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EIGHTEEN DAYS IN 1968:
AN ESSAY ON THE MATURATION OF
LONERGAN'S INTENTIONALITY ANALYSIS

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IN THEIR INTRODUCTION TO *A Second Collection*, William F. J. Ryan and Bernard Tyrrell suggested two main themes in Lonergan's development in 1964 and 1965: first, the clear emergence of the primacy of the fourth level of consciousness; and second, the significance of historical consciousness.¹ Although the transition from substance to subject is a good characterization of this point in his development,² and these two themes are manifestations of that transition, I would like to suggest that perhaps the transition wasn't completed in the 1964-65 period, after all. Two of Lonergan's lectures in 1968 suggest that this transition did not achieve its fullest maturity until at least that year.

In "The Subject," a lecture first given on March 3, 1968, Lonergan's account of subjectivity reached its summit in the individual: at the end of a summary statement of the advancing levels of consciousness, Lonergan said, "[s]ixthly, finally, rational consciousness is sublated by rational self-consciousness, when we deliberate, evaluate, decide, act. Then there emerges human consciousness at its fullest. Then the existential subject exists and his character, his personal essence, is at stake."³ In "Horizons,"

¹William F. J. Ryan and Bernard Tyrrell, "Introduction," in *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), vii-viii. As they note, see also David Tracy, *The Achievement of Bernard Lonergan* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), chaps. 4 and 9.

²See editorial note g in Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Existenz and Aggiornamento," in *Collection*, vol.4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 222-31, at 305.

³Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "The Subject," in *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan*,

given eighteen days later, on March 21, his account of subjectivity reached its summit in the community: after noting the sensitivity we share with other animals, Lonergan highlighted questions for intelligence, for reflection, and for deliberation, and he then commented that these last are where “self-transcendence ceases to be intentional and becomes real.... That real self-transcendence is the possibility of benevolence and beneficence, of willing what is truly good and doing it, of collaboration and true love, of swinging completely out of the habitat of an animal and of becoming a genuine person in a human society.”⁴ Succinctly put, “The Subject” expressed the summit of conscious subjectivity as the place at which the *individual* subject’s personal character and essence are at stake, while “Horizons” expressed the summit of conscious subjectivity as a *social* genuine personhood. *Insight* had situated the subject socially and highlighted the relative priority of the dialectic of community over the dialectic of the subject.⁵ Other, earlier works reveal Lonergan’s awareness of the historical and communal situation of subjects,⁶ and appropriate qualifications must be recognized in terms of audience and purpose. All the same, with these two 1968 lectures we find a maturing confluence of the two threads Ryan and Tyrrell identified, as for the first time historical consciousness came into play, not just in Lonergan’s account of the environment of subjectivity, but as an element in the *immanent* intelligibility of consciousness.

An examination of Lonergan’s materials from a few years to either side of these eighteen days will reveal that the three-week period between “The Subject” and “Horizons” is a marker for Lonergan’s full recognition of the

S.J, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 69-86, at 80.

⁴Bernard J. F. Lonergan, “Horizons,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, vol. 17 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 10-29, at 12. See note 2 on that page in the text for further information on Lonergan’s use of the term “real.” “Real,” “moral,” and “performative” were all used in various incarnations of this basic statement.

⁵Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), at 243: “[O]ne might say that a single dialectic of community is related to a manifold of individual sets of neural demand functions through a manifold of individual dialectics. In this relationship the dialectic of community holds the dominant position, for it gives rise to the situations that stimulate neural demands, and it molds the orientation of intelligence that preconsciously exercises the censorship. Still, as is clear, one must not suppose this dominance to be absolute....”

⁶See Bernard J. F. Lonergan, “PANTON ANAKEPHALAIOSIS,” *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 9 (1991): 139-72, for example.