or by the interference of that other type of desire on which, as we will see, Girard has thrown so much light. That spiritual spontaneity is regulated, not by being bound to any automatic response, but only insofar as it is actually constituted by a transcendental desire for being and value. It rules itself, insofar as under God's agency it determines itself to its own acts according to the exigencies of its own being as spiritual. But insofar as this is the case one conscious act will arise or proceed from another conscious act through the mediation of intelligent, reasonable, responsible consciousness itself.

## 3. THE DUALITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

I indicated at the beginning that I would attempt here (1) to strengthen the theoretical status of the mimetic paradigm by inserting it into Lonergan's four-point systematic-theological hypothesis and (2) to release the potential of mimetic theory to clarify the constitution of both dramatic bias and psychic conversion. Enough has been said for now about the four-point hypothesis and about its potential contribution to our analogical understanding both of the divine relations and of a peculiar variant of mimesis that is caused by the gift of God's grace, an imitation of God grounded in created participations in the divine relations. What is required now is to specify a way in which the mimetic paradigm relates to these theological considerations. And it is essential that I begin with a discussion of the duality of consciousness, for the spiritual dimension of consciousness, both spontaneous (act from potency) and autonomous (act from act), is not the whole of consciousness, and the mimetic paradigm is proximately pertinent to another dimension. It is because the two dimensions are so intimately related in the one consciousness of the human being that the mimetic paradigm can be inserted into the four-point theological hypothesis. It is in the context of talk about the autonomy of spiritual operations that we find a fruitful encounter with the mimetic theory of René Girard. Girard has in effect introduced a challenge to the project of self-appropriation initiated by Lonergan. For there is an interference of acquisitively mimetic desire with the unfolding of the transcendental orientation to the intelligible, the true and the real, the good, and God, and Girard with ruthless precision has captured the dynamics, indeed the mechanism, of that interference. But there is an *imago Dei*, an *imitatio Dei* — “*imago*” and “*imitatio*” are from the same root — that is natural, that resides in our spiritual nature, where “nature” is understood in the Aristotelian sense of an immanent principle of movement and of rest. The *imago* or *imitatio Dei* is not the whole of that spiritual nature, for that nature is “the human spirit as raising and answering questions” and so as potency in the realm of spiritual things.<sup>25</sup> But there are moments in which that nature precisely as nature imitates

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<sup>25</sup>See Bernard Lonergan, “Natural Right and Historical Mindedness,” in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 172.

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pure act, however remotely: when from understanding as act there proceeds an inner word of conceptualization as act; when from the grasp of evidence as sufficient there proceeds a judgment; and when from the judgment of value there proceeds a decision. And that natural image can be used as an analogy from which we may understand the more radical image that is also an imitation grounded in a created participation in the divine relations of active and passive spiration themselves.

I wish, then, to cite a relevant passage from *The Triune God: Systematics*.

...we are conscious in two ways: in one way, through our sensibility, we undergo rather passively what we sense and imagine, our desires and fears, our delights and sorrows, our joys and sadness; in another way, through our intellectuality, we are more active when we consciously inquire in order to understand, understand in order to utter a word, weigh evidence in order to judge, deliberate in order to choose, and exercise our will in order to act.<sup>26</sup>

Let us call the first way of being conscious sensitive or psychic, and the second spiritual. Moreover, within both sensitive and spiritual process, a distinction is to be drawn between the emergence of act from potency and the emergence of act from act. At the level of the spiritual, this becomes a distinction of spontaneous and autonomous processions. Spontaneous procession is exemplified in the procession of understanding from questions; it is a procession of act from potency. Autonomous procession is the procession of act from act, such as is exemplified in the instances that Lonergan presents from the order of natural process and in the created participations in active and passive spiration. In each form of the psychological analogy, natural and supernatural, what matters is a procession of judgment of value from grasp of evidence and a procession of love from the grasp and judgment functioning as one principle of commitment. In the realm of autonomous spiritual procession,

the proper principle of intellectual emanation [that is, of the spiritual procession] is not the object [or someone else mediating the object, as in Girard's mimetic theory] but the

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<sup>26</sup>*The Triune God: Systematics*, 139.

subject...intellectually [spiritually] conscious in act...Because intellectual [spiritual] consciousness owes it to itself to express to itself its own understanding, and to express it truly, it follows that what is being understood ought to be expressed truly. Because intellectual [spiritual] consciousness owes it to itself to bestow its own love rightly, it follows that what is judged as truly good ought also to be loved. And if perchance understanding is deficient or judgment erroneous, an unknown obligation does not prevail in such a way that one is duty-bound to act against one's conscience; rather, a known obligation prevails, so that one is duty-bound to judge in accordance with the evidence one has and to choose in accordance with one's judgment.<sup>27</sup>

And most importantly, "the autonomy of human consciousness is indeed subordinate, not to every object whatsoever, but to the infinite subject in whose image it has been made and whom it is bound to imitate."<sup>28</sup> The notion of autonomous spiritual procession on which the psychological analogies are built does not proceed from a grasp of sensitive consciousness or psychic process, but from a grasp of intellectual, rational, and moral consciousness or spiritual process.

#### 4. THE DIALECTIC OF DESIRE

There follows on the duality of consciousness a dialectic of desire. The integrity of the spiritual process that I have been speaking of is a function of fidelity to a transcendental orientation to the intelligible, the true and the real, and the good. This transcendental orientation is a participation in uncreated light. It is so first in its spontaneous movements from potency to act, as in the movement from inquiry to insight. This preliminary created participation in uncreated light is "the source in us that gives rise to all our wonder, all our inquiry, all our reflection."<sup>29</sup> It is our desire to know, our anticipation of being; it is also our desire for the good, the anticipation of value. In us those anticipations are potential. Ultimately,

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<sup>27</sup>*The Triune God: Systematics*, 213, 215.

<sup>28</sup>*The Triune God: Systematics*, 215.

<sup>29</sup>*The Triune God: Systematics*, 139.

they are what the Scholastics called obediential potency for a fulfilment that can be given only by God.

The transcendental orientation is a participation in uncreated light even more notably as it proceeds from act to act, since something remotely analogous to procession from act to act is precisely what constitutes the life of the triune God. I say "remotely analogous" because in God we do not find procession from one act to another absolutely distinct act, as in ourselves. Rather, within the one divine act we posit processions based exclusively on mutual relations of origin. But it is the procession from act to distinct act in human consciousness that provides the analogy for doing so.

These transcendental desires, even when they are awakened through mimetic process, are, when authentic, both natural and, in their inner constitution, non-imitative.

But Lonergan emphasizes that there are other desires that would interfere with the unfolding of the transcendental, spiritual, autonomous, active desire for being and value, the pure, unrestricted, detached, disinterested desire for what is and for what is good. We can approach this problem by recalling what Lonergan says about the two ways of being conscious. The discrimination of these two "ways of being conscious" is an extraordinarily sensitive and delicate business. For the first "way of being conscious" permeates the second, and it does so either in support of the transcendental orientation to intelligibility, truth, being, and the good, or in conflict with that orientation. Again, and more precisely, it precedes, accompanies, and overarches the intentional operations that constitute the second "way of being conscious."<sup>30</sup>

Distinguishing intellectually and negotiating existentially the two "ways of being conscious" is, then, a delicate exercise, one calling for what the Christian spiritual tradition has called discernment. For what "we undergo rather passively" in "what we sense and imagine, our desires and fears, our delights and sorrows, our joys and sadness" affects the entire range of our spiritual orientation as it actually unfolds. Under optimal circumstances, this psychic dimension bolsters and supports the

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<sup>30</sup>See "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 174-75; also "Mission and the Spirit," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 29-30.

spiritual “way of being conscious,” where “we consciously inquire in order to understand, understand in order to utter a word, weigh evidence in order to judge, deliberate in order to choose, and exercise our will in order to act.” But those optimal circumstances are rare indeed, and to the extent that they do not obtain, we can speak of a statistical near-inevitability of distortion precisely in the spiritual dimensions of human operation. There *is* a realm in which human desire and human operation are autonomous, not in the “modern” sense of a self-asserting effort at what Ernest Becker called the *causa sui* project,<sup>31</sup> but in the sense of our operating under transcendental exigencies for the intelligible, the true and the real, and the good. There are moments in that transcendental operating in which act flows from act: concept from understanding, judgment from grasp of sufficient evidence, decision from judgment of value. But that realm, as Lonergan says of human authenticity, is ever precarious; it is reached always by withdrawing from inauthenticity. It is the realm of the pure, detached, disinterested desire to know that Lonergan highlights in *Insight* and of the equally pure, detached, disinterested transcendental intention of value. It is the source and locus of all natural analogies for understanding the divine processions. But no one, not even the greatest saint, lives in that realm untroubled, serene, and free of temptation and distortion, precisely because of the complex relations between the two ways of being conscious.

##### 5. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GIRARD’S WORK WITHIN THIS CONTEXT

Girard challenges students of Lonergan’s intentionality analysis to face the difficulties that some might bring against an appeal to an “autonomous” natural dimension of consciousness, for he has called attention to what I believe are the principal dynamics of psychic interference with autonomous spiritual processions. He invites us also to clarify precisely in what consists the created participation in the divine relations that ground a supernatural imitation of the divine. At the level of the passive undergoing of “our desires and fears, our delights and sorrows, our joys and sadness,” our desire is mimetic, but not imitative of the trinitarian

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<sup>31</sup>Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death* (New York: The Free Press, 1973), *passim*.

processions. The latter imitation is a gift grounded in what de facto is a created participation in the divine relations. But the gift is itself pertinent to a healing from the deviations of mimetic contagion.

Accepting the invitations that Girard provides will help us to fine-tune our portrayal both of the relations between the two ways of being conscious and of the supernatural psychological analogy for understanding the Trinity. But my particular question here is, *What is it to imitate God, and how does that differ from the forms of mimesis that Girard discusses?*

A few preliminary comments are in order concerning the potential theological significance of Girard's work.

### 5.1 *The Theological Significance of Girard's Work*

Among contemporary authors, then, Girard in particular has called our attention to the extremely precarious nature of human claims to autonomous subjectivity. These precautions are salutary for anyone hoping to resurrect the psychological analogy in trinitarian theology. But they are not foreign to Lonergan's own expression of a hermeneutic of suspicion. For not only is human authenticity, which is our most prized possession and which entails the autonomy of processions of act from act, ever precarious, ever a withdrawal from unauthenticity, but also "every successful withdrawal only brings to light the need for still further withdrawals."<sup>32</sup>

Next, while Lonergan has called attention to authenticity and unauthenticity in the realms of understanding, truth, moral development, and religion, that is, in the areas that are positively treated when he speaks of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion,<sup>33</sup> I have called attention to a distinct dimension of the subject, of authenticity, and of conversion. This distinct dimension affects primarily Lonergan's first "way of being conscious," and so I have spoken of a *psychic conversion*. And Girard's

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<sup>32</sup>*Method in Theology*, 110.

<sup>33</sup>*Method in Theology*, 110: "Our advance in understanding is also the elimination of oversights and misunderstandings. Our advance in truth is also the correction of mistakes and errors. Our moral development is through repentance for our sins. Genuine religion is discovered and realized by redemption from the many traps of religious aberration."



work on the nature of human desire will give us a better purchase, I think, on this psychic dimension of desire than other current or recent explorations. But the false mimesis and deviated transcendence of which he speaks easily invade intellectual, moral, and religious discourse, and so being precise with Girard on these issues will help us isolate much more clearly just where in consciousness the genuine *imago Dei* really lies and purify that dimension of the contagion it easily undergoes due to mimetic interference. For while the *imago Dei* is implanted in the very nature of the spiritual dimension of human consciousness, it is not some automatic functioning that we need locate simply through introspective analysis or some other technique. In this vein, Lonergan writes of the end of the age of innocence, in which it was presumed that human authenticity could be taken for granted.<sup>34</sup>

I proceed, then, on the assumptions (1) that what Girard has written about desire concerns the first “way of being conscious,” that is, the sensitive, psychic dimension of consciousness, but also (2) that this dimension penetrates our spiritual orientation to the intelligible, the true and the real, and the good, for better or for worse, and so (3) that diagnosing these complex interrelations in concrete self-appropriation will help release the *imago Dei* in historical performance in history.

The major component of Girard’s worldview is the notion of mimetic desire. Many, perhaps most, of our desires are not autonomous or innate, but copied from others. “If I desire a particular object, I do not covet it on its own merits but because I ‘mimic,’ or imitate, the desire of someone I have chosen as a model. That person — whether real or imaginary, legendary or historical — becomes the mediator of my desire, and the relationship in which I am involved is essentially ‘triangular.’”<sup>35</sup>

Mimesis in itself (or in the abstract) is neutral. But *acquisitive* or *appropriative* mimesis leads to violence, whether overt or covert. Acquisitive mimesis, focused on the object because of the model or mediator, becomes conflictual mimesis when the object drops out of sight

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<sup>34</sup>See Bernard Lonergan, “The Ongoing Genesis of Methods,” *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), passim.

<sup>35</sup>Richard Golsan, *René Girard and Myth* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1. Golsan’s book is an excellent introduction to Girard’s work. Also recommended is Chris Fleming, *René Girard: Violence and Mimesis* (Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 2004).

and the subject becomes concerned only or at least primarily with the model or mediator. Conflictual mimesis is contagious. It can infect a community, an institution, a governing body, a religious establishment, and it can endanger the welfare and even the survival of the groups it affects, at least until the focus turns on one individual or group, namely, the scapegoat whose immolation, exclusion, or expulsion brings a precarious peace. Such is the basic schema that governs much of Girard's thinking.

I believe that this vision will figure centrally in future efforts at constructing a soteriology, and that it will do so more effectively the more its theoretical status can be strengthened by integrating this paradigm into a set of theological hypotheses. Thus here I am attempting to relate the mimetic paradigm to the four-point hypothesis, with its talk of imitating God through created participations in the divine relations. But even in its present state, the paradigm fills out and enriches Lonergan's theology of the "law of the Cross." For in Girard's view, which I find persuasive, there is a progressive revelation in biblical texts of precisely this set of mimetic mechanisms, which finally become unveiled for all to see — and so lose their power — in the crucifixion of Jesus. This liberation is one element of the salvation that the cross and resurrection of Jesus effect. Perhaps through Girard's help we will come to see it as the central element in soteriology. But for the moment my concern is exclusively with the assistance Girard gives us in gaining precision on the notions of desire and imitation, in order (1) to isolate, as distinct from acquisitive mimetic desire, the dimension of human consciousness from which genuine analogies may be drawn for an obscure understanding of the trinitarian processions and especially the dimension from which a supernatural analogy can be constructed, and (2) to relate Girard's mimetic view to this dimension, and in so doing to enhance the theoretical status of the mimetic position.

## 5.2 *A Brief Primer of Girard's Work*

A bit more should be said about Girard's position.

The mediation of mimetic desire can be either external or internal, in Girard's terminology. While Girard groups mediated desires into these

two fundamental categories, he allows that within this division there “can be an infinite number of secondary distinctions.”<sup>36</sup> There is *external mediation* of desire when the distance between the subject and the model is “sufficient to eliminate any contact between the two spheres of possibilities of which the mediator and the subject occupy the respective centers.” And there is *internal mediation* when this distance “is sufficiently reduced to allow these two spheres to penetrate each other more or less profoundly.”<sup>37</sup> The “distance” referred to in either case is, of course, not primarily physical but psychological or symbolic. Thus, to cite perhaps Girard’s favorite example, Quixote and Sancho are physically together, but still there is no rivalry between them, and their harmony is never seriously troubled, even as Sancho borrows almost all of his desires from Quixote, who himself is imitating the legendary Amadis of Gaul. “The hero of external mediation proclaims aloud the true nature of his or her desire.”<sup>38</sup> One is proud to be the disciple of so worthy a model, as was Quixote with regard to Amadis and as is the Christian with respect to Jesus. The hero of internal mediation, on the other hand, carefully hides his or her efforts to imitate a model. While *all* mimetic desire runs the risk of impairing its victims’ perceptions of reality, since the desirability of the object stems not from its own merits but from its designation by the mediator, in internal mediation the result is always conflict, even hatred. That is not the case in external mediation. In internal mediation the rivals can come to resemble each other through the identity of their desires, so that finally they are no more than each other’s doubles. The actual source of any desire is so obscured that the subject may even reverse the logical and chronological order of desires in order to hide his or her imitation. That is, one may assert that one’s own desire is prior to that of the rival whose desire one is imitating, and that the mediator is responsible for the rivalry. Everything that originates with the mediator is systematically belittled although still secretly desired. The mediator becomes a shrewd and diabolical enemy who tries to rob the subject of his or her most prized possessions and obstinately thwarts his or her most legitimate ambitions.

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<sup>36</sup>René Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1966), 9.

<sup>37</sup>Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, 9.

<sup>38</sup>Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, 10.

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Desiring individuals come to believe in the autonomy of their desires, and so deny the importance of the mediator.

Imitation thus occurs not only in the sphere of representation or knowledge, as Plato emphasized, but also in the sphere of appropriating objects to ourselves. We learn what to desire by copying the desires of others. Our desires are rooted not in their objects nor in ourselves but in a third party, the model or mediator, whose desire we imitate in the hope of resembling him or her. Thus the ground of desire resides, not in any one subject, but *between* subjects. This throws into question the intrinsic desirability of the object, recasting its value as a product of the interpersonal, or in Girard's term "interindividual," relation. It recasts object-relations theories, including Freudian psychoanalysis.

The notion of mimetic desire was worked out by Girard in the book *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, which contains studies of Cervantes, Dante, Stendhal, Proust, and Dostoyevsky. The book was first published in French in 1961, with the title *Mensonge romantique et vérité romanesque*. Those novels that portray desire as spontaneous and autonomous<sup>39</sup> embody the *mensonge romantique*, the romantic lie. Those novels that acknowledge that desire is triangular convey the *vérité romanesque*. The romantic lie valorizes all instances of originality and spontaneity as indicators of personal superiority. The romantic construal of desire is that of a straight line running between a desiring subject and an intrinsically valuable desired object. The *vérité romanesque*, on the other hand, describes the interindividual situation of desire. The conclusion to such a work may introduce a new mode of *interpersonal* relations, one that is not predicated on the slavish but largely unwitting imitation of others, one that rather displays an authentic negotiation of this intersubjective field. We cannot attain total independence from others, in some sort of putative heroism that is really self-possessed pride. The latter is still thoroughly entangled

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<sup>39</sup>Note Girard's way of conjoining the words "spontaneous" and "autonomous," whereas Lonergan distinguishes them. It is only the *processions of act from act in the spiritual realm* that Lonergan calls autonomous, since these processions are governed not by the interindividual field that constitutes the first way of being conscious nor by the emergence of answers from questions, of act from potency, that constitutes the spontaneity even of the second way of being conscious, but by the transcendental laws of the human spirit as it moves from experience through understanding and judgment to right decision.

with the Other, in an attempt to distinguish oneself from them. What we can attain is a *purified relationality* that is not caught up in imitative violence. Novels that distinguish these components in human relations are for Girard far more faithful to the true human condition than those that treat desire as spontaneous, autonomous, and directly object-related.

Relationships of internal mediation can become so complex and impossible that the only way out of the bind is to break the circle of desire. But even this can be a ploy. Renunciation can take place for the sake of the desire itself. The goal can be to discourage further imitation, but if the object desired is another person, this renunciation can actually occur for the sake of secretly opening the road to the desired object by making the desired object desire oneself. One who feigns indifference can seem to the desired object to be so self-possessed that this seeming self-mastery and peace becomes itself an object of desire on the part of the subject's own object of desire. *The object now desires the subject who desires the object.* Depending on the ontological emptiness of the object and the feigned or even real self-mastery of the subject, the object may want to absorb the very being of the subject into his or her own. The subject who was imitating the model or mediator of desire now becomes imitated by the object, desire for whom was mediated by the model or mediator.

It is here, in these complications, that Girard finds the source of all mimetic desire. Imitative desire, wherever it occurs, is always a desire to *be* Another because of a profound sense of the radical insufficiency of one's own very being. To covet what the other desires is to covet the other's essence. In the first case this was a matter of the subject desiring the person who is also desired by the model or mediator: the subject really wants not only what the mediator wants or perhaps has, but even what the mediator is. In the second case, when the subject feigns being above it all, the object now desires the self-sufficiency that the subject seems to be displaying. In either case, this conception of desire presupposes a radical insufficiency in the very being of the desiring individuals. They must be painfully conscious of their own emptiness to crave so desperately the fullness of being that supposedly lies in others. This attraction to the "putative autarky"<sup>40</sup> of the other Girard calls *metaphysical desire*, because

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<sup>40</sup>Fleming, *René Girard: Violence and Mimesis*, 24.

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the figures onto whom it is projected mediate being for us; it is via them that we seek to become real, and it is through wanting their very being that we come to imitate them. The wish to absorb, or to be absorbed into, the substance of the Other implies an insuperable revulsion for one's own substance. Metaphysical desire is masochism or pseudo-masochism: a will to self-destruction as one becomes something or someone other than what one is. In terms quite pertinent to the present paper, Chris Fleming writes that as the desire to be absorbed

suffers disappointment after disappointment, the metaphysical quest is not abandoned: rather, the masochist merely seeks out more powerful mediators from which to attain real, substantial being...The masochist...is a casualty of metaphysical desire; he hopes that realizing the desires that he sees in the Other will bring about the hoped-for self-sufficiency and allow him to participate in his divine being. But since the self-sufficiency, divinity, or plenitude that the masochist attributes to the model is illusory, his project to attain the same is doomed from the outset. The masochist vaguely perceives the fruitlessness of his quest but fails to give it up because to do so would mean that the promise of salvation would have to be given up along with it.<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, the subject who has been rejected can choose to be the tormentor. This is sadism or pseudo-sadism, but it backfires sooner or later.

Pseudo-sadism emerges at the point when the masochist, who has worshipped violence, begins to emulate those who have blocked his access to objects of desire...The sadist looks for imitators whom he can torture in the same way that he thought he was tortured prior to adopting the role. Indeed, it is the sadist's prior experience as victim that suggests the appropriate course of action. Yet, the emergence of sadism, of this 'dialectical reversal,' is by no means the simple 'opposite' of masochism: it is, rather, the same condition at a different moment. Nor is the movement from masochism to sadism stable or irreversible; both masochism and sadism are

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<sup>41</sup>Fleming, *René Girard: Violence and Mimesis*, 25-26.

subject to the same double imperative — of wanting to overcome the rival and simultaneously to be overcome *by* the rival...<sup>42</sup>

There is, then, a radical ontological sickness at the core of mimetic desire, and especially internal mimetic desire.<sup>43</sup> In the later works of Dostoyevsky, the heroes' wish to be absorbed into the substance of the Other reflects an insuperable revulsion for one's own substance. There can be no final victory, no fulfilment in the world of mediated desire. The only triumph possible is the complete renunciation of mimetic desire and of the ontological malady that accompanies it.

Girard's readings of great novelists gave rise to a new psychological view that he calls interindividual. It begins with a critique of Freudian psychoanalysis. Despite Girard's respect for Freud's acuteness of observation, he claims that Freud hovered around the basic insight without ever coming to acknowledge it. The sexual drive is, says Girard, "subordinate to the mimetic process, which plays a much more vital and decisive role in psychic processes and human actions."<sup>44</sup> The Freudian premise that desire is object-oriented is also criticized. The crucial role is that of the mediator, who stimulates and directs the individual's desires toward the object in question. Girard also rejects what he finds to be a fundamental duality in Freudian desire (both Oedipal and narcissistic). There is only one desire, in the realm at least of acquisitive or appropriative wishes, and it is always mimetic.<sup>45</sup>

### 5.3 Preliminary Assessment: Mimesis and the Dialectic of Desire

Three immediate benefits can be gained by Lonergan students from studying Girard. First, Girard's position shows, I believe, that there is a much greater complexity than might be obvious to the "two ways of being conscious" to which Lonergan refers. The mimetic model of desire indicates how much more enters into the first "way of being conscious" than is indicated in Lonergan's brief description in *The Triune God*:

<sup>42</sup>Fleming, *René Girard: Violence and Mimesis*, 28.

<sup>43</sup>For material in this and the next two paragraphs, see Golsan, *René Girard and Myth* 13-16.

<sup>44</sup>Golsan, *René Girard and Myth*, 21.

<sup>45</sup>See Golsan, *René Girard and Myth*, 21-22.

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*Systematics.* The ontological sickness pertains to the second way, but mimetic desire manifests how it contaminates the first. In this first way, we are by and large the passive recipients of "what we sense and imagine, our desires and fears, our delights and sorrows, our joys and sadness." But that passive reception is not some simple, one-dimensional thing. It is extraordinarily complex, and the mimetic model of desire throws more light on that complexity than any other position of which I am aware.

Second, Girard's position also shows the interrelations of the two "ways of being conscious." For one thing, it is ultimately a spiritual emptiness that leads to the derailments of mimetic desire, an emptiness redolent of Augustine's "You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you." But also, the only resolution of mimetic violence is the complete renunciation of the rivalry to which triangular acquisitive desire leads us, and that renunciation is an intensely spiritual act flowing from a decision that itself proceeds from a recognition of the facts of the situation. In other words, the resolution of the problems to which acquisitive mimetic desire gives rise takes place through a series of *autonomous spiritual processions* that are precisely the sort of emanations that Lonergan regards as appropriate for the psychological trinitarian analogy.

Finally, I have written fairly abundantly on the topic of psychic conversion and on the dramatic bias from which psychic conversion can help set us free. I have come to regard the vagaries of mimetic desire to which Girard gives us entrance as the principal instances of dramatic bias and also of the psychological components of other forms of bias.<sup>46</sup>

My own appropriation of Girard's work will emphasize that what Lonergan calls the first "way of being conscious" is precisely interdividual, that psychic development entails the negotiation of this interdividual field, that this negotiation calls upon the operations of the second "way of being conscious," that inadequate negotiations of the interdividual field can and will distort this second way, and that authentic negotiation of the same field will allow the second way to flourish in the development of the person. Overcoming or transcending conflictual

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<sup>46</sup>I would call attention here to the work of John Ranieri, whose several papers at Lonergan Workshops have explored the relations between the biases and mimetic theory.



mimesis in the psychic realm will facilitate the unfolding of genuine attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility in the spiritual realm, and so the unfolding of the natural *imago Dei* in its two forms of rational self-consciousness and being in love. But it will also liberate the community from the social sin of conflictual mimesis and institute in the community the social grace of participation in divine relations grounding imitations of the triune God. Thus too, in my own construals of psychic conversion, I wish to emphasize that its goal lies precisely in the purified relationality of the interdividuality that transcends conflictual mimesis.

Girard's work obviously raises the question of a radical ontological desire that itself is not mimetic but that is involved in all mimetic desire. Imitative desire is brought on by a sense of spiritual inadequacy that is endemic to the human condition. Perhaps we might say that the story of imitative desire is a story of the successes and failures of *mutual self-mediation*<sup>47</sup> in the attempt, itself completely legitimate, to find the completion of one's being, a completion that the Christian theologian would maintain is possible only by reason of a supernatural participation in divine life itself. Mimetic violence, which springs from imitative desire, is the fate of mutual self-mediation gone wrong. But there is also healthy mutual self-mediation. Our radical ontological insufficiency does not mean that these double binds are inevitable. There is a mediation that can quiet the sense of spiritual inadequacy and enable human relations to be something other than the violent mimesis that Girard depicts. What enables one to renounce mimetic rivalry completely, without using this renunciation as a feigned indifference that is just another way to get what one wants, is precisely the gift of love that enables consistent fidelity to the transcendental imperatives of the spiritual dimensions of consciousness. Perhaps it is precisely here, in the realm of these contaminated relationships and the forgiveness that alone transcends them, that we have the clearest indication that we are going to find as to

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<sup>47</sup>See Bernard Lonergan, "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 174-76. I am indebted to conversations with Gilles Mongeau of Regis College, Toronto, for these connections.

whether our love is God's love and so truly without conditions, reservations, restrictions, or qualifications.

As Max Scheler has said in his great book *Ressentiment*, the fact of choosing a model for oneself is the result of a tendency common to all people to compare oneself with others; all jealousy, all ambition, and even an ideal like the imitation of Christ are based on such comparisons. But these tendencies are all rooted in an ontological emptiness that only God can fill, and the ultimate meaning of the complicated vagaries of our tortured and tormented relationships lies in the way in which we negotiate this emptiness. There is a way of negotiating it that transcends victimization by the triangular situation that necessarily will be involved in the negotiation. This is the source, for instance, of our fascination with the saints, whether they be those whom the Catholic Church has canonized or those whom we acknowledge, even without such official recognition, as bearing in themselves a certain authentic transcendence of conflictual desire that we can not only admire and respect but also imitate. Think of Ignatius Loyola asking, "What if I were to do what Saint Francis did, or to do what Saint Dominic did?"<sup>48</sup> The mimetic quality of the question itself is obvious, but we may trust, I hope, that it led to something quite other than the tortured quality of internally mediated relations (however much the sons of Ignatius may have to struggle to overcome mimetic rivalry in their own midst!), that it led, in fact, to autonomous spiritual processions of word and love that were in fact, if not recognized as such, created participations in triune life. Think too of the constant appeals being made in our violent time to Gandhi and Martin Luther King and Dorothy Day, whose way of promoting justice for the victims of history is so different from the way of violence and hatred. Think of Ignatius's own prayer in the *Spiritual Exercises*: "...protesting that I wish and desire, and that it is my deliberate determination...to imitate Thee in bearing all insults and reproaches, and all poverty, as well actual poverty as poverty of spirit, if Thy Divine Majesty be pleased to choose and receive me to this life and state."<sup>49</sup> The sentiment is like that of Don

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<sup>48</sup>A *Pilgrim's Journey: The Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola*, trans. and ed. Joseph N. Tylenda, S.J. (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1985), 14.

<sup>49</sup>*The Text of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, trans. John Morris (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1952), 39.

Quixote vis-à-vis Amadis of Gaul,<sup>50</sup> but in Ignatius's case, at least once he overcame his own tendencies to carry things to an unhealthy extreme, it did not lead to distortion of judgment or misperception of reality.

What makes the difference are the transcendental desires of the human spirit, Lonergan's "second way of being conscious," and their ground and fulfilment in the gift of God's love. "All people by nature desire to know," says Aristotle at the very beginning of the *Metaphysics*. This becomes Lonergan's leitmotif throughout the book *Insight*, where he unpacks the dynamics of the desire to know in science, in common sense, and in philosophy, as well as some of the devices that we employ in fleeing understanding when the truth is something we do not want to face. In his later work he extends this transcendental desire, as well as the devices we use to escape its consequences, to the notion of the good.

How is all of this related to the mimetic quality of desire emphasized by Girard? Girard insists, correctly, that almost all learning is based on imitation,<sup>51</sup> and so satisfying the desire to know involves mimetic behavior. In this sense, too, in the realm of representation, mimesis is the essential force of cultural integration, even if in the realm of acquisitive desire it is also the force of destruction and dissolution. But the desire to know and the transcendental intention of value are not themselves a function of acquisitive mimesis. Acquisitiveness is a perversion of these desires. There is such a thing as a detached, disinterested desire to know. It is acknowledged by Girard himself, when he comments that integrating isolated discoveries into a rational framework and transforming them into real knowledge is the true vocation of thought, a vocation which in the end, after periods in which it appears to have run its course, is always reaffirmed.<sup>52</sup> This true vocation of thought reflects something other than acquisitive mimesis. It can, of course, be infected and derailed by acquisitive mimesis, as anyone who has spent any time in any academic institution knows all too well. But in itself the orientation that can become a vocation is natural, non-acquisitive, and in the last analysis not imitative. And Girard's work assumes a greater historical and theoretical

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<sup>50</sup>See Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, 1-2.

<sup>51</sup>René Girard, *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World*, trans. Stephen Bann and Michael Metteer (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987), 7.

<sup>52</sup>Girard, *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World*, 18.

significance to the extent that it can be shown to illuminate the deviations from that true vocation that lead us and our thinking astray, that is, when it is related both to the autonomous spiritual processions that at the supernatural level are our created participation in trinitarian life and at the natural level are analogues of that participation and so of the divine processions themselves.

But more must be said, for the significance of imitating the divine relations is not purely inward and spiritual but historical and social.

#### 5.4 Further Assessment: Scapegoating and Social Sin

In *Violence and the Sacred*<sup>53</sup> and *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World*, Girard faces the questions of the origins of mimetic desire and of its impact on cultural and social institutions. It is here that he discovers the scapegoating mechanism, which enables him to reassess the meaning of rites, rituals, and myths. Included in that mechanism is the notion of the sacrificial crisis. A sacrificial crisis is a crisis in a community that can be resolved only by means of the sacrifice or expulsion of a surrogate victim or scapegoat. A sacrificial crisis entails the collapse of the social hierarchy and the loss of difference within the group. With the effacement of social distinctions the members of the community lose sight of who and what they are. In the chaos other distinctions are lost as well: good and evil, right and wrong, rationality and irrationality. In *Violence and the Sacred* Girard writes: "...coherent thinking collapses and rational activities are abandoned...all values, spiritual and material, vanish."<sup>54</sup> The crisis in the Catholic Church in many parts of the world as I write this paper, a crisis brought about by the sexual abuse of minors on the part of clergy, is an excellent example of a sacrificial crisis, and the scapegoating of homosexuals by the church in the wake of the crisis is clear evidence that the victimage mechanism is not yet dead. Ironically, the very bible on which church authorities claim their authority is founded exposed this victimage mechanism for what it is. Nothing could be more contrary to the gospel than the church's official response, at least in some circles, to

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<sup>53</sup>René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1977).

<sup>54</sup>Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 91.

the crisis affecting its hierarchical system, a response that is resorted to in preference to reforming the system itself that is responsible for the abuses.

One of Girard's interlocutors in *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World* maintains that Girard's thesis is not primarily a theory of religion but a theory of human relations and of the role that the victimage mechanism plays in those relations, that the theory of religion is simply a particularly noteworthy aspect of a fundamental theory of mimetic relations, and that religion is one means of misinterpreting mimetic relations. Girard agrees. The sacred, he says, is to our understanding of human relations what phlogiston was to the understanding of combustion. And mimesis is to our understanding of human relations what oxygen is to the understanding of combustion. "Our own oxygen is mimesis and all that accompanies it." Such a statement may be primarily rhetorical, but its theoretical significance can be elevated if it is recognized, again, that Girard is working in and clarifying what Lonergan calls the first way of being conscious. The influence that distorted mimesis has on the realm of the sacred, which in its authenticity pertains primarily to the second way of being conscious, an influence that Girard elsewhere refers to as deviated transcendence, shows just how important this elevated theory of human relations, indeed of primordial intersubjectivity, is for theology. It helps us get straight just where the genuine *imago Dei*, and so the genuine *imitatio Dei*, lies in human consciousness and, even more, where it does not lie. To place it where it does not reside is precisely a matter of deviated transcendence.

## 6. IMAGO DEI

Where, then, does it lie? In particular, where is the *imago* that is also an *imitatio*? Foundationally, it lies in the created participation in active and passive spiration that is the share in divine life given to us here and now. That participation is (1) the gift of being in love in an unqualified fashion, which (2) alters the horizon in which evidence regarding one's existential self-constitution is grasped, to ground a radical assent (3) from which there flows that radical yes to the value of such self-constitution that (4) grounds the habitual performance of loving acts. The movements from evidence grasped to radical assent and then from evidence and assent

together to proceeding love are instances of *emanationes intelligibiles* or autonomous spiritual processions. When these are in the supernatural order, they are created participations in active and passive spiration, grounding an imitation of God in human interpersonal relations. The first three of these items constitute the created participation in active spiration, and the fourth the created participation in passive spiration.

It is, however, in the historical mission of the Word that we find concretely what it is to imitate the *Verbum spirans amorem* and the Father whose Word he is, that is, to imitate the two persons who *are* active spiration. And Girard illumines the concrete dynamics of what Lonergan articulates heuristically as follows, precisely in his discussion of the "appropriate willingness" required to transcend the mystery of iniquity:

...the will can contribute to the solution of the problem of the social surd inasmuch as it adopts a dialectical attitude that parallels the dialectical method of intellect. The dialectical method of intellect consists in grasping that the social surd neither is intelligible nor is to be treated as intelligible. The corresponding dialectical attitude of will is to return good for evil. For it is only inasmuch as men are willing to meet evil with good, to love their enemies, to pray for those that persecute and calumniate them, that the social surd is a potential good. It follows that love of God above all and in all so embraces the order of the universe as to love all men with a self-sacrificing love.<sup>55</sup>

What Lonergan here is calling a dialectical attitude of will is expressly called by Jesus an imitation of the divine Father: "You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:43-48). At this point, it seems, our systematic considerations

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<sup>55</sup>*Insight*, 721-22.

and the integration of these considerations with the mimetic theory of René Girard join in bearing witness to the biblical revelation's unmasking of the principal dynamics of evil in history and pointing the way to transcending these dynamics.

If this is the foundational instance of the *imago Dei*, the derived instance is the constant fidelity to the natural unfolding of the transcendental exigencies to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible, each with their own processions of act from act. This constant fidelity, as Lonergan emphasizes in *Insight*, requires the supernatural solution to the problem of evil, a supernatural solution that, in God's own dispensation, consists in the gift of created participations in the divine relations grounding imitations of the triune God.

## OBSTACLES TO METAPHYSICAL CONTROL

*Philip McShane*

*Vancouver, British Columbia*

THE TITLE IS peculiar, and I prefer to leave comments on it to the end. Best for now to take my topic to mean difficulties in understanding Lonergan's contributions to metaphysics. Indeed, I am talking about difficulties that I have had to overcome very slowly, and so I write in the hope that my few pointers may be both a help and an encouragement to others. The first difficulty that I write about, for instance, has been a trouble to me for decades, but I did not identify it with accuracy until the turn of the millennium, and broke through on it only in autumn of 2001. The last difficulty that I write about, the largest, regarding the new differentiations of consciousness involved in functional collaboration, was strangely one that troubled me least.<sup>1</sup> Others held me up in different ways in my struggle of forty-five years to understand Lonergan's achievements.<sup>2</sup> I would be interested in reader's views of any of these and in conversations about the overcoming of them.

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<sup>1</sup>I had the advantage of sharing with Lonergan the problems of method and fragmentation through the late 1950s and the early sixties. Then, to Lonergan's sketching to me of the solution in 1966 I brought the context of problems in musicology, and so forth. Functional specialization was evidently a global cultural need.

<sup>2</sup>People find it difficult to accept my claim that I was stuck with the problem of Lonergan's identification of energy and the empirical residue until two years ago and am now only beginning to see the larger possibilities of it. So, for example, Brian Greene writes "According to string theory, there is only one fundamental ingredient - the string - and the wealth of particle species simply reflects the different vibrational patterns that a string can execute" (*The Fabric of the Cosmos. Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality* [New York: Knopf, 2004], 346). String theory, of course, is multiply muddled: but might one not recognize the "different vibrational patterns" as forms of energy, and indeed, the higher patterns that concern us below as negentropic infoldings of actual aggregates on different levels of infolding?



## 1. CAPACITY-FOR-PERFORMANCE

The title doesn't really name the difficulty as it emerged for me. The difficulty as it emerged was the challenge of understanding the third chapter of *Verbum*, in particular the meaning of *potentia activa*.<sup>3</sup> The breakthrough of 2001 was my comprehending identification of *potentia activa* with the capacity-for-performance so casually introduced in chapter 15 of *Insight*.<sup>4</sup>

One good reason for starting with this difficulty is that it is associated with the larger difficulty that has been raised by serious Lonergan scholars over the years: what is the place of metaphysics? There is Lonergan's talk of faculty psychology being "out": does the same apply to metaphysics? Certainly that would not jive with the drive of *Insight*. Still, as one top Lonergan scholar said to me, there is something quite vague and elusive about chapter 16 of *Insight*: what is it all about?

But the present difficulty is with elements of chapter 15. Let me focus my difficulty by attending to that single footnote of the chapter, at the end of section 1.<sup>5</sup> Lonergan writes with massive assurance, beginning with "In brief I should say..." and sweeping through to the sweep of the *Prima Secundae*. One gets the focus by homing in on the second type of potency, the potency to *operatio*. One can home in better by thinking of the potency to seeing, the informed organic structure that has the familiar external appearance of the eye. That complex neurochemical structure is a receptor, but an active receptor. Decades ago I wrote about it as an autonomic form in contrast to the synnomic form of chemical and physical things: what I was getting at was that the eye receives light in a way that is "selfish and creative" as compared to the reception of light by a physico-chemical surface.<sup>6</sup> It is, then, identifiable as *potentia activa* where that

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<sup>3</sup>Section 4 of chapter 3 of *Verbum, Word and Idea In Aquinas*. But one has to work with the whole chapter.

<sup>4</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 464[489]. I thus refer to the two editions throughout.

<sup>5</sup>*Insight*, 434[459].

<sup>6</sup>This was a topic in "Insight and Emergence: Towards an Adequate *Weltanschauung*" (1970). The paper was published as chapter 1 in *The Shaping of the Foundations*, available on [www.philipmcshane.ca](http://www.philipmcshane.ca). More recently I have begun a 300-page commentary on the single paragraph of *Insight* 464[489], "Study of the organism..." The commentary is being

confused term is to be understood – no small task, as I found in the autumn struggle – in a precise sense that was at the outer limit of Thomas's understanding.<sup>7</sup>

It seems such a small step, then, to identify *potentia activa* with capacity-for-performance as it turns up on that "famous page" 464[489] of *Insight*. So, what blocked the identification for me? It was my failure to read the chapter toward and within the control of the emergent metaphysics that was, after all, the topic there.

## 2. EXPERIENCE

That failure shows up very startlingly when one considers the problem of the metaphysical equivalents<sup>8</sup> of experience, where the word *experience* is taken in the ordinary sense of empirical experience – for example, the first five in the list of the basic pattern of operations in *Method in Theology*:

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made available, on the website mentioned, as a series *Field Nocturnes*. The commentary complements the 200-page commentary there (*Sofdawares* and *Quodlibets*) on the single key page 250 of *Method in Theology*.

<sup>7</sup>See note 3 above. The relevant section on this topic is section 8, "Nature and Efficiency." A transposed thematic here would ground an enriched view of the natural resultance of the zoological conjugates from spirit's fourfold infolding of energy (see note 2 above). There are, of course, larger resultances of this transposition related to the present obstacles. First, one must carry forward this transposition into Lonergan's handling of another edginess in Thomas's understanding, one that dominates *Insight* chapter 16: a precise thematic of quantity. (Add, to the transpositions of chapter 16, Lonergan's consideration of Thomas's view of relations in Appendix 3 of *De Deo Trino II. Pars Systematica* [Rome: Gregorian Press, 1964]) Then, lurking in the drive of chapter 20, there is the need for a larger heuristic of "the solution" that would lift Thomas's struggle for an eschatology out of the imaginative synthesis of a Ptolemaic culture into a Eucharistic eschatology of past-modern physics. A context for reflection here is Charles Hefling Jr., "On Understanding Salvation History," *Lonergan's Hermeneutic. Its Development and Application*, ed. Sean E. McEvenue and Ben Meyer (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989). Hefling's reflections on the heuristics of chapter 20 include pointers regarding the "Turns Around" of section 5 below.

<sup>8</sup>*Insight*, 502-507[526-530]. There is the much larger problem of beginning to speak of the metaphysical equivalents of the communal experience of functional collaboration. On this, see, on the website, *Method in Theology: Revisions and Implementations*, chapter 10, "Metaphysical Equivalence and Functional Specialization".

seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting<sup>9</sup> – and then placed in the context of that same challenging page 464[489]. The organism that is you or I is “exhibited to our senses,” and we move forward from the time-honored five names that are associated with “a triple correlation of classified experiences, classified contents of experience and classified names.”<sup>10</sup> But we can fail to move forward, fail to move down that page. Then “correctly understanding experience” can get bogged down in a nominalism that leaves us “in the unenviable position of always arriving on the scene a little breathless and a little late.”<sup>11</sup> Our re-reading of the book *Insight* then remains in the descriptive mode tolerated by *Method* right up to those discomfiting pages that list *Insight’s* challenge of “embracing...a metaphysics.”<sup>12</sup> “From such a broadened basis one can go on,”<sup>13</sup> but there is no broadened basis, so one is left in the unenviable position of not being able to go on, or more particularly to go into dialogue with the contemporary world of interest in sensibility. We do not really share Rita Carter’s question, posed as the first sentence of the book *Exploring Consciousness*: “How does the feeling of this book in your hands, the perception of these words, the thoughts they provide – the whole, private inner world you are experiencing right now – arise in a universe that is made of molecules? What is this thing we call consciousness?”<sup>14</sup> What, to come back to our problem in an equivalent word, is that consciousness that we name attention? What Carter and company are doing are struggling unbeknownst down that page 464[489]: should we not join them? Then the metaphysical equivalents of seeing hearing tasting touching smelling will emerge in the *ethos* of the later definition of

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<sup>9</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 6. See the comments below, in note 21, on the pedagogical style of *Method in Theology*. The operations of seeing, hearing, and so forth are placed in an explanatory context by the essays, *Field Nocturnes*, mentioned in note 6 above.

<sup>10</sup>*Insight*, 555[578].

<sup>11</sup>*Insight*, 733[755].

<sup>12</sup>*Method in Theology*, 287.

<sup>13</sup>*Method in Theology*, 287.

<sup>14</sup>Rita Carter, ed., *Exploring Consciousness* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002). An introduction to the full empirical investigation of zoological and human consciousness is given in *Field Nocturne 11*, “Horse Sense.”

generalized empirical method.<sup>15</sup> We will be able to talk to contemporaries about such failures of sensibility as attention deficit syndrome. Without that dialogue and that effort we can too easily get trapped into pacing along – but hardly forward – in a phenomenology of sensibility rich with Heideggerian feeling but deeply vulnerable.

### 3. FRIGHT OF SYMBOLISM

What would protect us from the vulnerability and lift us toward richer open existential dialogue is – and it does seem paradoxical – an adequate symbolization of the basis of the metaphysical equivalents needed by Carter and company. This is an unpleasant fact of the post-Renaissance complexifications, whether one thinks of the symphonies of Mahler or the advances of mathematics or the analysis of mind. And it is the metaphysician's task to push for an expression of explicit metaphysics: "it would consist in a symbolic indication of the total range of possible experience"<sup>16</sup> (that word *experience* again, but now in its largest sense). But, one asks, is it really necessary? Well, is metaphysics, a reach for an integral heuristic structure of being, an easy task? It has to reach out, surely, to the work of both Mahler and Carter. "This comprehension of everything in a unified whole can be either formal or virtual. It is virtual when one is habitually able to answer readily and without difficulty, or at least 'without tears,' a whole series of questions right up to the last 'why?' Formal comprehension, however, cannot take place without a construct of some sort. In this life we are able to understand something only by turning to phantasm; but in larger and more complex questions it is impossible to have a suitable phantasm unless the imagination is aided by some sort of diagram. Thus, if we want to have a comprehensive grasp of everything in a unified whole, we shall have to construct a diagram in

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<sup>15</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 141. "Generalized empirical method operates on a combination of both the data of sense and the data of consciousness: it does not treat of objects without taking into account the corresponding operations of the subject; it does not treat of the subject's operations without taking into account the corresponding objects." This is a profoundly significant revision of the thematic of generalized empirical method in *Insight*, but it thematizes his own practice in the book. See note 24 below.

<sup>16</sup>*Insight*, 396[421].

which are symbolically represented all the various elements of the question along with all the connections between them."<sup>17</sup> Indeed, in the largest and most complex question one needs a relatively integral series of such constructs, what I have called in these past years "metaphysical words,"  $W_i$ .<sup>18</sup>

#### 4. WORDING THE "BASIC POSITION"<sup>19</sup>

The key transition page of *Insight*, on which one receives the invitation to take a stand regarding that odd line in the introduction,<sup>20</sup> is of necessity trapped in the limitations of the moving viewpoint, a pedagogical device.<sup>21</sup> This becomes pretty obvious if one broods seriously over one's

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<sup>17</sup>Bernard Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, vol. 7 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Michael G. Shields, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 151. Here I take the opportunity to suggest a related exercise in the control of reading. The word *phantasm* occurs twice in Lonergan's claim above. What do you mean by *phantasm*? In so far as you have been pushed toward a developed symbolism of metaphysics you are "tuned" in your reading to the hierarchic complexity of the reality, thus, for example, in possession of an explanatory heuristic of the passionateness of being's energy that Lonergan wrote of in terms of quasi-operations: "Its [the passionateness of being's] underpinning is the quasi-operator that presides over the transition from the neural to the psychic." ("Mission and Spirit," *A Third Collection*, 29).

<sup>18</sup>My first successful indication of such words was in the epilogue of *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations: Self-Axis of the Great Ascent*, 1973. This work is available on the website [www.philipmcshane.ca](http://www.philipmcshane.ca). An initial listing is given in *Cantower 24*, "Infesting History with Hodology." A fuller listing is in *Prehumous 2*, "Metagrams and Metaphysics."

<sup>19</sup>*Insight*, 388[413]. There are pointers to a fuller axiomatics of "the position" in the article mentioned in the previous note, "Metagrams and Metaphysics."

<sup>20</sup>*Insight*, xxviii[22] "There is an incoherent realism .... that poses as a halfway house between materialism and idealism, and on the other hand there is an intelligent and reasonable realism between which and materialism the halfway house is idealism."

<sup>21</sup>There are other limitations of the presentation which are beyond the present article. A full thematic of the basic position requires a thematic both of intentionality and of ultimacy.

It is important to notice the dominant pedagogical devices in *Insight* and *Method* inadvertence to which underpins the obstacles I treat of in this short essay. First, *Method*: I know from talking with Lonergan in the late sixties that he agonized about "leaving out *Insight*" in writing the book. He settled for a rich descriptiveness. But the problem of *Insight*'s writing is more subtle and missing his strategy has led to a tradition of misinterpretation. He is quite clear about that strategy when answering questions about feeling in the Florida Conference Interview: "There is in *Insight* a footnote to the effect that we're not attempting to solve anything about such a thing as personal relations. I

meaning of the "already out there now," a phrase in the statement of the basic position on that page. One gets a lift toward a thematic of that unpretty obviousness by becoming luminous about the previous three sections: What is this capacity-for-performance " – the whole private world that you are experiencing right now – in a universe that is made of molecules?" that we name knowing, or name "correctly understanding experience"? One needs to move down that page 464[489] with Carter and company if one is to lift the "already out there now" into an explanatory heuristic context. The lift requires a massive subtlety of imaging that is existentially unwelcome. "No man is born in that pattern; no one reaches it easily."<sup>22</sup> "There arises a demand for a metaphysics that is grounded, not in the impalpable potentiality of explanation, but in the manifest truth of description."<sup>23</sup> The move to the lift requires an ontic struggle of the subject as subject, not in the world of Husserl or Heidegger, but in the world of neurochemical explanation.<sup>24</sup> That self-"study of the organism begins from the thing-for-us" that is ourselves, reaching perhaps in a second or third reading of *Insight* for an existential liberation from the Cave of an imagined positioning into a systematic unification, and "there

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was dealing in *Insight* fundamentally with the intellectual side – a study of human understanding – in which I did my study of human understanding and got human intelligence in there, not just a sausage machine turning out abstract concepts. That was my fundamental thrust" (*A Second Collection*, 221-22).

<sup>22</sup>*Insight*, 385[408].

<sup>23</sup>*Insight*, 505[529].

<sup>24</sup>Symbolic of the challenge to overcome the obstacles I write of is the fantasy of a foundational integration and transposition of the two sets of lectures in volume 18 of Lonergan's Complete Works, *Phenomenology and Logic*. One must prevision the emergence, in slow cycles of the turns-around of section 5, of subjects ontically luminous in both aesthetics and science, "the whole thing in his [her] intellectual paws, so to speak" (*op. cit.*, 357), repossessing in an operative explanatory mode the finalistic lift of "the given" (*Insight*, 15.3.4). Recall note 15 above and place the merging into the perspective of a new "conceptualization of understanding" (see *Verbum*, 238) within the lift noted in section 5. Within that context fantasy itself must be defined as a component of the thematic transposition of qq. 7-17 of the *Prima Secundae*. But prior to that is the quasi-operational stretching of present fantasy: "Without fantasy, all philosophic knowledge remains in the grip of the present or the past and severed from the future, which is the only link between philosophy and the real history of mankind" (Herbert Marcuse, *Negation. Essays in Critical Thinking*, trans. Jeremy L. Shapiro [Boston: Beacon Press, 1968], 155)

is no evidence that such a systematic unification ensures the possibility of any imaginative synthesis.”<sup>25</sup>

### 5. COMES ABOUT, TURNS AROUND

“So it comes about that the extroverted subject visualizing extension and experiencing duration gives place to the subject oriented to the objective or the unrestricted desire to know and affirming beings differentiated by certain conjugate potencies, forms, and acts grounding certain laws and frequencies. It is this shift that gives rise to the antithesis of positions and counterpositions.”<sup>26</sup>

I have been writing briefly, doctrinally, about a few obstacles to metaphysics. I have just mentioned a second or third reading of *Insight*, and certainly one may take that existentially, biographically.<sup>27</sup> But the obstacles to metaphysics are phylogenetic and a deeper solution must be of the same histogenetic character. A Bell-curve statistics of positioning requires the shift of probabilities<sup>28</sup> associated with subtle schemings of recycling and in particular the subtle schemes of recurrence identified by Lonergan forty years ago. What would ground that higher range of probabilities is the recycling of global functional collaboration that would mesh the struggle of Carter and sincere company with searchers for fundamental enlightenment that are equally sincere.<sup>29</sup> That functional collaboration, to which all cultural domains point in their fragmented helplessness, is “a new and higher collaboration of men in the pursuit of

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<sup>25</sup>*Insight*, 93[117].

<sup>26</sup>*Insight*, 514[537].

<sup>27</sup>On the personal challenge of breaking the neurochemical exclusion of theoretic reaching by a prevalent axial superego, see, on the website, *Field Nocturne 2*, “Lonergan’s Obscure Challenge to His Disciples” and *Humus 2*: “*Vis Cogitativa*: Contemporary Defective Patterns of Anticipation.”

<sup>28</sup>*Insight*, 121[144]

<sup>29</sup>The meshing is not left to accidental occurrences of sincerity but is built into the cycles of collaboration as a consequence of the sloping convergence of disciplinary specializations on the way from Research to Dialectic. On the dynamics of sloping see, on the website, *Christ in History*, chapter 2, “The General Solution to Present Ineffective Fragmentation.” On the incompleteness of all such solutions see the website book, *Lonergan’s Standard Model of Effective Global Inquiry*.

truth,"<sup>30</sup> "a specialized auxiliary ever ready to offset every interference with intellect's unrestricted finality."<sup>31</sup> It is destined to spiral round and within global "institutions, roles, task"<sup>32</sup> to lift the street-talk of "personal relations"<sup>33</sup> into a fresh neurodynamics of "terminal value."<sup>34</sup> The major obstacle to metaphysical control of progress is the failure to implement Lonergan's auxiliary strategy of functional recycling.

That control is not some centralized institution, possibly at the mercy of sociopathic corporations, eating their way into education, at the mercy of the necrophilia of descendants of present economics, eating their way through the resources of the third world and the whole world. But I have written of that at length elsewhere over the past decades: it is the collaborative functional control of microautonomy that would ground a new mesoeconomic subtlety.<sup>35</sup> At its heart it would cherish Lonergan's cyclic revamping of Aristotle's regard for sensibility. "The rational expectation of an Aristotle is the aliveness of sense-ability in its reach for global mindmating, an inner neural luminousness that in the post-axial period would be a democratic nervepoise. Meantime, we have to live with axial arrogance, our nerves massaged with its colonialisms, for centuries or millennia."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>*Insight*, 719[740].

<sup>31</sup>*Insight*, 726[747].

<sup>32</sup>*Method in Theology*, 48.

<sup>33</sup>*Method in Theology*. Recall note 21 above. Also note that personal relations are, in the diagram, placed beyond the good of order: the last line of the display belongs to the dynamic exigence for the field. (On *field* and *exigence*, see these words in the index of *Phenomenology and Logic*).

<sup>34</sup>*Method in Theology*, 48.

<sup>35</sup>One might think of the shifts in perspective toward the beauty of smallness and the possibilities of nano-technology that would ground a culture of local creativities. This is in continuity with the remarkable fantasy of Lonergan, writing in 1942. "Nor is it impossible that further developments in science should make small units self-sufficient on the ultramodern standard of living to eliminate commerce and industry, to transform agriculture into a superchemistry, to clear away finance and even money, to make economic solidarity a memory, and power over nature the only difference between high civilization and primitive gardening" (Bernard Lonergan, *For A New Political Economy* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999], 20).

<sup>36</sup>Philip McShane, *Pastkeynes Pastmodern Economics: A Fresh Pragmatism* (Halifax: Axial Press, 2002), 155.





## HEIDEGGER, LONERGAN, AND SELF-PRESENCE

*Michael Sharkey*

*University of Wisconsin – Platteville*

*Platteville, Wisconsin*

### 1.

**I**N THE PASSAGE of his *Meditations* for which he is most famous, Descartes writes:

But I have convinced myself that there is absolutely nothing in the world, no sky, no earth, no minds, no bodies. Does it now follow that I too do not exist? No: if I convinced myself of something then I certainly existed. But there is a deceiver of supreme power and cunning who is deliberately and constantly deceiving me. In that case too I undoubtedly exist, if he is deceiving me; and let him deceive me as much as he can, he will never bring it about that I am nothing so long as I think that I am something... *I am, I exist.*<sup>1</sup>

Leaving aside the question of the nature and validity of his “sum,”<sup>2</sup> we may nevertheless be sure of the character of Descartes’s “cogito”: it is the result of an act of pure reflexion, an expression of the self’s perception of itself. If this is not made clear (and distinct) in the *Meditations*, it is so in *Rules for the Guidance of Our Native Powers*. There a distinction is made between “two paths [that] are the most certain of the paths to

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<sup>1</sup>Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. John Cottingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 16-17.

<sup>2</sup>The issue is famously discussed in Willis Doney, ed., *Descartes, A Collection of Critical Essays* (New York: 1967), and Bernard Williams, *Descartes, The Project of Pure Enquiry* (London: Penguin Books, 1978), 72-201.

knowledge,"<sup>3</sup> "intuition" and "deduction." The first, or "apprehension which the mind, pure and attentive, gives us so easily...that we are thereby freed from...doubt,"<sup>4</sup> has as its object "immediately present evidence,"<sup>5</sup> and so occurs in a "durationless instant,"<sup>6</sup> as an encounter of a brute and uninterpreted given. The second, "by which we understand all that is necessarily concluded from other certainly known data,"<sup>7</sup> is sullied by discursivity and time. "Intuition," then, is direct and immediate acquaintance, while "deduction" is inferential collection of the deliverances of it. But "[e]ach of us," Descartes insists, "can see by intuition...that he thinks."<sup>8</sup> So it is as if by an eye of the mind that the self is seen.<sup>9</sup>

Perceptual metaphors are still more pronounced in the writings of Locke and Hume. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke tells us that self-awareness is "the perception of what passes in a man's own mind,"<sup>10</sup> and that in it, "the understanding turns inwards upon itself, reflects on its own operations, and makes them the object of its own contemplation."<sup>11</sup> It is true that he asks, "Can...a man think, and not be conscious of it?", and answers, "it is altogether as intelligible to say that a body is extended without parts, as that anything thinks without being conscious of it."<sup>12</sup> And he admits: "to imprint anything on the Mind

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<sup>3</sup>Rene Descartes, *Rules for the Guidance of Our Native Powers*, Rule III, trans. Norman Kemp Smith, in *Descartes: Philosophical Writings* (New York: Modern Library, 1958), excerpted in *The European Philosophers from Descartes to Nietzsche*, ed. Monroe C. Beardsley (New York: Modern Library, 1960), 81.

<sup>4</sup>Descartes, *Rules*, 80.

<sup>5</sup>Descartes, *Rules*, 81.

<sup>6</sup>This is the suggestion of Williams, *Descartes*, 192, and of course German Idealism generally.

<sup>7</sup>Descartes, *Rules*, 80.

<sup>8</sup>Descartes, *Rules*, 80.

<sup>9</sup>Descartes himself employs the metaphor of the "eye" elsewhere. See his *Principles of Philosophy*, part I, 45, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, trans. E. S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 237. I owe the citation to Hugo Meynell, *Redirecting Philosophy: Reflections on the Nature of Knowledge from Plato to Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 270.

<sup>10</sup>John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (New York: Dover Publications, 1959), 138.

<sup>11</sup>Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 126.

<sup>12</sup>Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 138.

without the Mind's perceiving it, seems to me hardly intelligible."<sup>13</sup> But his acknowledgment of something like entailment goes so clearly in hand with his commitment to self-regard, that Richard Rorty must be right to say: "It is as if the *tabula rasa* were perpetually under the gaze of [an] unblinking Eye."<sup>14</sup>

Hume, too, accepts the portrait of self-awareness as self-vision. But unlike Descartes or Locke, he does not think anything like it occurs. In his *Treatise of Human Nature*, he famously reports:

For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception.<sup>15</sup>

With Chisholm and Price, we may wonder what self it is who is here doing the stumbling, and why Hume may not own up to his apparent awareness of it.<sup>16</sup> But his *stated* ideal is clear: were he ever to come to self-presence, it would have to be *via* "observation" or perception. And this, because: "some one impression...gives rise to every real idea," and the "self or person is not any one impression."<sup>17</sup>

Might Kant, in his wish to avoid the excesses of rationalism and empiricism, hew to some other-than-perceptualist line? Here and there in the first *Critique*, there are passages that tempt the thought. At B 68, Kant rules out the possibility of an intellectual intuition, saying: "If the faculty of coming to consciousness of oneself is to seek out...that which lies in the mind, it must affect the mind, and only in this way can it give rise to an

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<sup>13</sup>Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, I, 2, v, as quoted by Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 143.

<sup>14</sup>Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, 143.

<sup>15</sup>David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature in On Human Nature and the Understanding*, ed. A. Flew (New York: Macmillan Publishers, 1962), 259.

<sup>16</sup>Roderick Chisholm, "On the Observability of the Self," in John Donnelly, ed., *Language, Metaphysics, and Death* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1994), 198. Chisholm refers to H. H. Price, *Hume's Theory of the External World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1940), 5-6. And for a similar argument, see Joseph Fitzpatrick, *Philosophical Encounters, Lonergan and the Analytical Tradition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 42-44.

<sup>17</sup>Hume, *Treatise*, 258.

intuition of itself."<sup>18</sup> And, at A 107, he blocks the route through sense, saying: "Consciousness of self according to the determinations of our state in inner perception is merely empirical, and always changing. No fixed and abiding self can present itself in this flux."<sup>19</sup> But just when one believes Kant may set aside perceptualism altogether, he turns to the "deductive" strategy for which *he* is famous: "What has *necessarily* to be represented as numerically identical cannot be thought...through empirical data," he repeats. So "[t]o render such a transcendental presupposition valid, there must be a condition which precedes all experience, and which makes experience itself possible."<sup>20</sup> This is, of course, the "transcendental unity of apperception," or the "I think" that must be able to accompany all my representations.<sup>21</sup>

Now what is perceptualist about this transcendental unity? Perhaps nothing; for in it, or by it, the self is "apperceived," and not perceived; it is the awareness of self which "goes along with" and makes possible the self's perception of else. Still, the need for its *deduction* suggests Kant remains in the grips of the perceptualist ideal. Why may not the "awareness of self" be an affair of...awareness? The answer would seem to be: awareness *must* be intellectual or sensitive perception; and these have been disqualified.<sup>22</sup>

## 2.

In a series of core modern thinkers, then, we have a vision of self-presence as perception. For Descartes, it is intellectual self-perception; for Locke,

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<sup>18</sup>Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), 88.

<sup>19</sup>Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 136.

<sup>20</sup>Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 136.

<sup>21</sup>It may seem strange to suggest Kant is offering a transcendental deduction for the concept, "I think." But for the view that he is, see Patricia Kitcher, "Kant's Real Self," in *Self and Nature in Kant's Philosophy*, ed., Allen Wood (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 113-47, esp. 118.

<sup>22</sup>For an account of Kant as sensitive and intellectual perceptualist, see Giovanni Sala, S.J., *Kant and Lonergan*, trans. Joseph Spoerl, ed. Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994). And for unwilling confirmation, Merold Westphal, "In Defense of the Thing in Itself," *Kant-Studien Philosophische Zeitschrift Der Kant-Gesellschaft*, 59, Jahrgang, Heft 1, 1968, 118-41.

sensitive self-perception; for Hume, at least in principle, sensitive self-perception; and for Kant, though again in mere theory, sensitive/intellectual self-perception. Why the unanimity? Our modern thinkers themselves would tell us: "Because we are rigorous," that is, they would claim that, in the spirit of scientificity, they may not infer to any item beyond the "veil of ideas" – not even a self – without some evidentiating idea of the same. Yet, we may ask after the credentials of this criterion. What is this big "idea" idea?<sup>23</sup> Is it really the fundamental unit of experience? Is it descriptively adequate to portray experience in terms of units? Is the overall account here one which really "saves the appearances" or "covers the phenomena"? And is there here any *real* attempt to describe, before rushing to epistemic and (anti)metaphysical concern? *Is there here scientia?*

Thinkers in the phenomenological tradition – in which, to one degree or another, Heidegger and Lonergan stand – would answer largely in the negative. Indeed, they would suggest the *logoi* of the *phenomena* of the moderns to be supplied quite *un-critically*, because under the auspices of the "natural attitude."<sup>24</sup> That is, they would suggest that the moderns assume, and do not discover, experience to be an affair of subjects set over against objects, with ideas (understood as percepts) interposed; and they would call for a thoroughgoing "return to the data."<sup>25</sup> In this, they would require that experience be described "under an *epoche*,"<sup>26</sup> or in the

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<sup>23</sup>I borrow the phrase from John Greco, *Putting Sceptics in Their Place: The Nature of Skeptical Arguments and Their Role in Philosophical Inquiry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 165-66. But I would not endorse either Greco's diagnosis or remedy. For a corrective, see Michael H. McCarthy, *The Crisis of Philosophy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990), 181-92 and 222-337.

<sup>24</sup>Husserl defines the "natural attitude" as the one in which "I find continually present and standing over against me the one spatio-temporal fact-world...out there." See *his Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans., W. R. Boyce Gibson (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 96.

<sup>25</sup>Husserl issues his clarion call for a return "to the things themselves (*die Sachen Selbst*)," or "the data," in his *Logical Investigations*, vol. II, introduction, 2, trans. J. N. Findlay (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 252.

<sup>26</sup>Again in his *Ideas*, Husserl defines the *epoche*, or reduction, as an act in which I "put out of action the general thesis which belongs to the...natural standpoint, ...place in brackets whatever it includes respecting the nature of Being, ...[though] I do not then deny this 'world', as though I were a sophist...do not doubt that it is there as though I were a sceptic," 99-100.

condition of something like “intellectual conversion,”<sup>27</sup> so that no native tendency to reification might unjustly dominate proceedings. And they would claim that, only under such a methodological constraint, might an account hope to be truly evidential.

Such an utterly methodological response, moreover, is appealing. For it does identify a systematic inattentiveness to evidence, on the part of the moderns. It opposes oppositional and divisive reflection from the start, and so blocks the otherwise ensuing “problems” of modern philosophy. It anticipates, and already begins to undermine, the horizons of *Vorhandenheit* and “already-out-there-nowness” which certain thinkers would overcome.<sup>28</sup> And it consequently possibilizes a unitive portrait of experience, in terms of intentional acts and objects, which has it that the distinction between subject and object occurs *on the field* of the intention of Being.<sup>29</sup>

However, method and content, manner and matter, are notoriously intertwined in philosophy. And it may be that traditionally phenomenological thought itself remains tied to perception. In fact, Heidegger and Lonergan have given voice to something like this worry.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup>In a classic paper, W. F. J. Ryan argues that “the Transcendental Reduction (or, Epoche) in Edmund Husserl and Intellectual Conversion in Bernard Lonergan are kindred methodological starting points.” See “The Transcendental Reduction According to Edmund Husserl and Intellectual Conversion According to Bernard Lonergan,” in Matthew L. Lamb, ed., *Creativity and Method: Essays in Honor of Bernard Lonergan*, S.J. (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1981), 401, and ff.

<sup>28</sup>For Heidegger’s first (ambiguous) strike against *Vorhandenheit*, or the construal of “*Sein*” as “before the hand,” see *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 48. For Lonergan’s criticism of the construal of “being” as “already out there now,” see, for example, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 178, 260, 276-77, 437-40, 449-50, 523-24, and 529; and *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 263.

<sup>29</sup>For this in Heidegger, see, for example, his remarks on Dasein’s “pre-ontological understanding of Being,” in the introduction, I, and the antiskeptical use to which he puts the notion in 43a, of *Being and Time*. For the intention of being in Lonergan, see chap. 12 of *Insight*, and for antiskeptical capital, chap. 7 of *Understanding and Being*, vol. 5 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), esp. 159 and ff.

<sup>30</sup>In “Reading a Life: Heidegger and Hard Times,” ed. Charles Guignon, *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 80-83, Thomas Sheehan lists seven ways Heidegger found Husserl still to be tied to the

And so, with a nod of gratitude to the enterprise of phenomenology as first philosophy, we will here set aside its prospect, and turn directly to what Heidegger and Lonergan have to say about self-presence. (But let us do so with the full acknowledgment that if our thinkers do not simply add a "mind-mind" to the "mind-body" and other pseudo-problems of modernity, this is at least consistent with the phenomenological injunction to painstakingly describe before explaining.<sup>31</sup>)

### 3.

For his part, Heidegger's descriptions of "self-presence" begin with his recuperations of Augustine and Paul. In his 1920-21 Lectures in the Philosophy of Religion, he praises the saints for their retrieval of an original experience of the Christian "factic" or concrete and pre-thematic life in which presence to self and presence to world are concomitant and coincident.<sup>32</sup> His strategy, here, is to exploit the thought of these figures in order to recast the "fourfold configuration of intentional moments of our comportment to Being" with which philosophers from antiquity to the present have dualized. Hence, if traditionally, the "content sense" of our

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perceptualist problematic. In "Phenomenology: Nature, Significance, Limitations," in *Phenomenology and Logic: the Boston College Lectures on Mathematical Logic and Existentialism*, vol. 18 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Philip J. McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), Lonergan, too, marks the limitations of the devotion to intuition. See esp. 274-79.

<sup>31</sup>In his *Fashionable Nihilism: A Critique of Analytic Philosophy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002), Bruce Wilshire helpfully reminds: "[P]henomenological description must precede scientific explanation. When this principle is ignored, we get premature and misleading explanation. The diversion typically takes this form: the coherence of the directly lived world is missed. The world is parcelled out, partialled out, into reified abstractions. The most obvious cut isolates self, mind, ego, subjectivity, on the one hand, over against the material or 'external' world on the other. Phony problems are generated: How can 'non extended' mind possibly influence 'extended body', mine or any other's? How can minding self know there is anything beyond whatever is given in subjectivity – one's own privacy? Is there a world out there at all? How can value judgments possibly be true of ourselves and the rest of the world rather than being mere expressions of each of our subjective and idiosyncratic feelings and opinions? How can nihilism and vaporization of self be fended off?" 87-88.

<sup>32</sup>These have been published in English as *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).



intentional comportment to Being has been cast as “beingness,” or modeled too much on *Seiende*, here with Augustine it is recast as the transcendently intended *vita beata*. If, traditionally, the “relational sense” of our intentional comportment to Being has been cast as “*logos*” or modeled too much on representation, here with Augustine it is recast as *curare*. If traditionally the “fulfillment sense” of our intentional comportment to Being has been cast as a “making present,” or modeled too much on immediacy, here with Paul it is recast as a “moment of vision.” And if traditionally the “temporalizing sense” of our intentional comportment to Being has been cast as “pure presence,” or modelled too much on the atomic, here with Paul it is recast as “kairological time.” In every case, there is a dissolution of the division of subject from object. And, for this reason, there is in every case, too, an undoing of the division of the subject from itself. Thus, the coincidence of life and self-awareness is underscored.<sup>33</sup>

If this is not clear, let us attempt to make it so with respect to the final two recastings. In casting fulfilment sense, or the sense of enactment of the noetical relation to Being, not as an immediation, or a “making-present,” but as an interpretive, because temporalizing actuation; and, in casting temporalizing sense, or the deep radical sense of such actuation, not as an atomizing, or a privilegeding of the “purely present,” but as an horizoning of every present, *via* retention and protention, Heidegger casts fundamental dimensions of our comportment to Being as active and not just passive. That is, he casts our comportment to Being as being of some significance, not just for what it regards, but also for itself: he casts it as being self- as well as other-constituting. But constituting could not be genuinely *self*-constituting, that is, constituting of itself as *subject*, and not as object, were it not for its *pre-reflexive* presence to itself; for only pre-reflexive presence to self affords nonintentional, and hence nonobjectifying self-access. And so, Heidegger’s Pauline recastings must

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<sup>33</sup>For my account, I am indebted to John van Buren, *The Young Heidegger: Rumor of the Hidden King* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 157-202, and Theodore Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger’s BEING & TIME* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 192-219. Their predecessor was Otto Poggler, *Martin Heidegger’s Path of Thinking*, trans. D. Margurshak and S. Barber (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1987), chap. 1.

imply, because they require, an awareness of oneself that is concomitant with one's compartments, and not the result of a bending back upon oneself in self-division. They must imply, because they require, an indentification of one's self with one's life.

Now this is of course a thesis of *Being and Time*. For there Heidegger regularly says Dasein is marked by the fact that its Be-ing matters to it. It is, he says, "...distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being, that Being is an *issue* for it."<sup>34</sup> And this is made possible by the fact of its self-presence.<sup>35</sup> But among his *opus* works, it is the sequel to *Being and Time* – *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* – which contains the clearest expressions of the continuity of existence and self-awareness in Heidegger; for here he is in lecture mode, and lecture by which he does not hope to make his name. We will perhaps do best simply to quote at length.

[T]he Dasein, as existing, is there for itself, even when the ego does not expressly direct itself to itself in the manner of its own peculiar turning around and turning back, which in phenomenology is called inner perception as contrasted with outer. The self is there for the Dasein itself without reflection and without inner perception, *before* all reflection. Reflection, in the sense of a turning back, is only a mode of self-*apprehension*, but not the mode of primary self-disclosure. ...[T]he Dasein does not first need to turn backward to itself as though, keeping itself behind its own back, it were at first standing in front of things and staring rigidly at them. Instead, it never finds itself otherwise than in the things themselves, and in fact in those things that daily surround it. It finds *itself* primarily and constantly in *things* because, tending them, distressed by them, it always in some way or other rests in them. Each one of us is what he pursues and cares for. In everyday terms, we understand ourselves and our existence by way of the activities we pursue and the things we take care of. ...The Dasein does not need a special kind of observation, nor does it need to conduct a kind of espionage on the ego in order to have the self;

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<sup>34</sup>Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 488. And see, for example, 67, 68, 69, 137, 160, 236, 238, 278, 361, 369, 375, 381, 458.

<sup>35</sup>Heidegger, *Being and Time*, esp. 67-71.

rather, as the Dasein gives itself over immediately and passionately to the world itself, its own self is reflected to it.<sup>36</sup>

Barring the odd suggestion in the final lines, that comportment is somehow “immediate,” and that the self is “reflected” back to itself thereby, Heidegger’s meaning is quite clear: the awareness of oneself is had, not through self-thematization, or at least not primarily, but concomitantly, in and through one’s acts of intending in a world. It is, as he says, “codisclosed” with one’s disclosures.<sup>37</sup>

#### 4.

For Lonergan as for Heidegger, self-awareness is *pre-reflexive*. “Experience in its internal dimension,” as it might be called, is an awareness of oneself, and of one’s acts, acquired in and through one’s acts of intending. It is not the result of craning one’s neck around, to get a good look at one’s looking. It is, instead, an awareness maintained “concomitantly with [one’s] knowledge of objects.”<sup>38</sup>

Inner experience,” then, is in the first place “an awareness immanent in cognitional acts.”<sup>39</sup> It is not a characteristic of mere biological occurrence – the growth of one’s beard, the metabolism of one’s cells. It is present in “cognition” alone. This is because “cognition” is intentional. It consists in an *intentio* and *intentum*. Consciousness pertains to the former of these. “[W]ithin the cognitional act as it occurs...there is a factor...over and above its content [which]...differentiates cognitional acts from unconscious occurrences.”<sup>40</sup> This is the *intentio*’s presence to itself.

The operations of the mind, Lonergan insists, do

not only intend objects. There is to them a further psychological dimension. They occur consciously, and by them the operating

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<sup>36</sup>Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 159.

<sup>37</sup> Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, 158.

<sup>38</sup>Bernard Lonergan, “Christ as Subject: A Reply,” *Collection*, vol. 4 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 165.

<sup>39</sup>*Insight*, 344. By “cognitional acts,” Lonergan means to include acts of sensation.

<sup>40</sup>*Insight*, 346.

subject is conscious. Just as operations by their intentionality make objects present to the subject, so also by consciousness they make the operating subject present to himself.<sup>41</sup>

To see this it helps to distinguish different sorts of presence. "There is," in the first place, "material presence, in which no knowing is involved, and such is the presence of the statue in the courtyard. There is intentional presence, in which knowing is involved, and it is of two quite distinct kinds."

There is the presence of the object to the subject, of the spectacle to the spectator; there is also the presence of the subject to himself, and this is not the presence of another object dividing his attention, of another spectacle distracting the spectator; it is presence in, as it were, another dimension, presence concomitant and correlative and opposite to the presence of the object.<sup>42</sup>

This is something anyone may verify for herself.

As the parade of objects marches by, spectators do not have to slip into the parade to become present to themselves; they have to be present to themselves for anything to be present to them; and they are present to themselves by the same watching that, as it were, at its other pole makes the parade present to them.<sup>43</sup>

Self-awareness, then, is a feature of the *noesis*. "[O]ne need not assume that only objects are known."<sup>44</sup> It is not the result of the intention of oneself, but the awareness of oneself that is implicit in intention. To say this is to say that it is pre-thematic; it is to say, in a word, that it is *pre-reflexive*. Let this, then, be the second feature of self-presence that we mark.

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<sup>41</sup>*Method in Theology*, 8.

<sup>42</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 209-10.

<sup>43</sup>"Cognitional Structure," 210.

<sup>44</sup>"Christ as Subject," 172.

If self-presence “is not to be confused with reflexive activity,”<sup>45</sup> then it is, in the third place, *counter-intuitive*. For it may not be thought of as “some sort of inward look.”

People are apt to think of knowing by imagining a man taking a look at something and, further, they are apt to think of consciousness by imagining themselves looking into themselves. Not merely do they indulge in such imaginative opinions but also they are likely to justify them by argument. Knowing, they will say, is knowing something; it is being confronted by an object; it is the strange, mysterious, irreducible presence of one thing to another. Hence, though knowing is not exclusively a matter of ocular vision, still it is radically that sort of thing. It is gazing, intuiting, contemplating. Whatever words you care to employ, consciousness is a knowing, and so it is some sort of inward looking.<sup>46</sup>

But, of course, knowing is not some sort of looking, as Lonergan argues at length; and so consciousness is not some sort of looking, either. It is not, in particular, a looking at oneself; it is, instead, a condition of any such. But if this is so, then it is “counter-intuitive.”

If consciousness is counter-intuitive, or non-intuitivist, then it is, in the fourth place, the *basis of self-constitution*. For if it were intuitive, that is, self-thematic, it would mistake itself as object, and miss itself as subject, and thereby fail in its enterprise altogether. But as counter-intuitive, that is, as tacit and pre-reflective, it regards itself as subject, and thereby establishes self-relation. Because of such self-relation, subjective action – constitution – is simultaneously self-constitution.<sup>47</sup>

In the fifth and final place, consciousness is *differentiated*. It is, as we have said, the awareness of oneself, and of one’s acts, acquired in and through one’s acts of intending. But for this reason, it is as differentiated as the activity in and through which it occurs. “If one sleeps and dreams,” Lonergan writes, “one is present to oneself as the frightened dreamer.” But if one wakes,

one becomes present to oneself, not as moved but as moving, not as

<sup>45</sup> “Christ as Subject,” 166, n. 14. Emphasis added.

<sup>46</sup> *Insight*, 344.

<sup>47</sup> For the self-constituting character of consciousness, see “Christ as Subject,” 164-66.

felt but as feeling, not as seen but as seeing. If one is puzzled and wonders and inquires, the empirical subject becomes an intellectual subject as well. If one reflects and considers the evidence, the empirical and intellectual subject becomes a rational subject, an incarnate reasonableness. If one deliberates and chooses, one has moved to the level of the rationally conscious, free, responsible subject that by his choices makes himself what he is to be and his world what it is to be.<sup>48</sup>

The levels of one's intentional operation, in other words, codetermine the levels of one's (self-) awareness. And these levels are four in number: there is the *empirical* level, on which one senses, perceives, and imagines, and on which one is aware of one's attentive proceeding. There is the *intellectual* level, on which one inquires, understands, and conceives, and on which one is aware of one's intelligent proceeding. There is the *rational* level, on which one reflects, weighs the evidence, and passes judgment, and on which one is aware of one's reasonable proceeding. And there is the *responsible* level, on which one deliberates, decides, and acts, and on which one is aware of one's moral proceeding. "On all four levels, one is aware of oneself but, as one mounts from level to level, it is a fuller self of which one is aware and the awareness itself is different."<sup>49</sup>

To summarize, then: the awareness of oneself is a feature of the *noesis*; it is its awareness of itself, and of the subject who performs it. It is, not coincidentally, *pre-reflexive*; it occurs without the intentional thematization of oneself. It is, therefore, "*counter-intuitive*"; it is not to be thought of as a "looking at" oneself. It is, further, the *basis of self-constitution*; it establishes the self-relation which possibilizes self-making. And it is *differentiated*; it is as many-levelled as the acts in which it occurs. However, if this is so, then the awareness of oneself, for Lonergan as for Heidegger, is incompatible with the doctrine of confrontation. For it is coincident with one's directedness to world. It is, as Augustine would hold, an awareness of self had in awareness of an other.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>"Cognitive Structure," 210.

<sup>49</sup>The last line is a paraphrase of *Method in Theology*, 9.

<sup>50</sup>See *On the Trinity* X, ix, 12.

## CONCLUSION

Might we prefer Heidegger or Lonergan on the issue at hand? This is a difficult question, for it invites us to consider matters beyond self-presence, proper. Insofar as self-presence is had in and through intending, and intending is carried in socio-practical, linguistic, and historical media, one's account of self-presence would seem ultimately to depend, at least in part, on one's account of such media. And on such a score, we believe Heidegger may fare better than Lonergan. For his account of the "lifeworld" is so richly developed.<sup>51</sup> But insofar as self-presence, again, is had in and through intending, one's account of self-presence will also depend, at least in part, on one's account of intending. And on this score, we believe Lonergan may fare better. For his account differentiates between understanding and conception, and especially reflection and affirmation, far more carefully than does Heidegger's, if indeed Heidegger's does at all.<sup>52</sup> (In brief, we believe Heidegger may be in danger of collapsing the "processions" into the acts from which they "process." And we believe this may be the result of a residual cognitional-theoretical reliance on "sensuous-", "ideational-", and "synthetic-categorical intuition," from Husserl's "Sixth" *Logical Investigation*.<sup>53</sup>) However, discussion of these matters will, of course, have to await another occasion.

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<sup>51</sup>For (the early) Heidegger on social practice, see *Being and Time*, Div. I, chap. III-IV; for the same on language, Div. I, ch. III, no. 17; and for temporality and history, Div. II, chap. I and III-VI.

<sup>52</sup>For a first pass at this claim, see my "Heidegger, Lonergan, and Authenticity: An Inquiry into the Role of Intelligence in *Praxis*," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Fordham University, 2003, chap. IV.

<sup>53</sup>See Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, 756 ff. and Heidegger's appropriations of them in the penultimate draft of *Being and Time*, *History of the Concept of Time*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 19-92), preliminary part, chap. 2, and perhaps *Being and Time*, Div. I, chap. V, no. 32, Div. II, IV, no. 69b, and *passim*.

# HUMAN FLOURISHING AFTER 9/11: CONTEXTUALIZING ONE OF LONERGAN'S CENTRAL PHILOSOPHICAL CLAIMS

*Michael Vertin*  
*St. Michael's College*  
*University of Toronto*

## INTRODUCTION

READERS OF HIS writings sometimes complain that Bernard Lonergan's central philosophical claims are profound but obscure, rich but unduly technical, highly suggestive but difficult to grasp. Deemed particularly elusive and enigmatic are his contentions that (i) knowing is not essentially a matter of seeing, (ii) objectivity is what follows from authentic subjectivity, (iii) reality (including real goodness) is what the authentic subject yearns to know and choose, and (iv) my denial of any of the foregoing would put me in contradiction with the inescapable operational presuppositions of my own concrete cognitional and moral subjectivity.<sup>1</sup> Puzzlement about such contentions is often expressed by students<sup>2</sup> and occasionally even by professional scholars.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See, for example, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 5<sup>th</sup>. ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 11-24, 343-409, 618-56; *Understanding and Being*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 3-21, 133-55, 185-88; *Collection*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 142-52, 188-231; *A Second Collection* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 37, 86, 138; *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 6-25, 27-55, 83, 238-40, 261, 297, 316.

<sup>2</sup>I have worked with undergraduate and graduate students in philosophy, religious studies, and theology for the past thirty-seven years as a professor at St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto.

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, the comments of book reviewer James Bretzke in *Horizons* 32 (2005): 424-25.



My aim in this paper is to illustrate how something of the third foregoing contention may be made accessible to persons who are well educated but not necessarily expert in philosophical matters.<sup>4</sup> More exactly, I will reflect on the moral dimensions of a familiar set of events in order to display in relatively nontechnical fashion the role and character of what Lonergan claims to be the ultimate standard of goodness that we employ whenever we are making moral assessments with maximum skill.

The paper's background is the set of attacks by members of the Islamic terrorist organization "Al Qaeda" against various targets in the United States that occurred on September 11, 2001, and ensuing developments during the subsequent thirty-eight months that concluded with the U.S. Presidential election of November 2004. The moral reactions of *individual* North Americans to those events were many and varied. Countless persons became energetically involved in seeking causes, recalling traditional moral principles or elaborating new ones, apportioning moral praise and blame, and reaching diverse and often highly nuanced conclusions about the kind and degree of response that would be morally appropriate. However, perhaps understandably, the *collective* moral reactions that were both the most broadly reported and the most extensively shaped by popular communications media tended to be unnuanced and oversimplified.

The paper's initial focus is the assemblage of those collective moral reactions. Granted that they have the disadvantage of often lacking nuance and detail, they nonetheless have the advantage of being widely familiar. I suggest that they can be organized into four main groups, and that analysis of those groups can illuminate important features of the methodical structure of concrete moral argumentation. That is to say, such an analysis can bring to light that the lived justification of any particular moral assessment is the resultant of three sets of factors: the *particular concrete elements* that the assessors encounter in the given situation, plus the *habitual moral dispositions* and *fundamental moral presuppositions* that they bring to that situation. By presenting these factors as the contents not

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<sup>4</sup>I presented an initial version of this paper as the annual Aquinas Lecture at Saint Thomas University, Fredericton, New Brunswick, on January 31, 2005. As is the tradition at Saint Thomas, the lecture was geared for an audience of students and faculty members not all of whom were specialists in philosophy.

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of abstract theories but of the concrete cognitional performances of North Americans reacting collectively to 9/11, I seek to underline the unavoidably personal character of our knowing and choosing in every moral setting. And as a key part of that presentation, I seek to indicate the fundamental procedural location of our ultimate moral yardstick, and to highlight what Lonergan thinks are the distinctive features of the yardstick we employ whenever we are operating at our best, by contrast with two common alternative yardsticks.<sup>5</sup>

To allay some obvious potential confusions, at the outset I should emphasize two things that are *not* central to my goal in this paper. I will not be attempting to determine in detail the morally most appropriate response to 9/11, though I will be indirectly signaling some that are inappropriate. Nor will I be much concerned to propose refinements of the four collective reactions by North Americans that I will report, though I will touch on some in passing. On the contrary, my primary concern is structural. The *most obvious* issues in moral disputes are not the *most basic* ones. My central goal is to illustrate that fact by using the diverse collective moral reactions to 9/11 and their justifications as examples, and then to argue briefly for what – with Lonergan – I take to be the optimum stance on an aspect of the most basic issue.<sup>6</sup> My hope is that these efforts may prove useful in some way to others who, like myself, are responsible for initiating and guiding discussions on a wide range of moral topics in the philosophy classroom, and for nurturing the skill of the participants.

The paper has a first main part devoted to exposition and a second main part devoted to critical reflection, with each part subdivided into sections. In the first main part, I begin by sketching the collective moral reactions by us North Americans to Al Qaeda, which planned and carried out attacks using airliners as self-propelled bombs, and to those who later became associated in the public mind with Al Qaeda. Then in subsequent sections I explore our underlying justifications of those reactions – the

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<sup>5</sup>In line with my aim of appealing concretely to readers, I avoid technical references in the text of my paper and situate them instead in the notes.

<sup>6</sup>In terms that will be familiar to readers of Lonergan's *Method in Theology*, my effort in this paper stands mainly not in the functional specialties of the first three levels but rather those of the fourth level – principally dialectic and, in the second main part, foundations.

reasons that we offer, or that I think we would offer if asked. Specifically, I spell out the successive alternative stances that emerge in our particular moral assessments of possible responses to Al Qaeda, in our particular moral assessments of Al Qaeda itself, in our general moral assessments of ourselves, and in our ultimate standards of moral assessment. In the second part, I begin by offering a brief Lonerganian sketch of optimal and defective moral assessment-making. Then, drawing on that sketch, in the remaining sections I offer brief appraisals of the alternative stances presented in the paper's first main part.

## 1. EXPOSITION

### *1.1 Our Collective North American Moral Reactions to the Events of 9/11 and Their Aftermath: A Brief Sketch*

Around 9:30 on the morning of September 11, 2001, I turned on my computer to check my e-mail and get the latest weather forecast. I noticed that an airplane was reported to have crashed into New York's World Trade Center. During the previous months two light planes had been crashed into buildings; and I thought to myself, "Another demented person!" Subsequent reports, however, soon made clear that a much larger airplane had been involved. Nor was that all. Soon afterward, a second airliner was reported to have hit the World Trade Center; and by mid-morning there would be news of crashes at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and in rural Pennsylvania as well. By now, I was glued to the television set. With millions of other viewers, I watched in horror as the World Trade Center's south tower crumbled and fell to the earth – and a short time later, the north tower.

The first meetings of my courses for the 2001-2002 school year happened to be scheduled for that afternoon. By the time I met with my students, the extent of the devastation had become better known; and everyone was both upset about the attacks and puzzled about just why they had occurred. I began each class by asking for one minute of meditative silence as a gesture of respect for all of our fellow humans who had died that morning – both the victims, whatever their states in life, and the attackers, whatever their motives. The following week, when the

courses' small-group discussions got under way, local versions of the countless personal stories we had been seeing on television began to emerge. In one of the discussion groups, for example, Kimberley told us that her father had been in the World Trade Center when the attack took place, and with relief she explained how he had survived. But then Peter told us that his brother-in-law had also been in the World Trade Center, and with great sadness he reported that he had not survived.

Next, before I attempt to characterize the contents of our reactions to the events of 9/11 and what followed, let me underscore what I think is an important feature of how those reactions were formed. As with most of our other real-life attitudes, we developed our reactions to 9/11 not simply as individuals but rather as members of groups, groups within which our emerging responses were affected by the emerging responses of other members of the group and affected them in turn. But in this case, what was unprecedented about the groups was their size, their vitality, and their consequent social influence, characteristics that were direct consequences of twenty-first century communications technology and psychology. Anyone who watches television, owns a digital camera, uses a cell phone, corresponds by e-mail, or surfs the internet is aware of the huge advances in communications hardware and software that have occurred in just the last several years. And anyone familiar with these advances is also aware of how they put more and more of us in closer and closer contact with one another, and then – within various and ever-larger groups – incline us toward common feelings, common understandings, common judgments, common evaluations, common choices. In peculiarly dramatic fashion, the social impact of the events of 9/11 and their aftermath illustrated the power of this enhanced communications. In the immediacy of real-time television, millions of viewers experienced watching *together* as the twin towers fell. Then and during the following weeks and months, electronic linkages enabled diverse groups to have the experience of experiencing similar feelings about those events *together*, of arriving at similar understandings, judgments, and evaluations *together*, and of making similar decisions *together*. The power of the electronically augmented *experience* of sensory, affective, cognitional, and decisional togetherness was a key factor both in the decisions taken by the U.S. government after 9/11 and in the main groups of reactions to what

happened on that day and afterward. In its twenty-first century magnitude, it is a novel power. It is a power that can bring about either good or ill, but that in no case should be overlooked. (In his second successful U.S. presidential campaign, George W. Bush did not overlook it.)

In the context shaped so extensively by this enhanced communications, North Americans on my reading tended to have either of two main kinds of reactions to the Al Qaeda bombers – the planners and the actual attackers – and, later, toward people in Afghanistan and Iraq that many members of the public came to think supported Al Qaeda. (I recognize that there is virtually no evidence, as distinct from assertions repeated again and again by some politicians, of a direct link between Al Qaeda and the regime of Saddam Hussein. However, I am talking here not about the reality of such a link but rather about the common public perception of one.)

One group of people, by far the largest, reacted predominantly with anger, fear, and hostility. They were outraged by the sight of grieving persons wandering about Lower Manhattan, showing photographs of their loved ones and asking whether anyone had seen them. They were afraid that what happened in New York and Washington might also happen in Los Angeles or Toronto. And they were disposed to return the attack. (For example, this was the attitude voiced shortly after 9/11 by the student, Peter, whose brother-in-law was killed; and he voiced it even more strongly a year later upon his return from the remembrance service in New York.) If we invent two people, Alice and Charles, to represent this group, then Alice and Charles assert vigorously, “We *ought* to retaliate!”

A second group of people, much smaller, reacted predominantly with compassion, guilt, and restraint. Later they would be saddened by the sight of grieving persons wandering about Kabul and Baghdad, showing photographs of their loved ones and asking whether anyone had seen them. They would feel that they recognized something of themselves in the faces of those others. And they were disposed not to return the attack. If we invent two other people, Barry and Darlene, to represent this group, then Barry and Darlene declare, “We *ought not* to retaliate!”

Let me ask you the reader to recall your own reactions to the Al Qaeda bombers and those you understood to be sponsoring them. Like Alice and Charles, were you fundamentally inclined to strike back? Or, like Barry and Darlene, were you fundamentally inclined not to do so?

### 1.2. *Steps C and 4: Our Particular Moral Assessments of Possible Responses to the Al Qaeda Bombers*

Whenever anyone takes a position on some issue, it is always legitimate to ask her, "Why? Why do you take the position you do? How do you justify it? What are your reasons? To what evidence do you appeal?" If the person dismisses this question, her position is liable to be dismissed likewise as not serious, as without a reasonable basis, as an expression of mere feeling or arbitrary choice. On the other hand, the fact that someone cannot immediately answer the question does not necessarily prove that her position lacks justification. Many of our most strongly held positions have solidly reasonable grounds that nonetheless we cannot readily articulate because we have not sufficiently thought about them. They are *lived* but not yet *objectified*; they are *operative* but not yet *articulated*. This is especially true of moral and religious positions; and in what follows I will assume that it is true of the reactions had by Alice, Barry, Charles, and Darlene, our four imagined representatives. Our question to the four then becomes this: "Why do you react morally to the events of 9/11 and after as you do? How do you justify your reactions, even though perhaps you have not spelled out that justification thus far?" I propose that the answer of each has four successively more basic components.

Before analyzing each answer, however, let me pause briefly for an overview of my procedure. Alice, Barry, Charles, and Darlene each makes a seven-step argument, summaries of which are given below in Figure 1. There are five points worth noting about the structure of these arguments and my use of them, plus an additional point that flags a qualification.

First, each argument includes both numbered and lettered steps, with the respective numbered and lettered steps of one argument addressing the same issues as the corresponding steps of the other arguments.

Figure 1: Summaries of the Four Arguments

**ALICE** (An *Intellectual Intuitionist* Ultimate Standard of Goodness)

1. If and only if our intentions and deeds meet the *intellectually intuited* ultimate standard of goodness, then they are *morally good*.
2. But the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *habitually do* meet the intellectually intuited ultimate standard of goodness.
  - A. Therefore, the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *habitually* are *morally good*.
3. But the Al Qaeda bombers attacked us North Americans *because* our intentions and deeds toward many people in the Moslem world were *morally good*.
  - B. Therefore, the Al Qaeda bombers as such were *morally evil*.
4. But everyone ought to *retaliate against* morally evil aggressors in order to punish, correct, and deter them.
  - C. Therefore, we *ought* to retaliate against the Al Qaeda bombers.

**BARRY** (A *Practical Discursivist* Ultimate Standard of Goodness)

1. If and only if our intentions and deeds meet the *practically anticipated* ultimate standard of goodness, then they are *morally good*.
2. But the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *habitually do not* meet the practically anticipated ultimate standard of goodness.
  - A. Therefore, the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *habitually* are *morally evil*.
3. But the Al Qaeda bombers attacked us North Americans *because* our intentions and deeds toward many people in the Moslem world were *morally evil*.
  - B. Therefore, the Al Qaeda bombers as such were *morally good*.
4. But no one ought to *oppose* morally good agents as such.
  - C. Therefore, we *ought not* to retaliate against the Al Qaeda bombers.

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**CHARLES** (A *Speculative Discursivist* Ultimate Standard of Goodness)

1. If and only if our intentions and deeds *meet* the *speculatively anticipated* ultimate standard of goodness, then they are *morally good*.
2. But the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *sometimes do* meet the *speculatively anticipated* ultimate standard of goodness and *sometimes do not* meet it: they manifest no habitual pattern in this regard.
  - A. Therefore, the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *sometimes* are *morally good* and *sometimes* are *morally evil*: they manifest no habitual pattern in this regard.
3. But the Al Qaeda bombers attacked us North Americans *because* our intentions and deeds toward many people in the Moslem world were *morally good*.
  - B. Therefore, the Al Qaeda bombers as such were *morally evil*.
4. But everyone ought to *retaliate against* morally evil aggressors as such in order to punish, correct, and deter them.
  - C. Therefore, we *ought* to retaliate against the Al Qaeda bombers.

**DARLENE** (A *Speculative Discursivist* Ultimate Standard of Goodness)

1. If and only if our intentions and deeds *meet* the *speculatively anticipated* ultimate standard of goodness, then they are *morally good*.
  2. But the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *sometimes do* meet the *speculatively anticipated* ultimate standard of goodness and *sometimes do not* meet it: they manifest no habitual pattern in this regard.
    - A. Therefore, the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *sometimes* are *morally good* and *sometimes* are *morally evil*: they manifest no habitual pattern in this regard.
  3. But the Al Qaeda bombers attacked us North Americans *because* our intentions and deeds toward many people in the Moslem world were *morally evil*.
    - B. Therefore, the Al Qaeda bombers as such were *morally good*.
  4. But no one ought to *oppose* morally good agents as such.
    - C. Therefore, we *ought not* to retaliate against the Al Qaeda bombers.
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Second, the numbered steps are premises, and the lettered steps are conclusions. This means that, if my logic is correct, the *expansive steps* are the numbered ones. The lettered steps simply articulate what the numbered ones imply.

Third, the final steps of Alice's and Charles's arguments are verbally identical, as are the final steps of Barry's and Darlene's arguments. Nonetheless, the meaning of any conclusion is a matter not just of its words but of the premises from which it follows. And since Alice and Charles arrive at their final steps via importantly different premises, the meanings of those verbally identical conclusions are importantly different. Consequently, to pin down precisely how they are different, we must examine and compare the respective premises from which they follow. And similarly for Barry's and Darlene's final steps.

Fourth, and in line with the preceding, my analysis begins with the final step (C) of each argument and then, working backwards, elucidates the successively more basic expansive steps (4, 3, 2, and 1) on which that final step depends.<sup>7</sup>

Fifth, to assist any reader who wishes to trace the advance of this retrogressive analysis, I import into my text the numbers and letters that designate the steps as shown in the summaries.

Sixth, in order to reduce the complexity and clumsiness of what follows, I will assume that all the intentions and deeds I will be discussing are *morally imputable* ones. That is to say, I will postulate that the Al Qaeda bombers and their sponsors, on the one hand, and the pertinent North Americans, on the other, possess *sufficient knowledge* and *sufficient freedom*

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<sup>7</sup>My attention to premises and conclusions should not be taken as a sign that I judge logical formulations to be methodically fundamental. On the contrary, I wholly accept Lonergan's contention that one's lived cognitional processes and their pre-logical results are methodically fundamental, and that logical formulations are methodically subsequent, derivative, secondary. This contention is a central theme of Lonergan's work throughout his career. For just one group of examples, see *Method in Theology*, 6, 94, 305.) On the other hand, logical formulations can be extremely useful for highlighting key features of those concrete cognitional processes and results; and that potential usefulness is what I am attempting to realize by my employment of premises and conclusions in this paper. Moreover, in the paper's final section I will be attending more directly to the methodical grounds of the logical formulations.

that their intentions and deeds are ones for which they as agents are *morally responsible*.

Now, employing the foregoing procedure, let me begin spelling out the justifications offered by Alice, Barry, Charles, and Darlene for their moral reactions to the Al Qaeda bombers. As we have seen near the end of our previous section, retaliation against the bombers and those thought to be supporting them is the reaction that Alice and Charles judge to be the morally appropriate one. This reaction (expressed as step C) depends proximately upon two prior steps of their respective arguments, as follows: "(B) The Al Qaeda bombers as such were *morally evil*; but (4) everyone ought to *retaliate against* morally evil aggressors in order to punish, correct, and deter them; therefore (C) we *ought* to retaliate against the Al Qaeda bombers." Step B enunciates the negative moral assessment of the bombers by Alice and Charles. It depends in turn upon even earlier steps, steps that express *why* they make a negative assessment. We shall return to step B and its grounds in a moment. Our present concern is step 4, the most obvious but least basic *expansive* step, and the *first* expansive step to be considered in our retrogressively ordered analysis of Alice's and Charles's arguments.

In step 4, Alice and Charles are voicing a general principle to which they are already committed, namely, that whenever one is the subject of violence that is undeserved, one has a moral duty to strike back with violence of similar kind and degree for the sake of meting out due retribution to the assailants, of making them understand the wrongness of their actions, and of dissuading them from such actions in the future. Not to respond in such fashion would be immoral.

By contrast, as we have also seen already, nonretaliation against the Al Qaeda bombers and their supposed sponsors is the reaction that Barry and Darlene deem morally appropriate. This reaction (expressed as step C of their respective arguments) depends proximately upon two prior steps, as follows: "(B) The Al Qaeda bombers as such were *morally good*; but (4) no one ought to *oppose* morally good agents as such; therefore (C) we *ought not* to retaliate against the Al Qaeda bombers." Step B articulates the positive moral appraisal of the bombers by Barry and Darlene, and it depends upon still earlier steps that articulate *why* they reach a positive appraisal. Like the corresponding matters in Alice's and Charles's

arguments, we set them aside for now in order to focus on step 4, the *first expansive* step in our analysis of Barry's and Darlene's arguments.

In their step 4, Barry and Darlene are appealing to a general principle that they already hold, namely, that one has a moral duty to avoid proceeding against people insofar as their deeds are morally good. While one is obliged to resist or at least not cooperate with evildoers, one also is obliged to cooperate with or at least not resist doers of good.

Let me ask you the reader for your evaluation of the general principles I have just pointed out. Do you agree with Alice and Charles that one is morally bound to respond with violence against the agents of violence that is unmerited, or do you disagree? Do you agree with Barry and Darlene that one is morally bound to avoid opposing persons insofar as they are performing morally good deeds, or do you disagree?

### 1.3. Steps B and 3: Our Particular Moral Assessments of the Al Qaeda Bombers

In the preceding discussion of the arguments made by Alice, Barry, Charles, and Darlene, I noted that each particular moral assessment of the 9/11 bombers (expressed as step B) depends upon prior steps that articulate *why* it was made. I now point out that step B in each case depends proximately upon step A and step 3. Let us examine the details of how this plays out for each of our four representatives, beginning with Alice.

Alice argues as follows: "(A) The intentions and deeds of us North Americans *habitually* are *morally good*; but (3) the Al Qaeda bombers attacked us *because* our intentions and deeds toward many people in the Moslem world were *morally good*; therefore (B) the Al Qaeda bombers as such were *morally evil*." Step A expresses Alice's general moral evaluation of herself and other North Americans, an evaluation that is *thoroughly positive*. "For the most part, we're good people." This evaluation depends in turn upon still earlier steps of her argument, steps that spell out *why* she makes such an evaluation; and we will see more about that matter in our next section. For now our interest is in step 3 of Alice's overall argument, a less obvious but more basic expansive step than her step 4, and the *second* expansive step encountered in our retrogressive analysis.

Alice's step 3 expresses her view that the principal motive of the attacks was the bombers' radical antipathy toward certain human values that North Americans vigorously promote, values such as individual dignity, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the political equality of women and men. Since such values are universal, the antipathy toward them was quite unjustifiable; and the attacks were – in effect – acts of primitive and uncivilized barbarism. Hence Alice's conclusion that the bombers were blameworthy. Perhaps the most prominent real-life exponent of this line of argument was President Bush. Again and again he declared, "We're in favor of freedom for everyone; the members of Al Qaeda attacked us because they hate freedom; therefore they are evil."

Now, just as in my discussion of Alice's argument, so in my parallel discussions of the remaining arguments I will note briefly each person's general moral assessment of North Americans but defer to the next section of this paper my consideration of that assessment's grounds.

In the steps that correspond to what we have just seen Alice argue, Charles contends: "(A) The intentions and deeds of us North Americans *sometimes* are *morally good* and *sometimes* are *morally evil*, but (3) the Al Qaeda bombers attacked us *because* our intentions and deeds toward many people in the Moslem world were *morally good*; therefore (B) the Al Qaeda bombers as such were *morally evil*." Step A, which brings to light Charles's general moral assessment of himself and other North Americans, differs from what Alice maintained. While her assessment was thoroughly positive, Charles's is *cautiously qualified*. "We can be and often are good people, but we can be and often are bad people." It remains that in his account of the principal motive of the attackers, Charles agrees with Alice: his step 3 and hers are the same.

Next, Barry maintains: "(A) The intentions and deeds of us North Americans *habitually* are *morally evil*; but (3) the Al Qaeda bombers attacked us *because* our intentions and deeds toward many people in the Moslem world were *morally evil*; therefore (B) the Al Qaeda bombers as such were *morally good*." In his step A, Barry differs from both Alice and Charles. His moral estimate of himself and other North Americans is neither thoroughly positive nor cautiously qualified; rather, it is *pervasively negative*. "For the most part, we're bad people." Moreover, in his step 3 Barry differs sharply with both Alice and Charles.

Step 3 expresses Barry's view that the attacks were motivated principally by the bombers' radical antipathy toward self-aggrandizing North American cultural, economic, political, and military policies regarding Middle Eastern nations. Since those policies have been highly destructive of ancient and noble Middle Eastern communal values, the antipathy toward them was quite justifiable; and the attacks were – in effect – acts of communal self-defense. Hence Barry's conclusion that the bombers were praiseworthy, not blameworthy. One often hears this evaluation expressed by extreme left-wing critics of the Bush administration. "We always pursue nothing but our own self-interest!" "They attacked us because we've been exploiting them!" "We invaded Iraq because we want its oil!"<sup>8</sup>

Finally, Darlene claims: "(A) The intentions and deeds of us North Americans *sometimes* are *morally good* and *sometimes* are *morally evil*; but (3) the Al Qaeda bombers attacked us *because* our intentions and deeds toward many people in the Moslem world were *morally evil*; therefore (B) the Al Qaeda bombers as such were *morally good*." In her step A, her general moral evaluation of herself and other North Americans, Darlene disagrees with both Alice and Barry and agrees with Charles. She is neither thoroughly positive nor pervasively negative; rather, she is *cautiously qualified*. "We can be and often are good people, but we also can be and often are bad people." But in her step 3, her account of the principal motive of the attackers, she disagrees with both Alice and Charles and agrees instead with Barry.

In making your own moral assessment of the Al Qaeda bombers, do you the reader find yourself more sympathetic to Alice and Charles's view that they attacked us because we behaved rightly toward them, and therefore they are evil? Or do you find yourself more sympathetic to Barry and Darlene's view that they attacked us because we behaved wrongly toward them, and therefore they are good?

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<sup>8</sup>For a recent example of this view, see R. T. Naylor, *Satanic Purses: Money, Myth, and Misinformation in the War on Terror* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006).

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#### 1.4. *Steps A, 2 and 1: Our General Moral Assessments of Ourselves, and Our Ultimate Standards of Moral Assessment*

In the previous section, when treating the arguments offered by Alice, Barry, Charles, and Darlene, I noted that these persons' general moral evaluations of themselves and other North Americans (conveyed by step A of each overall argument) depend upon prior steps that express *why* they were made. Now, speaking more precisely, I point out that step A in each case depends upon step 2 and step 1.

Step 2 indicates each person's judgment about the frequency with which the intentions and deeds of North Americans *satisfy the ultimate standard of goodness*. And step 1 states each person's judgment about *what the ultimate standard of goodness is*. Step 2 is a less obvious but more basic expansive step of each overall argument than steps 4 and 3, and it is the *third* expansive step encountered in our retrogressive analysis. And step 1 is the least obvious but most basic expansive step of each overall argument, and it is the *fourth and final* expansive step encountered in our retrogressive analysis. In completing our analysis of each person's argument, it will be convenient to treat these two steps together, beginning in each instance with step 1.

Before undertaking that task, however, let me offer three important precisions. The first two spell out common understandings that I have been simply assuming thus far. First, our *integral standard of goodness* establishes what we *mean* by "goodness." It is what enables us to identify instances of goodness if and when we encounter them; or, from the other side, it is the criterion, norm, yardstick against which we test particular realities to determine whether or not they are good. Now, that integral standard is a compound of proximate, intermediate, and ultimate elements, where the ultimate element is the definitive, conclusive, decisive one. It follows that "the ultimate standard of goodness" is a shortened way of referring to the *ultimate element* of our *integral standard* of goodness.

Second, *moral* goodness is a specific kind of goodness, namely, the kind that is proper to intentions and deeds. A morally good *intention* is our knowing and free choosing of something that (i) meets our integral standard of goodness and (ii) is chosen precisely *because* it meets that standard; and a morally good *deed* is one that expresses a morally good

intention. Among other things, this means that our ultimate standard of *goodness* becomes our ultimate standard of *moral* goodness when we employ it to measure not only *what* we choose (at best, what *accords with* the standard) but also *why* we choose it (at best, *because* it accords with the standard).

Third, my subsequent discussions of the ultimate standard of goodness do not purport to treat every stance regarding that standard, only three familiar stances, namely, the ones that are maintained by Alice, by Barry, and by Charles and Darlene. Prior to the disagreements between them that we will be examining, all four agree that our ultimate standard of goodness is *cognitive*: it emerges for us by way of knowing rather than by way of sheer feeling or sheer choosing. It is *self-transcendent*: it is not (or at least not merely) myself or an aspect of myself. And it is *general*: it is common to various instances rather than differing radically from one instance to the next. Hence I will not be discussing stances according to which our ultimate standard of goodness is noncognitive, merely self-immanent, or strictly situational.<sup>9</sup>

Let us turn now to Alice's answer to the question "Why do you maintain the general moral self-assessment that you do?" Alice responds, "(1) If and only if our intentions and deeds meet the *intellectually intuited* ultimate standard of goodness, then they are *morally good*; but (2) the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *habitually do* meet the intellectually intuited ultimate standard of goodness; therefore (A) the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *habitually are morally good*."

Two features of this answer merit our careful attention. First, in step 1 Alice is maintaining that the ultimate standard of goodness is *intellectually intuited*. It is the general intelligible structure or pattern of

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<sup>9</sup>When considering a hypothetical reality, or even an actual reality that affects only themselves or a small number of individuals, persons sometimes argue strongly that their own ultimate standard of goodness is *noncognitive*, or *merely self-immanent*, or *strictly situational*. However, it has been my experience that when considering something as concrete and monumental as 9/11 and its aftermath, very few persons are content with making moral judgments whose meaning and scope are as diminished as those that depend upon ultimate standards such as these. For this reason I am fairly confident that the four main groups of moral reactors to 9/11 that are represented by Alice, Barry, Charles, and Darlene – reactors who appeal to ultimate standards that are *cognitive*, *self-transcendent*, and *general* – do not leave out very many people.

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goodness, a pattern that implicitly includes the pattern of every particular good, whether actual or just possible. This general structure or pattern is immediately given to my mind in the context of my encounter with the natural world, the human community, and/or divine revelation.<sup>10</sup> It is what is formulated (in both its generality and some of its particulars) in tenets of "the natural law," in the positive laws of enlightened societies, in teachings common to the great religious traditions, or perhaps even in teachings distinctive of a given religious tradition. Thus far, Alice's stance is reminiscent of the type of claim at least broadly characteristic of such philosophers as Plato, and Thomas Aquinas as interpreted by Etienne Gilson and Joseph Owens, and of such theologians as Augustine of Hippo, Karl Barth, and Germain Grisez.<sup>11</sup>

Second, in step 2 Alice is contending that, as a matter of concrete psychological fact, the intentions and deeds of us North Americans, herself included, typically do indeed satisfy this intellectually intuited standard. Although such a pattern is not without occasional exceptions, on the whole we fulfill the criterion far more often than not. In our motives and behavior we are predominantly generous, characteristically benevolent, primarily self-transcending. This great optimism about our meeting the standard underlies Alice's *thoroughly positive* general moral self-assessment, which is expressed by step A. Such optimism and the consequent strongly affirmative character of one's general moral self-assessment are often illustrated in the judgments made by political and religious reformers and revolutionaries throughout history, persons utterly confident of their own moral rectitude, or of their vocation to be the agents of God's righteousness.<sup>12</sup> In our present context, we might

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<sup>10</sup>Whether it is given to me in the context of my encounters with one, two, or all three of these is a further issue; and different scholars take different stances on that issue.

<sup>11</sup>See, for example, Plato, *Republic*, VI-VII; Etienne Gilson, *Thomist Realism and the Critique of Knowledge* [1939] (San Francisco: Ignatius Institute, 1986), ch. 5; Joseph Owens, *Interpretation of Existence* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1968), ch. 2; Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, X; Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936-62), I/2; and Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983), ch. 6.

<sup>12</sup>The flavor of such utter confidence is conveyed with tongue in cheek by Phyllis McGinley, in a short verse on the dispute in the 1520s between two reformers, Ulrich Zwingli and Thomas Muntzer, over whether the appropriate form of Christian baptism is the baptism of infants or the total immersion of adults.



notice what often appears to be a notable lack of moral self-doubt on the part of President Bush and many members of his administration.

How does Barry answer the question "Why do you maintain the moral self-assessments that you do?" He replies: "(1) If and only if our intentions and deeds meet the *practically anticipated* ultimate standard of goodness, then they are *morally good*; but (2) the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *habitually do not* meet the practically anticipated ultimate standard of goodness; therefore (A) the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *habitually are morally evil*."

As with Alice's answer, there are two features of Barry's answer that we must note carefully. First, in step 1 Barry is maintaining that the ultimate standard of goodness is *practically anticipated*. Like Alice's standard, it is the general intelligible structure or pattern of goodness, a pattern that implicitly includes the pattern of every particular good. But unlike Alice's standard, it is not the general *intuited* structure of goodness, a general structure that I grasp by historically given intuition. Rather, it is the general *anticipated* or *heuristic* structure of goodness, a structure that I

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Said Zwingli to Muntzer,  
 "I'll have to be blunt, sir.  
 I don't like your version  
 Of Total Immersion.  
 And since God's on my side  
 And I'm on the dry side,  
 You'd better swing ovah  
 To me and Jehovah!"

Cried Muntzer, "It's schism,  
 Is Infant Baptism!  
 And since I've had a sign, sir,  
 That God's will is mine, sir,  
 Let all men agree  
 With Jehovah and me,  
 Or go to Hell, singly,"  
 Said Muntzer to Zwingli,

As each drew his sword  
 On the side of the Lord.

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"How to Start a War," in McGinley, *Times Three* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1961), 28-29. Also recall such figures as Oliver Cromwell and John Brown.

know by interiorly given anticipation.<sup>13</sup> More exactly, it is the structure of the exhaustive set of goods that I anticipate as potential contents of my particular acts of *merely practical* knowing, acts of knowing that grasp goods not speculatively, as they are in themselves, but just practically, simply as potential objects of my acts of choosing.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the structure of that anticipated set of goods is prefigured by the structure of the anticipated acts through which I would know them; and, among other things, the structure of those acts specifies the structure of those goods as totally distinct from my personal satisfactions, as entirely over against my private fulfillments, as wholly excluding my self-interest. Finally, this practically anticipated structure of goodness is what is formulated (in both its generality and some of its particulars) in tenets of "the natural law," in positive laws of enlightened societies, and in teachings of the great religious traditions. Thus far, Barry's stance echoes the kind of claim that is at least clearly implicit in the work of such philosophers as Immanuel Kant, John Rawls, and Robert Nozick, and of such theologians as George Lindbeck, Gordon Kaufman, and David Novak.<sup>15</sup>

Second, in step 2 Barry is contending that it is psychologically indisputable that the intentions and deeds of us North Americans, including himself, typically fail to satisfy this practically anticipated standard. No doubt there are exceptions from time to time, but overall we fall short of the norm far more often than not. Almost always our basic motives are ones of self-interest, although we are strongly drawn to

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<sup>13</sup>By "the general anticipated or heuristic structure of goodness" I mean the structure of a transcendental content that is convertible with being, the structure of transcendental goodness, the structure of the goal of transcendental intending and categorial knowing. (See Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, 416-17, 665.) Here, Barry – with Kant – envisions that structure as the structure of the goal of *merely practical* intending and knowing. Below, Charles and Darlene – with Lonergan – envision it as the structure of the goal of *properly speculative* intending and knowing.

<sup>14</sup>Recall Augustine's "restless heart": *Confessions*, I, i, 1.

<sup>15</sup>See, for example, Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Preface to Second Edition; *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, First Section; John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), ch. 1; Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), ch. 5; George Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), chs. 1-2; Gordon Kaufman, *In the Face of Mystery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), chs. 1-2; and David Novak, *Natural Law in Judaism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), chs. 3, 5-6.

deceive others and even ourselves about this fact. This great pessimism about our meeting the standard underlies Barry's *peruasively negative* general moral self-assessment, which is expressed by step A. Such pessimism and the consequent strongly negative character of one's general moral self-assessment are often illustrated in the judgments made by political and religious doomsayers throughout history, persons who have no doubt that virtually all of our aims and behavior are morally suspect.

And what of Charles and Darlene? Their answer to the question "Why do you maintain the moral self-assessments that you do?" is the following: "(1) If and only if our intentions and deeds *meet* the *speculatively anticipated* ultimate standard of goodness, then they are *morally good*; but (2) the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *sometimes do* meet the speculatively anticipated ultimate standard of goodness and *sometimes do not* meet it; therefore (A) the intentions and deeds of us North Americans *sometimes are morally good* and *sometimes are morally evil*."

As with the answers of Alice and Barry, there are two features of Charles and Darlene's answer that deserve careful consideration. First, in step 1 Charles and Darlene are maintaining that the ultimate standard of goodness is *speculatively anticipated*. Like Barry's standard, it is the general *anticipated* or *heuristic* structure of goodness, a structure that I know not by historically given intuition but by interiorly given anticipation. However, unlike Barry's standard, it is the structure of the exhaustive set of goods that I anticipate as potential contents of my particular acts of *properly speculative* knowing, acts of knowing that grasp goods not just practically, merely as potential objects of my acts of choosing, but speculatively, as they are in themselves.<sup>16</sup> As in Barry's account, the structure of that anticipated set of goods is prefigured by the structure of the anticipated acts through which I would know them. But now, among other things, the structure of those acts specifies the structure of those goods as not totally distinct from my personal satisfactions, not entirely at odds with my private fulfillments, not wholly excluding my self-interest. Rather, the structure of the acts foreshadows the structure of the goods as incorporating whichever of my satisfactions is not *just* personal, as

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<sup>16</sup>Recall Aristotle's "inquiring mind": *Metaphysics*, I, 1.

encompassing as many of my private fulfillments as are not *strictly* private, as including my self-interest insofar as it is not *mere* self-interest.<sup>17</sup> Finally, this speculatively anticipated structure of goodness is what is formulated (in both its generality and some of its particulars) in tenets of "the natural law," in positive laws of enlightened societies, and in teachings of the great religious traditions. Thus far, Charles and Darlene's stance brings to mind the kind of claim that is more or less distinctive of such philosophers as Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas as interpreted by Joseph Maréchal and Bernard Lonergan, and by such theologians as Karl Rahner, Bernard Lonergan, and Frederick Crowe.<sup>18</sup>

Second, in step 2 Charles and Darlene are contending that it is psychologically evident that the intentions and deeds of us North Americans, themselves included, sometimes do satisfy our speculatively anticipated standard and sometimes do not satisfy it. Our basic motives sometimes are indeed just self-interested. But at other times they are self-transcending in a way that subsumes self-interest and puts it in service of actualizing what is truly satisfying, genuinely fulfilling, veritably rewarding for everyone, not excluding ourselves. That is to say, the collectivity of our concrete intentions and deeds manifests no definitive

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<sup>17</sup>See, for example, Michael Vertin, "The Two Modes of Human Love: Thomas Aquinas as Interpreted by Frederick Crowe," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 69 (2004): 31-45, esp. 40-44.

<sup>18</sup>See, for example, Joseph Maréchal, *Le point de départ de la métaphysique* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1949), V, ii; Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), chs. 1-2, 4-5; *Insight*, chs. 9-13, 18; *Method in Theology*, chs. 1-4, 10-11; Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), chs. 1-2; and Frederick Crowe, *Three Thomist Studies* (Boston: Lonergan Center of Boston College, 2000), chs. 1-6.

In Lonergan's view, although this standard is naturally anticipated by my concrete dynamic subjectivity, only by virtue of a fundamental decision do I come to employ it as the ultimate norm of *my particular choices*. Lonergan labels that fundamental decision "moral conversion." On my interpretation of Lonergan, moral conversion both methodically presupposes and psychologically fosters what he labels "intellectual conversion," namely, my recognition of the anticipated structure of *reality* as the ultimate norm of my *particular cognitional efforts*. That is to say, the critical justification of moral conversion includes an appeal to intellectual conversion; and the actual occurrence of moral conversion encourages the actual occurrence of intellectual conversion. (See, for example, *Method in Theology*, 238-44, 267-69. Cf. Walter Conn, "Moral Development: Is Conversion Necessary?" in Matthew Lamb, ed., *Creativity and Method: Essays in Honor of Bernard Lonergan, S.J.* [Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1981], 307-24.)

habitual disposition at all, whether toward meeting the ultimate standard of goodness or toward falling short of it. This finding underlies Charles and Darlene's *cautiously qualified* general moral self-assessment, which is expressed by step A.

What do you the reader think is your own ultimate standard of moral assessment? In your actual process of making moral assessments (as distinct from what you may say to others or even to yourself about that process), do you think you employ an ultimate standard that you *intellectually intuit*, as Alice suggests? Or one that you *practically anticipate*, as Barry proposes? Or one that you *speculatively anticipate*, as Charles and Darlene contend? Or one that differs from all three of these? Or sometimes one and sometimes another, depending upon the particular moral issue at stake?

Again, in those delicate moments when you undertake an overall moral assessment of your own intentions and deeds, do you find that they *satisfy* your ultimate standard of moral assessment *far more often than not*, as Alice does? Or do you find that they *fail to satisfy* that ultimate standard *far more often than not*, as Barry does? Or do you find *no habitual pattern of success or failure*, as Charles and Darlene do?

As you try to discover your answers to these two questions, make sure that you are clear about the character of the questions themselves. At root they are not questions about Alice or Barry or Charles or Darlene. They are not questions about Plato or Aristotle, Augustine or Aquinas, Kant or Lonergan, Barth or Rahner, Jean-Paul Sartre or John Paul II. They are questions about *you*.

## 2. CRITICAL REFLECTION

In my judgment, the requirements of human flourishing after 9/11 are largely the same as they were before 9/11. However, the events of 9/11 and what followed underscore just how urgent it is that we clarify our grasp of those requirements and do better at fulfilling them, lest we destroy ourselves. In the first section of this paper I suggested that one of the most significant things about 9/11 is that it illustrates the new situation created by our electronically enhanced togetherness. This enhanced togetherness greatly increases our collective power to do good

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or ill to one another, to the human community as a whole, and to the planet Earth. Hence the increased importance of accurate moral knowledge and vigorous moral commitment.

Vigorous moral commitment cannot be taught: it can only be inspired. Accurate moral knowledge, by contrast, is at least somewhat amenable to the ministrations of a teacher. Consequently, the central goal of this paper is to nurture a particular dimension of our skill at making moral judgments in social situations. More precisely, it is to indicate the fundamental procedural location of our ultimate criterion of goodness, and then to argue briefly for what – with Lonergan – I take to be the version of the ultimate criterion that we ought to be employing in order to function optimally as knowers of moral goodness, by contrast with two common alternative versions.

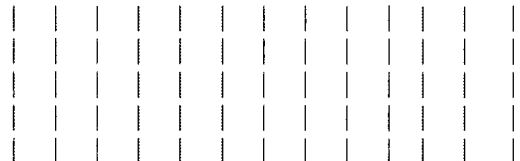
Using the events of 9/11 and their aftermath as a timely take-off point, in the preceding sections I have employed logically formulated argumentation to elucidate four successively more basic issues that arise whenever we attempt to justify what we deem the morally most appropriate responses to physical or nonphysical aggression intentionally directed at us by other persons. What is our particular moral assessment of possible responses to these aggressors? What is our particular moral assessment of these aggressors? What is our general moral assessment of ourselves? What is our ultimate standard of moral assessment? And using four imaginary people as illustrations, Alice, Barry, Charles, and Darlene, I have also elucidated certain stances that (at least implicitly) we often take on these four issues.

### *2.1. A Brief Lonerganian Sketch of Optimal and Defective Moral Assessment Making*

Two obvious questions present themselves at this point. Which of the alternative stances on the four successive issues, especially the fourth and most basic one, have the strongest claims to being correct? And how does one determine the answer to the that question? Although detailed replies to these two questions are beyond the scope of this paper, let me employ a diagram to facilitate my short response to each.

I direct the reader's attention to Figure 2. The top line of numbers and letters represents steps 1 through C of the logically formulated argument made by someone attempting to justify her moral reaction to being the subject of intentional aggression. For example, in the respective arguments made by Alice, Barry, Charles, and Darlene, what each arguer deems the morally appropriate reaction to 9/11 is expressed as step C; and the cumulative justification of that response is expressed retrogressively as steps 4 through 1. However, no step of this logical sequence stands on its own. The conclusions (C, B, and A) follow from the preceding expansive steps (4, 3, 2, and 1); and the expansive steps at best are objectifications of correlative underlying elements (4', 3', 2', and 1') of the arguer's lived cognitional process. In particular, step 1, which is each arguer's judgment about the character of the ultimate standard of

*objectifications* of elements of  
my lived cognitional process:

$$1 + 2 \Rightarrow A + 3 \Rightarrow B + 4 \Rightarrow C$$


my *lived* cognitional process:

$$1' + 2' \Rightarrow A' + 3' \Rightarrow B + 4' \Rightarrow C'$$

Figure 2: Lived Knowing and Objectified Knowing

goodness, at best articulates that arguer's own lived ultimate standard of goodness (1'), the standard that she actually employs in her own concrete process of making moral assessments. In other words, while the *logically* fundamental location of an arguer's *judgment* about the ultimate standard of goodness is at the beginning of any explicitly formulated moral argument that she may make, the *methodically* fundamental of her *actual* ultimate standard of goodness is at the beginning of her lived cognitional process.

Next, let us utilize this diagram to help sketch a Lonerganian account of what occurs insofar as a moral assessor is operating optimally in each of three crucial respects. First, on the level of her lived cognitional process,

what she habitually chooses to employ as her ultimate standard of goodness is identically the exhaustive set of properly speculative goods that is the anticipated content of her naturally given "transcendental intention of value." That is to say, she is sufficiently developed and unimpeded both cognitively and affectively that the ultimate criterion of goodness she regularly chooses to utilize (1') in making each of her lived expansive moral assessments (2', 3', 4', etc.) is nothing other than the innate "speculative discursivist" norm, the content of the transcendental intention that both sublates and goes beyond the transcendental intentions of intelligibility and of reality. As a concretely functioning moral assessor, she is *authentically self-constituting*.

Second, insofar as our moral assessor is moved to provide an account of what she is doing when she is making moral assessments, her account is essentially accurate and complete. That is to say, she is sufficiently developed and unimpeded both cognitively and affectively that her objectifications of her lived ultimate criterion of goodness (1) and of the lived expansive moral assessments that she makes in fidelity to it (2, 3, 4, etc.) correctly capture all the pertinent features. As a reflective moral assessor, she is *authentically self-appropriating*.

Third, insofar as our moral assessor is moved to formulate explicit moral arguments, and thus takes pains to objectify not only the expansive elements of her lived cognitional process but also their intelligible relations and consequents, the results are logically consistent and sound. That is to say, she is sufficiently developed and unimpeded both cognitively and affectively that her articulated connections between premises and conclusions are rationally successful. As an explicit argument-making moral assessor, she is *authentically reasoning*.

Corresponding to these three aspects of a moral assessor's optimal functioning, the Lonerganian analyst notes (in reverse order) three ways in which a moral assessor can go awry. First, her *explicit moral reasoning* can be defective. The connections she makes between premises and conclusions can embody inferential errors. Second and more profoundly, her *moral self-appropriation* can be defective. What she envisions as an essentially accurate account of the ultimate standard of goodness that she actually uses and how she uses it can be mistaken. Third and most profoundly, her *moral self-constitution* can be defective. In her lived



performance as a moral assessor, she typically chooses to shape her moral assessments in fidelity to something other than the content of her naturally given transcendental intention of value. As her ultimate criterion of goodness, she opts instead perhaps for the particular given contents that characterize concrete situations, or perhaps for the generalized contents of previous knowledge, or perhaps for the content of the transcendental intention of intelligibility alone, or perhaps for the content of a transcendental intention that goes beyond the intentions of intelligibility and reality without sublating them.<sup>19</sup> In each of these three ways of going awry, the cause of the defect can be one or more of the following: insufficient cognitive development; insufficient affective development; erroneous knowledge; and skewed feelings or choices.

It is my own personal conclusion that the Lonerganian account of how I function as a moral assessor when I am operating at my best and also of the ways that I can go wrong is fundamentally accurate in all important respects. I invite you the reader to test this conclusion for yourself through careful research in the laboratory of your own mind.

## 2.2. Step 1: Our Ultimate Standards of Moral Assessment

In light of the foregoing Lonerganian sketches of optimally and defectively functioning moral assessors, here and in the remaining four short sections of this paper let me provide some concise evaluative comments of my own regarding the arguments by which Alice, Barry, Charles, and Darlene support their respective moral reactions to the events of 9/11 and its aftermath.

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<sup>19</sup>There are three points here that I encourage the reader to notice. First, these alternative modes of self-constitution are what the moral assessor *experiences* herself to be doing, not necessarily what she (reflexively) *knows* herself to be doing. Lived performance is the basic process; objectifying that performance is a further process; and the basic process occurs whether or not the further process does. Second, this list of alternatives is my *Lonerganian* objectification of lived alternatives. That is to say, it purports to grasp and express the alternatives in a notably more precise and comprehensive fashion than a person living one of those alternatives could be expected to do if she happened to engage in self-objectification. Third, in this list (which I do not intend to be exhaustive), the second alternative is the one I am labeling "intellectual intuitionist"; and the fourth, "practical discursivist."

In her *intellectual intuitionist*<sup>20</sup> account of the ultimate standard of goodness, Alice correctly maintains that I grasp and employ an ultimate standard that is cognitive, self-transcendent, and general; but she incorrectly maintains that I grasp it directly and immediately, through a kind of intellectual seeing. The inaccuracy in Alice's account could arise simply from defective moral self-appropriation, a flaw in her knowledge of her own performance as a moral assessor; or, more seriously, it could arise from defective moral self-constitution, a flaw in her performance itself. Here and wherever this alternative emerges in my subsequent analysis of Alice and her colleagues, I will assume that the problem is the latter.

In his *practical discursivist* account, Barry correctly affirms that I grasp the general standard of goodness not through some type of intellectual seeing but rather by anticipating the structure of the goods I yearn to know and choose; but he is incorrectly presents that yearning as merely practical, and the goods as excluding all self-interest. As in the case of Alice, I interpret the inaccuracy in Barry's account as stemming not from defective moral self-appropriation but, more significantly, from defective moral self-constitution.

In their *speculative discursivist* accounts, Charles and Darlene correctly assert that it is not through merely practical yearning but rather through properly speculative yearning that I anticipate the structure of the goods I seek to know and choose; and they correctly present those goods as including self-interest when it is more than *mere* self-interest. Their

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<sup>20</sup>If the ultimate standard of goodness is thought to be given by *intellectual intuition*, particular instances of goodness commonly are thought to be known by a process that culminates in such intuition; hence the label "intellectual intuitionist" here for Alice's account. If the ultimate standard of goodness is thought to be given by *practical anticipation*, particular instances of goodness are thought to be known by a process that culminates in practical reasoning or "discourse"; hence the label "practical discursivist" shortly for Barry's account. And if the ultimate standard of goodness is thought to be given by *speculative anticipation*, particular instances of goodness are thought to be known by a process that culminates in properly speculative reasoning or "discourse"; hence the label "speculative discursivist" shortly for the accounts offered by Charles and Darlene. In all three cases, however, what is fundamental is not the label but rather the alleged self-experience that the label is intended to designate.

Let me reiterate that these three accounts of the ultimate standard of goodness are not the only ones, but in my view they probably are concretely the most common ones. (Recall note 9, above.)

accounts would seem to reflect both optimal moral self-constitution and optimal moral self-appropriation on their parts.

### 2.3. *Steps 2 and A: Our General Moral Assessments of Ourselves*

Alice's *thoroughly positive* general moral assessment of our North American intentions and deeds is overly optimistic by far, even tending toward *moral presumptuousness*. As with the inaccuracy in her account of the ultimate standard of goodness, so too here: though the inaccuracy could emerge from defective moral self-appropriation, I take it as emerging from defective moral self-constitution. Either way, however, it is worth noting a certain psychological continuity between Alice's step 1 and her step 2. For the cognitive and affective dispositions that incline someone toward an intellectual intuitionist account of our moral knowing can also incline her toward a thoroughly positive general evaluation of our intentions and deeds. A person who takes for granted that her own moral assessments usually are speculatively objective, who is attracted by the simplicity of intuitionist moral philosophies, and who moves easily from unfamiliarity with complex explanations to disdain for them, is often the same type of person who takes for granted that her own moral motives usually are generous, who is attracted by the optimism of idealized moral histories of her community, and who moves easily from unfamiliarity with far-off communities to disdain for them.<sup>21</sup>

Barry's *pervasively negative* overall moral appraisal of North Americans' intentions and deeds is unduly pessimistic, even heading toward *moral cynicism*. As with the inaccuracy in his account of the ultimate standard of goodness, the present inaccuracy could spring from a

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<sup>21</sup>I should underscore that the connection I am suggesting between intellectual intuitionism and undue moral optimism about oneself and one's community is merely psychological, not logical. Hence it is entirely possible that someone giving an *intellectual intuitionist* account of how we grasp the ultimate standard of goodness would also make an *overly pessimistic* or an *antecedently neutral* general finding about our propensity actually to satisfy that standard. My suggestion is simply that the first combination of stances is psychologically more likely than the other combinations. (*Mutatis mutandis*, the same qualification applies to the connection I propose in the following paragraphs between steps 1 and 2 of Barry's argument, and again between steps 1 and 2 of the arguments made by Charles and Darlene.)

flaw in Barry's knowledge of his own moral performance, but I interpret it as springing from flaw in that performance itself. In either case, however, there may be psychological resonances between Barry's step 1 and his step 2. The same cognitive and affective tendencies that tilt someone toward a practical discursivist account of our moral knowing can tilt him toward a pervasively negative overall appraisal of our intentions and deeds. A person who has concluded that our own moral assessments never are speculatively objective, who finds the simplicity of intuitionist moral philosophies to be naive, and who is tempted to think that complex explanations almost always are preferable to simple ones, is frequently the same kind of person who has concluded that our own moral motives usually are selfish, who finds idealized moral histories of his community to be naive, and who is tempted to think that far-off communities almost always are morally superior to his own.

Charles and Darlene's *cautiously qualified* general moral evaluation of our North American intentions and deeds correctly recognizes that they display no clear-cut habitual pattern at all, whether of good or of evil. Generalizations in either direction are both mistaken and misleading; and genuinely judicious concrete moral assessments emerge only from case-by-case inquiries, a finding that fosters *moral realism*. This step 2 finding would seem to reflect exacting moral self-discernment on the part of Charles and Darlene. Moreover, the finding may be psychologically of a piece with their step 1. For the cognitive and affective inclinations that encourage a speculative discursivist account of our moral knowing can also encourage a cautiously qualified global evaluation of our intentions and deeds. Someone who has concluded that our own moral assessments can be speculatively objective, who is put off both by moral philosophies that portray moral knowing as fairly easy and those that portray it as virtually impossible, and who thinks that complex explanations sometimes are preferable to simple ones and sometimes vice-versa, is apt to be the same type of person who has concluded that our own moral motives are sometimes generous and sometimes selfish, who is put off both by moral histories of her community that sanctify it and by those that demonize it, and who thinks that a far-off community sometimes is morally superior to ours and sometimes vice-versa.

#### 2.4. Steps 3 and B: Our Particular Moral Assessments of the Al Qaeda Bombers

Alice's overly optimistic conclusion (in step A) that our North American intentions and deeds habitually are morally good inclines her in advance toward judging (in step 3) that the Al Qaeda bombers attacked us because of our morally good intentions and deeds toward the Moslem world in particular, and thus concluding (in step B) that the bombers were morally evil. Her conviction that *usually* we are good establishes an investigative bias toward judging *in particular instances* that we are good and whoever opposes us is evil, rather than exploring such instances with an open mind. And that antecedent bias in turn is reinforced in *this* particular instance by the feelings consequent on Alice's narrowing of her attention to *our* grievances, as though they are the only grievances that possibly matter.

Barry's unduly pessimistic conclusion (in step A) that our North American intentions and deeds habitually are morally evil slants him in advance toward judging (in step 3) that the Al Qaeda bombers attacked us because of our morally evil intentions and deeds toward the Moslem world in particular, and thus concluding (in step B) that the bombers were morally good. His confidence that *typically* we are good slants him toward judging *in individual instances* that we are evil and whoever opposes us is good, rather than evaluating such instances on their own merits. And that antecedent slant in turn is complemented in *this* individual instance by the feelings attendant on Barry's exaggerated attention to the grievances of Middle Eastern Moslems and his relative inattention to the grievances of those who were attacked.

Charles's sagacious conclusion (in step A) that our North American intentions and deeds display no definitive habitual pattern at all, whether of good or of evil, frees him from any predisposition toward judging (in steps 3 and B) either that we were good and the Al Qaeda bombers were evil, or vice-versa. That is to say, his antecedent neutrality leaves him free to investigate the events of 9/11 and their aftermath with an open mind, and to base his moral assessments not on affective inclinations but rather on whatever evidence he encounters in the concrete situation. Hence the crucial question about Charles *negative* moral appraisal of the bombers is whether, at least in its expressed form, it is actually supported by the

evidence to which he appeals. For example, might not a careful review of the evidence indicate the need for tempering the appraisal's *sweepingly* negative character? Were our North American intentions and deeds toward people in the Moslem world *utterly* good, or did they include at least some admixture of evil? Correlatively, were the Al Qaeda bombers' motivations *utterly* evil, or did they include at least some admixture of good? Were the members of Al Qaeda and the ordinary people of Afghanistan and Iraq all *equally* evil?

Darlene, like Charles, approaches her exploration of 9/11 from a position of antecedent neutrality. It follows that the key question about her *positive* moral appraisal of the bombers is whether the evidence she invokes is indeed sufficient to sustain it, at least in its stated form. For instance, might not a careful review of the evidence suggest the necessity of softening the appraisal's *unqualifiedly* positive character? Were our North American intentions and deeds toward people in the Moslem world *thoroughly* evil, or did they include at least a tincture of good? Correlatively, were the Al Qaeda bombers' motivations *thoroughly* good, or did they include at least a tincture of evil? Were the ordinary people of Afghanistan and Iraq and the members of Al Qaeda all *uniformly* good?

Finally, let me spotlight for the reader a crucial but easily overlooked semantic feature of the claims we have just discussed. Each representative's present claims (steps 3 and B) stand within the context established by his or her previous claims (steps 1, 2, and A) and derive meaning from that context. But, as Figure 2 suggests, the *logical* context established by those previous claims at best expresses something of an underlying *methodical* context, the context established by one's lived performance as a moral assessor; and the latter context, not the former, is procedurally the most fundamental. Hence it is from that underlying methodical context that each representative's present claims derive *the fullness* of their meaning. However, as we saw earlier, the respective contrasts between Alice's steps 1, 2, and A and those of Charles reflect differences of not simply of moral self-appropriation but of moral self-constitution. Alice and Charles differ not just in self-knowledge but in lived performance. It follows that the *full* meanings of the claims expressed by Alice in her steps 3 and B are importantly different from those expressed by Charles in his corresponding steps, *even though the*

*expressions are verbally identical*. And a similar difference of full meanings despite verbally identical formulations obtains between the corresponding present claims of Barry and Darlene.

More amply, the full meaning of Alice's negative assessment of the Al Qaeda bombers methodically presupposes both (i) an intellectual intuitionist ultimate standard of goodness, a standard whose content on my interpretation is nothing other than the generalized contents of her previous evaluative knowledge,<sup>22</sup> and (ii) an unduly optimistic general moral assessment of us North Americans. By contrast, the full meaning of Charles's *verbally identical* negative assessment of the bombers methodically presupposes both (i) a speculative discursivist ultimate standard of goodness, a standard whose content on my interpretation is identically the content of his naturally given transcendental intention of value, and (ii) a wise and balanced general moral assessment of us North Americans. And a similar relationship holds for Barry and Darlene. The full meaning of Barry's positive assessment of the bombers methodically presupposes both (i) a practical discursivist ultimate standard of goodness, a standard whose content on my interpretation is identically the content of a transcendental intention that goes beyond the intentions of intelligibility and reality but does not sublimate them, and (ii) an unduly pessimistic general moral assessment of us North Americans. By contrast, the full meaning of Darlene's *verbally identical* positive assessment of the bombers has methodical presuppositions that are identical to those of Charles's negative assessment.

As one illustration of how significant such differences are, let us note their most basic implication. What Alice means by "morally good" and "morally evil" in her assessment of the Al Qaeda bombers is *not exactly the same as* what Barry means by the same words in his assessments; and what Charles and Darlene mean is *not exactly the same as* what either Alice or Barry means. For Alice, whether intentions and deeds are morally good or evil depends upon whether they do or do not meet an *intellectual intuitionist* ultimate standard of goodness; for Barry, a *practical discursivist*

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<sup>22</sup>On the intellectual intuitionist and (shortly) the practical discursivist ultimate standards, recall above, note 19.

standard; and for Charles and Darlene, a *speculative discursivist* standard. In other words, besides the obvious difference between negative and positive assessments of the Al Qaeda bombers, there are other less obvious but more basic differences – namely, those between the *full meanings* of moral assessments, regardless of whether they are negative or positive.

#### 2.5. *Steps 4 and C: Our Particular Moral Assessments of Possible Responses to the Al Qaeda Bombers*

Just as steps 3 and B of all four representatives' arguments stand in the context of steps 1, 2, and A, so steps 4 and C stand in the context of all the previous steps. It follows that my *negative* appraisal of Alice's moral assessment of the Al Qaeda bombers because of its intellectual intuitionist presupposition and its antecedent anti-bomber bias extends as well to her moral assessment of our possible responses to the bombers. Likewise, my *negative* appraisal of Barry' moral assessment of the bombers because of its practical discursivist presupposition and its antecedent pro-bomber bias also extends to his moral assessment of our possible responses. On the other hand, just as I *positively* appraise Charles's and Darlene's moral assessments of the bombers at least insofar as their speculative discursivist presupposition and antecedent neutrality toward the bombers enable the issue to be determined strictly on the basis of whatever evidence they encounter in the concrete situation, so for the same reasons and to the same extent I *positively* appraise their moral assessments of our possible responses to the bombers.

But what then of the actual evidence? Does it support Charles's claim that whenever one is the subject of morally imputable violence that is undeserved, one is duty-bound to strike back with violence of similar kind and degree, and thus that – given his sweepingly negative assessment of the Al Qaeda bombers – we *ought* to retaliate against them? Might not a careful review of the evidence suggest a broader range of morally appropriate options? For example, in response to large-scale aggression, is not a military embargo sometimes morally preferable to a direct counterattack? Is not a trade embargo sometimes morally preferable to either? Is not quiet diplomacy sometimes morally preferable to all of the



foregoing? Even more radically, suppose that the evidence turned out to require that Charles's sweepingly negative assessment of the bombers be tempered and matched with an at least mildly negative assessment of us North Americans and a corresponding mildly positive assessment of the bombers. In that case, would not such evidence also require that our morally appropriate response to 9/11 include both proportionately reducing our negative response to the bombers and undertaking a proportionate effort of candid self-criticism and vigorous self-correction?

Again, does the actual evidence support Darlene's claim that one is duty-bound to avoid proceeding against persons insofar as they are performing morally good deeds, and thus that – given her unqualifiedly positive assessment of the Al Qaeda bombers – we *ought not* to retaliate against them? Might not a careful review of the evidence indicate additional morally appropriate possibilities? For example, in order to defend a largely upright nation, is it not sometimes morally appropriate to take steps whose foreseen though not directly intended consequences include the deaths of doers of good deeds? Even more radically, suppose that the actual evidence turned out to necessitate that Darlene's unqualifiedly positive assessment of the bombers be qualified and paralleled with an at least moderately positive assessment of us North Americans and a corresponding moderately negative assessment of the bombers. In that case, would not such evidence also entail that our morally appropriate response to 9/11 include both proportionately reducing our self-condemnation and undertaking a proportionate effort of direct resistance to the bombers?



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