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Lonergan's Notion of the Subject
The Relation of Experience and Understanding
in Intellectually and Religiously Differentiated Consciousness

Jim Kanaris

Faculty of Religious Studies
McGill University, Montreal
July, 1995

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
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In loving memory

of my brother

Nick Kanaris

(1954-1993)

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Abstract

The notion of "the subject" is central methodologically to the heuristics of Bernard Lonergan. Insight: A Study of Human Understanding (1957; 5th ed., 1992) is Lonergan's most significant work in which he attempts to unveil the ever-elusive dynamics of conscious being as it functions in diverse realms of human thought. Essential to this endeavor is the identification of conscious operations (acts) and their objectifications (contents). This constitutes the "semantic" burden of Insight which, consequently, ought not to be separated from Lonergan's pragmatic mode of investigation. Failure to note this dipolar structure of Insight results in misinformed analyses which are quick to make faulty ideational correlations, thereby excusing out of hand any ingenuity on the part of Lonergan. This study attempts to reverse such trends by examining certain basic relations of the thinking subject in Insight (i.e. "experience" and "understanding"), and by developing the dynamics of such a relation in the larger context of the differentiations of consciousness (i.e. "intellectual" and "religious"), a concept that is brought to full fruition in Lonergan's widely read Method in Theology (1972)

Résumé

La notion de "sujet" est méthodologiquement centrale dans l'heuristique de Bernard Lonergan. Insight: A Study of Human Understanding (1957; 5e éd., 1992) est le travail le plus significatif de Lonergan dans lequel il tente de dévoiler l'insaisissable dynamique de l'être conscient dans les divers aspects de sa pensée. L'identification d'opérations conscientes (actes) et de leur objectifications (contenus) est essentielle dans cette tâche. Cela constitue le volet "sémantique" de Insight qui ne doit pas être séparé du mode pragmatique d'enquête de Lonergan. Le manque d'attention à cette structure bipolaire de Insight conduit à des analyses tronquées permettant d'écarter d'autant plus facilement toute originalité dans l'entreprise de Lonergan. - La présente étude tente de renverser pareille tendance par l'examen de rapports fondamentaux caractéristiques du sujet pensant dans Insight (i.e. "l'expérience" et "la compréhension"), et par l'analyse de la dynamique de tels rapports dans le contexte plus large des "différentiations de conscience" (i.e. "l'intellectuel" et "le religieux"), un concept plus longuement développé dans le livre bien connu de Lonergan, Method in Theology (1972).

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Thanks are also due to Professor Sean McEvenue, my mentor and friend, whose creative approach to the Bible not only introduced me indirectly to the insights of Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984), but also inspired a mutual respect for the elemental stances of literature and the rigorous—at times exhausting—attempts at its technical expression. Finally, a word of special thanks must go to my esteemed thesis supervisor, Professor Maurice Boutin, whose extraordinary learning and enthusiasm (to say nothing of his openness toward the academic interests of his students) provided the necessary stimuli for the conception and the completion of this work; to him I am greatly indebted: "chi m'avria tratto su per la montagna?"*

* "Who else but he could take me up the mount?" - Dante, The Divine Comedy, Purgatory (trans. Mark Musa) iii. 6.

ABBREVIATIONS OF WORKS BY B. LONERGAN*

C	<u>Collection</u> (1967 // CWL 4, 1988)
C2	<u>A Second Collection</u> (1974)
C3	<u>A Third Collection</u> (1985)
CWL	<u>Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan</u> (1988 -)
I	<u>Insight: A Study of Human Understanding</u> (1957 // CWL 3, 1992)
M	<u>Method in Theology</u> (1972)
TE	<u>Topics in Education</u> (CWL 10, 1993)
UB	<u>Understanding and Being</u> (1980 // CWL 5, 1990)
V	<u>Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas</u> (1946-1949 // 1967)

* For complete bibliographical information see Bibliography, pp. 104-110.

INTRODUCTION

The projected twenty-two volume Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan (1988 -) comes at a most opportune time when the question of "the subject" rages at full tilt in the humanities. No sooner does one turn a bookseller's corner than to discover that the subject, under a confusing nexus of neighboring terms, has taken on a life of its own. In its present controversial state, the notion has catered to the now immoderate modern/post-modern dichotomy that is sure to make the wary reader suspicious of stuffy two-school constructions, which can hardly do justice to the complexities involved. The timeliness of this particular publishing event lies in its author's conviction, readily admitted by thinkers unscathed by polar renditions of the debate, that "it is not so easy to leave the subject outside one's calculations" (I:433).

Lonergan's expended intellectual efforts on the notion of subject have recently earned him the title "the philosopher of human subjectivity."¹ Indeed, Robert Doran, co-editor of the Collected Works, believes that this Canadian philosopher-theologian provides an initial completion to the modern turn, a plateau or, as he conceives it, a series of plateaus "without sacrificing knowing on the altar of idealism, immanentism, or relativism."² The overriding concern of this study is not to question such intellectual comradery, but to think

¹ G.B. Sala, Lonergan and Kant: Five Essays on Human Knowledge, trans. J. Spoerl, ed. R.M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), p. xii.

² R.M. Doran, Theology and the Dialectics of History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), p. 25. See I:22.

the implications of subject³ as conceived by Lonergan with particular attention given to the intricate relation of conscious activity and its (conceptual) content, and the various patterns of experience in which the relation functions. Our primary source in doing so is Lonergan's *magnum opus* Insight: A Study of Human Understanding (1957) with his more popular work Method in Theology (1972) coming in at a close second—our probings into the nature of religious subject could hardly avoid the inclusion.

The twofold division of the study takes into account the metastructural data of the subject, which each individual chapter attempts to handle in close proximity to Lonergan's methodological deliberations—what I refer to recurrently as the process of explication.⁴ Its theoretical boundaries are meant to delimit two types of “inside-data” that differ

³ “To think the implications of subject” is a variant of Bernard McGinn's “think along with” strategy which, as he poignantly observes, “may be more true to Lonergan's intent ... than merely [exegeting] what he has to say” (“Theological Reflections on ‘Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon,’” Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies 12/2 [1994]: 205).

⁴ The use of “explication” here is not to be confused with what Wolfhart Pannenberg, for example, understands by the term: the process of merely rendering explicit what is already implicit in “direct experience” (i.e., perception and insight). See W. Pannenberg, “History and Meaning in Bernard Lonergan's Approach to Theological Method,” in Looking at Lonergan's Method, ed. P. Corcoran (Dublin: The Talbot Press, 1975), p. 93. On this account, no creative significance beyond that of systematization is granted to thinking subjects which Lonergan, in the good company of philosophically rigorous historians like Michel Foucault, recognizes to be constitutors of emergent “reality.” Pannenberg makes this move to avoid what he regards as subjectivism, not, as it may be imagined, to defend the ontological priority of “truth” in Martin Heidegger's sense (a-lethia), which falls outside the realm of “logic”/“correctness.” And yet it could be argued that Pannenberg's notion of explication merely complicates the subjectivism out of which he, in the end, fails to escape. This explains to a certain extent why he cannot accept—indeed, why he misunderstands—Lonergan's “additions” of consciousness within the differentiated/differentiating field of meaning. See chapters 1 and 3 for further details.

qualitatively in relation to cognitional reflection. Although the broadly based distinction is purposely crafted to make matters easier, it nonetheless fosters the legitimacy of micro-experiential data insightfully posited by an expanding universe of discourse. The desire to know is boundless in proportion to the limits of its being, its historicity.

The chapters in question may be characterized according to the functional specialties Lonergan delineates in the second part of Method. The simultaneity of conscious activity and its content may be understood as an exercise in the “interpretation” of Insight. I have taken the non-controversialist strategy which sets out to determine what an author has to say about a given topic vis à vis the interests of the exegete, in this case the simultaneity involved in cognitional process.⁵ A tacit dialogue with semiotics emerges from time to time which requires further research to bring to maturation—an undertaking that takes us beyond the parameters of this study. Lonergan’s engagement with the analytic tradition in philosophy complicates matters, especially for those congenial to his method, who have a striking suspicion that his cognitional theory is amenable to, and even anticipates to some degree, certain insights of continental philosophy.⁶ Except for the odd intimation that I agree, the debate is left largely in the hands of those more qualified to assess.

⁵ For an understanding of the controversialist approach see M: 158f.

⁶ See M.J. Matušík, Mediation of Deconstruction: Bernard Lonergan’s Method in Philosophy: The Argument from Human Operational Development (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988); J. Miller, In the Throes of Wonder: Intimations of the Sacred in a Post-Modern World (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1992). - See Miller’s enlivening “Reply to Michael Maxwell,” Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies 12/1 (1994): 109-119, for a concise summary of his position with respect to Lonergan and postmodernity, and also F. Lawrence, “The Fragility of Consciousness: Lonergan and the Postmodern Concern for The Other,” Theological Studies 54 (1993): 55-94.

The dialectical analysis of chapter two consists of a critical evaluation of secondary literature on Lonergan's notion of the subject. By "dialectic"—a term that has almost become irredeemable—I mean an examination of conflicting interpretations which aims at a comprehensive viewpoint. One of its purposes, according to Lonergan, is to bring clashing positions to light that stem from an explicit or implicit cognitional theory.⁷ On the basis of my inquiry in chapter one, I attempt to show, through an appraisal of what I consider to be hypercritical interpretations, what Lonergan does not mean by the subject, and how his position is unnecessarily pivoted against the insights of other paramount thinkers. Contributing to Lonerganian apologetics little concerns me. The issue, rather, is one of faulty interpretation which requires correction, and that for Lonergan is a dialectical matter.⁸

In the reduplication of differentiated consciousness I pursue the question of the religious subject. The developments of Method are introduced, finding a point of entry in the datum of "desire" which is brought to the pinnacle of theoretical expression in chapter nineteen of Insight, "General Transcendent Knowledge." Here, I pursue the tripartite distinction of religious experience, expression and differentiation within the conscious circle of cumulative meaning.⁹ In this chapter a return is made to interpretation, seeking whether the

⁷ Its other purposes is to engage implicit and explicit ethical and religious stances, which we do not undertake in this study. See I:242, 268-269, 446-447, for a different, though related, definition of "dialectic." The functional specialty in Method (chapter 10) is a development of chapter 17 of Insight, "Metaphysics as Dialectic."

⁸ A recurrent principle in Insight is: "positions invite development and counterpositions invite reversal" (I:412).

⁹ "Conscious circle" is not to be confused with Lonergan's "conscious being" (C.229), although both notions are intricately related. Conscious circle speaks of a develop-

stated meaning of Lonergan's approach is agreeable to a substantially less linear understanding of his methodology.

In a concluding section, I tie in the notion of simultaneity ("equiprimordiality"), developed in chapter one, with that of the conscious circle to address a question raised in an early segment of chapter three: Is religious experience merely a matter of upbringing ("objective norming"), and not something that is encountered at a personal level? A combination of interpretation and dialectic leads to the interesting comprehensive viewpoint of both/and, to a position open to the developmental and differing experiences of consciousness, which Lonergan aptly dubs a "heuristic structure."

The beyondness to which the postmodern turn directs is arguably not a subjectless reality.¹⁰ The move, understood nihilistically by a great number of people, is intended, or appropriated, as one of liberation—from the shackles of a self-sufficient, truncated self, to the creative, open-ended intellection of notions like subject.¹¹ So-called "postmodern"

mental ("genetic") context of meaning within which conscious being functions. See 3.3 of the present analysis. The phrase is inspired by Martin Heidegger's insight concerning the paramount nature of the circle of understanding, "the expression of the existential fore-structure of Dasein itself" (Being and Time, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson [New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1962], p. 195).

¹⁰ See A.C. Thiselton, New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), p. 125.

¹¹ S.D. Moore, after an encounter with current trends in literary theory in communication with Rudolf Bultmann, Martin Heidegger, Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida, speaks of "a spring-like quickening of my intellectual and spiritual sap such as I have not felt since historical criticism's first rude accostation mated my quest for Reality" (Literary Criticism and the Gospels: The Theoretical Challenge [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989], p. 177).

authors like Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault focus on the emerging subject. Others (also dubbed "postmodern") prefer to think the subject exclusively in terms of conceptual development; the subject is an idea, the result of extended historical processes. Lonergan's tact is to think the subject implicit in ideational constructs. He does not, so to speak, go behind conceptual content in order to do so, but through it rather, in an effort to evolve a "plan" for further attentive, intelligent and reasonable discoveries. Truncation for him is rooted in the neglect of subject—the forgetfulness of subject (Subjektvergessenheit)—at the cost of conceptualism, the defects of which include anti-historical immobilism, excessive universalism, and a static, non-proleptic, non-intentional notion of Being (C2:73-74).

Although Insight appears to be a paradigmatic example of the kind of thinking deconstruction intends to undermine,¹² it holds great surprises for those seeking to escape modernist assumptions and also for those equally dissatisfied by certain versions of the post-modern deconstruction of them.¹³ Its particular wisdom lies in its encouragement of being-in-becoming to continue marvelling at its boundless openness toward mystery, the Mystery.

¹² See J. Miller, "A Reply to Michael Maxwell," p. 111.

¹³ The slant within postmodern thought that David R. Griffin refers to as deconstructive-eliminative. See D.R. Griffin, "Introduction: Varieties of Postmodern Theology," in Varieties of Postmodern Theology, ed. D.R. Griffin, W.A. Beardslee, J. Holland (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1989), pp. 1-7.

PART ONE

INTELLIGENT STRUCTURE OF THE GIVEN

THE SIMULTANEITY OF CONSCIOUS ACTIVITY AND ITS CONTENT

1.1 Verbum: A Preliminary Consideration

Loneragan's Insight is divided into two parts. The first, Insight as Activity, deals with a peculiar act of human understanding called "insight." The second, Insight as Knowledge, seeks to ground this activity in the pivotal moment of self-affirmation. The division is of paramount importance and may be said to ground Lonergan's every pronouncement. Its rudiments, recognizably epistemological, go back to his Heythrop days (1926-1930) when, for instance in a personal letter (1927) to Fr Henry Smeaton in St Boniface (Manitoba), he writes, "I am afraid I must lapse into philosophy The theory of knowledge is what is going to interest me most of all."¹ Indeed, an interest which was to culminate, according to one reviewer, in "[o]ne of the great philosophical treatises of the century."²

¹ Reported in F. Crowe's semi-biographical work, Loneragan, ed. Brian Davies, Outstanding Christian Thinkers Series (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), p. 14.

² A dazzling appraisal by E.F. O'Doherty which appears on the back cover of the Collected Works edition, the fifth edition, of Insight (CWL 3, 1992). Such original enthusiasm, however, has almost been brought to a sullen lull. Hugo Meynell judges correctly when he states, "Of all contemporary philosophers of the very first rank, Bernard Lonergan has been up to now the most neglected" (An Introduction to the Philosophy of Bernard Lonergan, 2d ed. [Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1991], p. 1).

We reserve comment on this arguably great treatise for the moment, and backtrack to a series of articles—five to be precise—which appeared successively in Theological Studies from 1946 to 1949, conveniently designated the Verbum articles.³ The digression is necessary in that a notion of verbum or “word” is fundamental to the programmatic distinctions of Lonergan and, more particularly, to those of Insight. Personal experience has taught me that Verbum, especially the first article on “Verbum: Definition and Understanding,” can only make clear what appears obscure in Insight. Insofar as this is true, a brief account of its basic elements is desirable.

As the subtitle of the book suggests, the Verbum articles are about “word and idea” in the thought of Thomas Aquinas. Not surprisingly, Aristotle figures greatly in this assessment—he is, after all, the opposite pole of the celebrated synthesis. Lonergan begins his excursus on verbum “in the omnivorous fashion of the fact collector,” sieving through the works of Aquinas and Aristotle respectively. Of significant worth for the present analysis are the concepts “understanding” (intelligere), “inner” and “outer” word (verbum). It goes without saying that they pertain to what Lonergan in Insight refers to as the subjective field.⁴ Let us treat the latter pair first, and conclude with a reflection on the relation of intelligere and verbum interius, which will quickly lead us into the nitty-gritty of Insight.

³ The Verbum articles have been subsequently published in a book edited by D.B. Burrell: Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967). It is to this edition that we will refer. Incidentally, the articles will be reissued as vol. 2 of the Collected Works sometime in the near future.

⁴ See I:204. - “I have begun, not from the metaphysical framework, but from the psychological content of Thomist theory of intellect” (V:45). See also I:432 in this connection.

When one hears the term “word” what instantaneously comes to mind is the printed marks on a page. It is probably the only term which is self-referential, but its ordered, hence meaningful concatenation, is indicative of a process that precedes mere ink blotches or, if you prefer, laser-induced images on a leaflet. To put it simply, there is more to a mark than the mark itself. This is, in a way, what Aristotle and Aquinas mean by the terms logos and verbum as an inner “perfection” of human being to be distinguished from its outer expression. Now this “outer” component may be spoken, written, imagined or meant:

Spoken words are sounds with a meaning: as sounds, they are produced in the respiratory tract; as possessing a meaning, they are due to imagination according to Aristotle, or, as Aquinas seems to have preferred, to soul; it is meaning that differentiates spoken words from other sounds, such as coughing, which also are produced in the respiratory tract. Written words are simply signs of spoken words; the issue was uncomplicated by Chinese ideograms. A similar simplicity is the refreshing characteristic of the account of imaginatio vocis; a term that seems to embrace the whole mnemonic mass and sensitive mechanism of motor, auditory, and visual images connected with language. Finally, the outer word that is some external thing or action meant by a word is dismissed as a mere figure of speech. (V:1)

Aquinas recognizes the outer word to mean (significans) the inner which is its efficient cause and immediate referent. No heroic leap is required to understand that on this account meaning is essentially bound up with the inner word, while the outer word possesses it by participation or signification. Communication scholars capture this well in memorable pithy sayings like, “Meanings are not in words, but in people.”⁵ However, Aquinas,

⁵ See J. A. DeVito, Human Communication: The Basic Course, 5th ed. (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers Inc., 1991), p. 99; G.E. and T. Myers, The Dynamics of Human Communication: A Laboratory Approach, 5th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1988), p. 122.

gripped by a demeanor which is markedly less controversial, would probably qualify such disjunctions to read, "Words have meaning in virtue of what people are."⁶

What about the nature of the correlation? The first thing to note is that one may speak of three types of correlation with regard to the distinctions mentioned: (1) inner and outer words, (2) inner words and "reality," and (3) inner words and intellect. The reason "outer words and reality" do not figure in the discussion is because inner words are said to correspond to reality, "while outer words are the products of convention and custom, and so vary with different peoples."⁷ We have already addressed the inner-outer word relation with "significant" primacy given to the inner word (quod est exteriori verbo significatum).⁸ As to reality, which divides into essence and existence, notions of direct apprehension are discredited in favor of noetic derivation or abstraction: "... the correspondence of realities to inner words is, at best, like the correspondence between a function and its derivative; as the derivative, so the inner word is outside all particular cases and refers to all from some higher view-point" (V:3). How this relates to the classical questions Quid sit? ("What is it?") and

⁶ "The outer word has meaning in virtue of the inner" (V:2). - It is not by accident that Lonergan summarizes the aim of Insight as that which asks people "to discover in themselves what they are" (C2:213).

⁷ V:3. - This is not to deny, of course, the meaningfulness of texts, for the reality (de)posited there, whether near to or far from us, includes the same correlations Aristotle, Aquinas (and Lonergan) talk about. See also Myers and Myers, p. 123 ("Dictionaries and meaning")—they are, however, too emphatic about words not having meaning. In order to escape needless tangles precipitated by the statement, it is better to conclude with Aquinas that words have meaning by virtue of inner words.

⁸ "One is apt to think of the inner word, not as what is meant [significatum] by the outer, but as what means [significans] the outer" (V:2). For Aquinas, the reverse is true.

An sit? ("Is it?") will be dealt with later. For now we simply observe that the point-to-point correspondence, denied to the inner and outer word, resides preeminently with the correlate "inner words and reality."⁹ Let us turn our attention to the third combination.

The act of intelligere ("understanding") and the inner word, which Aquinas frequently refers to as conceptio, are not synonymous. The relation is depicted quite clearly in terms of a unity-in-tension, so that not only is the verbum interius in the intellect, but also distinct from it. In spite of the inner word being a product and effect of the act of understanding, a simultaneity is affirmed which pervades its eventual order.¹⁰ Heidegger's gleichursprünglich¹¹ proficiently describes what is at issue here ontologically. Yet Lonergan unwaveringly maintains with Aquinas that intelligere is both ground and cause of conceptio (V:37f.). Here lies our problem. How does Lonergan hold to this position while advocating the equiprimordial constitution of the relation? How does he account for this unity-in-tension? Verbum provides various clues, but by and large the answer is to be found in Insight, and subsequent writings that have its program in plain view.¹²

⁹ It should be mentioned, though, that the inner word, according to Aquinas, functions like a medium between the meaning of spoken words and signified things/realities: "vox exterior significat conceptum intellectus quo mediante significat rem" (Aquinas quoted in V:8 [n. 36]). See I:35.

¹⁰ The relevant passages in question are V:9-10, 11 (n. 48), 37-38.

¹¹ John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, translators of the 7th ed. of Sein und Zeit, interpret this hefty adjective as "equiprimordial."

¹² I have in mind here Lonergan's Halifax Lectures of 1958 on Insight published under the title Understanding and Being (CWL 5, 1990), and his Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education, Topics in Education (CWL 10, 1993). Also exceedingly helpful is the volume simply entitled Collection (CWL 4, 1988) which contains a series of important

1.2 Correlations: *Verbum* and The Patterns of Experience

Earlier we alluded to the twofold division of *Insight*. We can now safely align, without too much exertion on our part, the notion of “activity” to intellect, and “knowledge” to inner word; “expression” denotes outer words in *Insight* (I:576-81). And so we have three closely related terms that if confused would be detrimental to Lonergan’s philosophy—rather, to one’s reputation as a sound interpreter. Perhaps the most consequential error to be avoided is to mistake activity-knowledge for activity-expression—a move permissible for “the psychology of words”¹³ but one ill-advised for cognitional theory and/or epistemology.¹⁴

The activity of intellect regards an operation of consciousness assigned to an “upper” context of invariant structures (*noêsis*). Knowledge, as well as its expressive correlate, belongs to a “lower” context of conceptual content, successive and provisional (*noêma*).¹⁵ Since the upper context concerns Lonergan most, we will begin there, slowly

lectures and previously published articles that span the years 1943-1967.

¹³ A phrase Lonergan uses (I:577) to describe what linguistic philosophy—Charles W. Morris for example—might call “syntactics.”

¹⁴ Since the relation is one between meanings and their signs, “semantics” seems like an appropriate parallel—bearing in mind that the fields of epistemology and semantics are not identical.

¹⁵ I:20. These spatial metaphors play an important role in Lonergan’s “transcendental” method, a term he adopted relatively concurrent with his *Gregorianum* review of Emereth Coreth, *Metaphysik: Eine methodisch-systematische Grundlegung* [Innsbruck-Vienna-Munich: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1961] (see C:297 [n. d]). - The work of human living is often depicted by Lonergan as one which involves acts of “ascension” and “sublation” (*Aufhebung*) to still “higher” viewpoints. Indeed, *Insight* is brought to a close with the importance of reaching “up” to the minds of persons (in his particular case, Aquinas’) in order to transpose

working our way through a number of notions which should place us in a better position to address the vexing problem of correlation.

To begin with, this upper context includes more than just a solitary act of understanding. After a rather probing discussion of diverse fields of human thought, Lonergan provides a list of conscious acts with which his readers by chapter 9 of *Insight* are supposed to have become familiar. They are: "seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching, perceiving, imagining, inquiring, understanding, formulating, reflecting, judging, and so forth."¹⁶ In chapter 11 these activities are said to be a given unity (I:349-52). I propose that we understand this unity in terms of unconscious compression, conscious compression, and analytical differentiation, set within the context of "patterns of experience," namely the biological and intellectual patterns (I:205-207, 209-210).

Compression, here, means a unity that is undifferentiated, non-analyzed. According to Lonergan, the biological pattern terminates somewhere in between imaginative and inquisitive acts of consciousness, on the lower rung of the aesthetic pattern, "for kittens play and snakes are charmed" (I:207). It is a functional realm given to all organisms

their insights to contemporary situations. See also C3:100-109, where Lonergan speaks of a creative process which moves from below upward and healing development from above downward. The term "self-transcendence" also includes such spatial imagery.

¹⁶I:299. - "So forth" anticipates the operations added to the list in *Method*, namely, deliberating, evaluating, deciding, speaking, writing (M:6). In 17.2.5 of *Insight* Lonergan speaks of "the decision" as a corollary of judgment in that it, too, is concerned with actuality ("Being"). However, decision, unlike rational judgment, confers actuality upon a course of action that otherwise would not exist—in the sense of "doing" (I:636). The emergence of decision in *Method* as an expansive level of consciousness proper seems to follow naturally from this basic distinction.

conscious of things, outside-things, at the elementary level of experience. The "unconscious" part of the equation refers to an inadvertence, characteristic of species dominated by extroversion, to inside-things—not to mention the "inside" of outside-things (i.e. essences) What sets off the intellectual pattern from the biological—the aesthetic serving as some sort of intermediate—is understanding, another word for which is "insight." This particular datum incites a reflective poise that grasps related acts within the inside-range of prime things, Lonergan's data of consciousness. Two types of intelligence, one commonsensical the other "scientific," precipitate the needed distinctions mentioned above. Because common sense has no inclination for theoretical abstraction, compression continues to linger due to various practical exigencies. After all, people of common sense are busy. "They have the world's work to do" (I:202). It is "conscious" in the sense that practical insight is reflective; but its contemplative life is entirely unlike that of, say, the philosopher or the theologian, whose intent it is to wrestle with seemingly obscure questions like outside- and inside-things.¹⁷

Analysis is the break, the differentiating driving force of methodical insight which seeks to "loosen" up the compression of biological-commonsensical consciousness. This is done with a view to understanding the unity, not dispensing with it. In other words, the "nature of"¹⁸ that unity is its goal, and it is accomplished, ideally, through persistent acts

¹⁷ Lonergan gives as an example the amusing tale of Thales who fell into a well because he was so intent upon the stars, and the milkmaid who could not overlook the well because she was indifferent to the stars (I:205, 96).

¹⁸ For a discussion of the "nature of" see I:60-62; UB:64-69, 196, 198.

of interrogation. As Lonergan's analysis shows, higher viewpoints do not supersede the primordial unity of consciousness, but affirms it at a differentiated level. "Unity," then, properly understood, is a concept of differentiated consciousness.¹⁹ While biological being (unconscious compression) is oblivious to the fact, common sense (conscious compression), except for an inadvertent usage of the term, is indifferent to it.

Let us consider this model in connection with the correlation of noetic activity (the full range of inside-things) and knowledge (inside-things turned outside, i.e., objectified). "One cannot deny," writes Lonergan, "that, within the cognitional act as it occurs, there is a factor or element or component over and above its content."²⁰ Why the ambiguity? The nature of act is such that it cannot be made an object of extroverted consciousness; its essence (physis), like all essences, is imperceivable. Were it otherwise, we would already be in possession of a number of tractates on the matter by the physiologically able in the animal kingdom, excluding Homo sapiens of course. Activities of noësis, simple apprehension being no exception, are by definition intelligibles which transcend the corporeal order. Although all sentient beings enjoy the basic, elemental range of inside-things, they are unaware of, reflectively indifferent to, it. So much for their intellectual attainability in the biological pattern.

But what of common sense? Why is it incapable of making the necessary con-

¹⁹ This language smacks of that of Method, but early traces of it appear in Insight. See I:203, 791 (n. d).

²⁰ I:346, emphasis added. - "Unity" is treated with regard to content and act respectively (I:349). In the passage just quoted, Lonergan touches on the correlative interplay of the dipolarity with an appeal to personal experience for his analytic claim.

nections? The case of common sense is an interesting one, for it serves somewhat like a halfway house between the biological and scientific patterns of experience. Take, for example, Lonergan's bifurcation of knowing into an animal and human type. Animal knowing, as we just saw, is dominated by an experiential objectivity of extroverted consciousness. At this level, "knowing" is taking a good look at, and acting upon, what is already-out-there-now-real:

[C]onsider a kitten. It is awake, and its stream of consciousness flows in the biological pattern. Such consciousness is a higher technique for attaining biological ends. It may be described as orientated toward such ends and as anticipating means to the ends. Moreover, the means lie in external situations, and so the anticipation is extroverted. The kitten's consciousness is directed outwards towards possible opportunities to satisfy appetites. This extroversion is spatial: as it is by the spatial maneuvers of moving its head and limbs that the kitten deals with means to its end, so the means also must be spatial, for otherwise spatial maneuvers would be inept and useless. The extroversion is also temporal: present data are distinct from the memories that enrich them; they are no less distinct from the imagined courses of future action to which they lead. Finally, the extroversion is concerned with the "real": a realistic painting of a saucer of milk might attract a kitten's attention, make it investigate, sniff, perhaps try to lap; but it could not lead to lapping, and still less to feeling replete; for the kitten, painted milk is not real. (I:276)

Common sense, in its usual offhand manner, tends to assume that genuine human knowing is what Lonergan has just described. We are all familiar with its standard credo, "If you can see it, it's real," which sounds very much like a watered-down version of Berkeley's esse est aut percipi aut percipere.²¹ Yet in the moment one ponders the situa-

²¹ "Existence is either to be perceived or to perceive." - Berkeley intends by this to bring into dispute Locke's or, more accurately, Boyle's division of "primary" (size, extension, motion, etc.) and "secondary" (colors, sounds, tastes, etc.) qualities—a division that can

tion—the situation of seeing that is—something more than mere seeing occurs. What that may be is not liable to grace the passive observer. True, methodical inquiry begins in a state of compactness, but it comes to fruition only through the arduous strain of intellectual tenacity—an inopportune reality for which practical consciousness does not have much time or patience.²²

1.3 *The Nature of the Correlation: Breaks and Links*

We have taken a relatively long route in order to ascertain how Lonergan might address the equiprimordial relation of act-content. The key resides in his notion of differentiated consciousness (Method), scientific intelligence (Insight). To approach the topic in this way is to rescue it from the straights of the chicken-and-egg dilemma which is sure to arise in an examination of the procession question. This can be qualified with yet another distinction Lonergan introduces in his Cincinnati lecture on “The Theory of Philosophic Differences” (1959).

There is a “difference,” Lonergan argues, between ontic and ontology. The former regards being, the latter an account of being. The ontic is undifferentiated reality which (un)conscious compression leaves semi-untroubled, swayed as it is by the pulsating

be traced back to Galileo. In short, for Berkeley, all qualities are sensations, hence for qualities to exist they must be perceived. Lonergan’s response to Berkeley is fairly simple: one’s understanding of qualities, primary or secondary, cannot be perceived, hence to exist is not only to perceive, but also, if not more so, to understand and to judge.

²² See I:33-34, 197, 210. “Knowledge makes a slow, if not a bloody entrance” (I:210).

flow of experience²³ In itself, the ontic is the given as merely given, "as stripped of all intelligibility" (TE:189). Here, comprehension-seeking queries are received in stalwart silence. The logos about being, on the other hand, attempts to cut through this relational tautness in a persistent effort to understand it, a kind of wedge forcing asunder the world of immediacy only to engender another mediated by meaning. This, for Lonergan, marks the birth of internal and external subject-object splits which concepts like Dasein intend to overcome, rather to get behind or under.²⁴ However, the "behind" or "under" which Dasein intends is to be had solely by means of a going "through." "[I]f we know anything about anything," writes Lonergan, "it is through meaning,"²⁵ the ontic through the ontological.

We now begin to see that the question of equiprimordiality may be cast in these terms. Ontic simultaneity occurs in undifferentiated form. But to judge so is to transcend, better yet to sublimate, the undifferentiated interplay. While "equiprimordiality" is indeed ontically grounded, it is determined "ontoreflectively," ontologically. Thus to say that intelligere is both ground and cause of conceptio is to express an analytic insight into an undifferentiated reality. The ontological exonerates Lonergan's simultaneous processionism.

²³ Lonergan describes such an "experience" as the stream of consciousness (I:210).

²⁴ "The reason Heidegger speaks of Dasein is that he does not want any split between subject and object" (TE:210).

²⁵ It is not coincidental that Heidegger speaks of a "step back." See Identity and Difference, trans. J. Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969), pp. 49ff.

This brings us to the Daß-Was relationship of medieval theology and philosophy.²⁶ That (daß) something is is a response to the question an sit, what (was) it is to the question quid sit. On this score, noetic “activity” corresponds to thatness, so-called “content” to whatness. As an end result the match is entirely true, but the analogy breaks down when applied to Lonergan’s philosophy. He prefers to treat the questions in line with cognitional process, so that quid sit manages the level of understanding, an sit the level of judgment. Both are inextricably related to the whatness of things. Thatness, which one could certainly say is equivalent to things, refers to the given as merely given. With regard to the thatness of outside-things, and what is equally applicable to inside-things, Lonergan says:

[T]he given is constituted apart from questioning; it remains the same no matter what the result of questioning may be; it is unquestionable in the sense that it lies outside the cognitional levels constituted by questioning. In the same fashion the given is indubitable. What can be doubted is the answer to a question for reflection [an sit]; it is a yes or a no. But the given is not the answer to any question; it is prior to questioning and independent of any answers.²⁷

An sit, having wrestled with quid sit, serves as the epistemological-ontological confirmation of ontic reality. Formulated affirmation does not give “reality” to the “thing” in question,²⁸

²⁶ See M. Boutin, “God and Nonobjectifying Projection: Consequences of Rudolf Bultmann’s Understanding of God,” in Rudolf Bultmanns Werk und Wirkung, ed. B. Jaspert (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1984), p. 278f.

²⁷ I:406. - See also I:350 where Lonergan mentions that consciousness “is given independently of its being formulated [quid sit] or affirmed [an sit].”

²⁸ One is reminded here of Heidegger’s phrase, Es, das Sein, gibt. For Lonergan, “the given” refers to mere data, whether it be inside- or outside-things that are devoid of concep-

it differentiates it with a view to knowing it. Accordingly, the “is” of reasonable judgment is qualitatively different from the primal or a prioristic “is” of ontic thatness.²⁹

Fred Lawrence correctly asserts that noetic activity “can never be made explicit exhaustively.”³⁰ For to make act explicit (explicitus) at all is de facto to make it a content. As an “outside” thatness left on its own it merely “is.” To know this, however, is to know more than mere is-ness. This is the complex of equiprimordiality: once a move is made to explain it, mere thatness gives way to significant whatness.

At this point one might suspect that all talk about given thatnesses is nonsense, and that either Lonergan unwittingly supports this or surreptitiously devised his whole argument to lead in this direction—a kind of pre-Derridean denial of an outside-text (hors texte), if you like. Besides being a rather rash conclusion, it misses the pedagogical import of Insight. Lonergan is well aware that he cannot give conscious acts to his readers; they already have them. His task is to make them “aware” of it, to catch themselves in the process of being aware. Insight, then, is completely absorbed by an outside-text so long as this “outside” is, in accordance with its syntactic structure, understood textually, a posteri-

tual content. This is not to deny that percepts of this sort usually, if not always, come to us already encoded. The general idea is that the given lets itself be known, as it were, by “being-there.” He states, in no uncertain terms, that “[i]t is by human inquiry and understanding and activity that intelligibility accrues to the universe” (TE: 189). Taken from another angle, the distinction means to denounce the naive opinion that knowing and sensing what is out-there or in-here to be sensed are one and the same thing.

²⁹ The “is” of reasonable judgment is noematic (differentiated); the “is” of thatness, as we remark, ontic (undifferentiated).

³⁰ F. Lawrence, p. 59.

ori, as an “inside” a priori. Indeed, chapters 1 to 13 may be characterized as one long argument regarding the semantics of the subjective field.

There are two principles at work in this “semantic” project: (1) the content of *Insight*, Lonergan’s verbum interius about intelligere, and (2) self-appropriation, the reader’s grasp of his or her “essential” being. Conceptual content is the necessary means to achieving self-appropriation, for, as Lonergan recognizes, “the process of self-appropriation occurs only slowly, and usually, only through a struggle with some such book as *Insight*.”³¹ It signifies that which self-appropriating subjects have to discover for and within themselves. In this way, Lonergan does not reduce the semantic referent (thatness) to a system, his system, of signs. What guards against the reduction is the personal act of self-appropriation, the eventual link which binds content to act.

However, objectification must not be confused with what we have labelled “reduction.” A bona fide reduction, for Lonergan, would be to posit the equivalence of act-content and thereby argue for content-expression alone. Such a position rejects the thatness to which conceptual whatness directs. Objectification, on the other hand, makes explicit (explicitus) what is implicit (implicitus) or latent in the objectifying process. Far from being insignificant, it is the objective of the pure desire to know.³² Consequently, Lonergan only

³¹ M:7 (n. 2), emphasis added. - One can detect here a certain uneasiness Lonergan feels with the exclusivity of the second portion of the clause. But as F. Crowe’s recollection intimates, Lonergan’s standard reply to importunate questioners tends to reduce the force of what I regard to be the hesitant “usually” in the quote above: “‘Read *Insight*’. Or, softening somewhat, ‘Read chapter 11 of *Insight*’” (Crowe, p. 59).

³² “The objective of the pure desire [to know] is the content of knowing rather than the act” (I:373).

wants to get across that explication or objectification removes one from mere act.³³

Perhaps the best way to view the nature of the correlation is as follows. Correlation involves a "break" (insight) which divides and a "link" (self-appropriation) which joins. The break proceeds from the side of act, which is related synergistically to conscious compression, and ruptures this elemental convergence due to certain analytic exigencies. The function of the link serves a different purpose. It takes one from the ruptured aftermath of insight to the essential movement of the whole affair, to the "operator"³⁴ of differentiation. Event (Ereignis) may be pinned on the whole process, both upper and lower contexts between which is self-appropriation.

Discriminative insight, being scrupulously methodical, grasps an "equiprimordially" to act and content which, when simply related to us (quoad nos) in our native undifferentiated state, goes unnoticed or is, at best, passed off mythically as some sort of "absolute" procession. In an attempt to relate the event to itself (quoad se), we identify a sequence on the side of "logic." Not that we create the procession, but that we analyze it through acts of insight. Because act does not occur without content, we cannot simply quarantine the former from the latter, as though it operates in a vacuum. In this sense, event is virtually impenetrable. Once we reason, differentiate the compressive context of the occurring event, we are permitted to say that act precedes content as its sine qua non. But the nature of the upper-context event does not depend on personal realization for it to happen.

³³ In C:208 he describes "the remove" in terms of "a reduplication of the structure." See 3.2.3 of the present analysis for a variant on the notion of "reduplication."

³⁴ See I:490ff. for the notion of "operator."

Lonergan's point is that it happens in spite of our "awareness" of it, and that through personal acts of appropriation one can discover this for oneself.

"Simultaneity," "unity," "equiprimordiality," "processionism"—these are all notions of differentiated consciousness. To borrow an analogy from the Hebrew scriptures, they manifest a finite reworking of human *tôhû wâbôhû* (Gen 1:2). What the break by discovery disseminates the link joins at a higher level of conscious awareness, awareness, that is, which is objectified. Without analysis the "unity" of conscious acts and their conceptual content, whether understood separately or isomorphically, remains "a formless void."³⁵ This does not by any means guarantee an impeccability to analytic moves; it is only the first of several steps—a process comparable to Adam's simple naming of animals to the quark and lepton tables of the twentieth century, and beyond.³⁶

1.4 *The Pragmatics of Insight*

An inside a priori: this is the expression that we have chosen to signify conscious activity. As an intelligible which eludes representation, conscious activity remains a referent of willy-nilly perpetual signification, the outside-inside which is "usually" grasped textually. The perpetuity of the lower-context event does not alter the referent in any way. It is invariant in the sense that from whatever angle you approach it, you will be seeing,

³⁵ "Without analysis, it is true, we cannot discern and distinguish the several operations; and until the operations have been distinguished, we cannot formulate the relations that link them together" (M:18).

³⁶ See chapter two of J. Miller, *In the Throes of Wonder*, for an excellent discussion of "the principle of fallibility," which is the call of authentic being.

hearing, touching, perceiving, imagining, inquiring, understanding, formulating, reflecting, judging to do so.³⁷ The main point to be made here is that such a burden is obviously semantic, namely, an endeavor to relate words to so-called extra-linguistic reality. What is interesting in Lonergan's case is that this extra-linguistic referent is the user of words.

Pragmatics, understood as the relationship between language and their users, looms beneath the surface of Insight. To be sure, Lonergan himself does not speak of his program in these terms. In fact, in Method he puts Charles Morris' semiotic distinctions of 1938 (syntactics, semantics, pragmatics), with which he seems to be unfamiliar in Insight, in a rather unfavorable light.³⁸ However, one can certainly detect unwitting tensions in his work concerning semantic-pragmatic levels of reflection, especially if we are to think of "pragmatics" as analysis at the level of practice or performance.³⁹ Some might feel it more

³⁷ It should be noted that the controversial "invariancy claim" of Insight (I:22, 769f.) applies, as we indicate here, to the structure of consciousness, not its expression: "A distinction must be drawn between the normative pattern immanent in our conscious and intentional operations and, on the other hand, objectifications of that pattern in concepts, propositions, words. Obviously, revision can affect nothing but objectifications. It cannot change the dynamic structure of human consciousness" (M:19).

³⁸ Lonergan comes close to calling these "metalanguages" reductionist, as that which seeks to undercut the meaningfulness of language based on originating mental acts. However, the criticism seems to be aimed at those who employ the distinctions reductionistically (see M:256f.). He is not alone in this. Noam Chomsky has made similar charges, for instance, against philosophers influenced by Wittgenstein, who reduce knowledge and language to ability ("Language and Problems of Knowledge," in The Philosophy of Language, 2d ed., ed. A.P. Martinich [New York: Oxford University Press, 1990], pp. 509-527). See 2.3 of the present analysis for more details.

³⁹ W. Rehg, for example, notes the complementarity between Lonergan's "pragmatics" and Jürgen Habermas' formal pragmatics. See W. Rehg, "From Logic to Rhetoric in Science: A Formal-Pragmatic Reading of Lonergan's Insight," in Communication and Lonergan: Common Ground for Forging the New Age, ed. T.J. Farrell and P.A. Soukup (Kansas City,

accurate to mark Lonergan's program as pragmatic over against semantic. Although this is not entirely false, it clearly stretches matters beyond the suitable parameters set by *Insight* itself. An equilibrium is probably closer to the truth. Uncompromising categorizations are usually quite dubious, especially when texts themselves bend in a number of directions.

The outside-text or upper context of human subjectivity is a principal, if not the principal aim of *Insight*. Texts, or the lower context of human objectifications, "attain a definitive significance only in the measure that they give access to the upper context" (I:19). Lonergan will not have texts for texts' sake, if that means exclusive concentration on objectifications in a conscious effort to free oneself from subjectivity. For him, "Genuine objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity. It is to be attained only by attaining authentic subjectivity" (M: 292). The question of subjectivity, or "the subject," is as vexing as the correlations we sought earlier. In short, Lonergan's notion of subject—as the reader has probably already guessed—lies in the upper context, the order of thatness, what Lonergan calls the subject-as-subject. Predications (whatness) objectify the subject, so that no longer is the essential subject at issue but the subject-as-object. Of paramount significance for Lonergan is what one holds concerning the position subject-as-subject.⁴⁰

MO: Sheed & Ward, 1993), pp. 153-72.

⁴⁰ Authentic subjectivity, according to Lonergan, is constituted by a threefold, ongoing "conversion": intellectual, moral, and religious (M:338). *Insight* is preoccupied with the first.

Present controversy over this notion, cast under a foundationalist/antifoundationalist guise, tends to blur, not without legitimate reason, Lonergan's understanding.⁴¹ There is absolutely no doubt that Lonergan considers the subject to be the "center" of conscious activity. Thus we read in *Insight* that the subject is "the experienced center of experiencing, the intelligent center of inquiry, insight, and formulations, the rational center of critical reflections, scrutiny, hesitation, doubt, and frustration" (I:434). But this should come as no surprise, for even Jacques Derrida, the expert of decentralization/dissemination, deems the subject to be "absolutely indispensable."⁴² Rather than focusing on polemically infested terms, we should look at the kind of "center" Lonergan intends and, perhaps more importantly, how he gets there.

Lonergan's "meditations" are not carried out in isolation from the rest of dialogical reality, in front of a blazing hearth where one could directly contemplate the mysteries of human knowledge through, say, morsels of wax. On the contrary, he situates himself unabashedly in the midst of diverse fields of thought that cause the querulous to cower in

⁴¹ See C. Davis, "Post-modernity and the Formation of the Self," in C. Davis, *Religion and the Making of Society: Essays in Social Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 153-69, who subtly treats Lonergan as an obvious example of traditional foundationalism.

⁴² See J. Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," in *The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, ed. R. Macksey and E. Donato (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1979), p. 271. It is unfortunate that the re-edited version of this important article (originally published in 1967) in J. Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. A. Bass (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978) does not contain the Discussion in which this crucial comment is made.

dismay.⁴³ But like Moses who promises the Torah to be near and not too far from us (Deut 30:11-14 // Rom 10:6b-8), Lonergan claims that he is not describing “some distant region of the globe which the reader never visited, or some strange and mystical experience which the reader never shared” (I:13). Personal experience, and the knowledge which has shaped that experience, is constantly invoked. It is up to the reader, Lonergan counsels, to “pluck [his] general phrases from the dim world of thought to set them in the pulsing flow of life” (I:13).

What happens when we know? is the guiding question of the first part of Insight,⁴⁴ the emphasis being placed on the knowing that knowers do, rather than on specific concepts or categories to which they should adhere in order to know. Insofar as this is true, Lonergan’s account of cognitional process “represents a kind of pragmatics.”⁴⁵ Here, the activities of consciousness are not procured through some sort of intuitive leap despite the myriad bog of conceptual objectifications. Acts of consciousness are related inextricably to historical situations and their idiosyncratic expressions, apart from which self-reflective

⁴³ We find Lonergan apologizing indeterminately for “the formidable five”, i.e. chapters 1-5, in the Introduction of Insight—formidable primarily because they are filled with instances of insight drawn from the fields of mathematics and science/physics. He summarizes his reasons for doing so, in good Cartesian manner, as follows: “[I]f one’s apprehension of [conscious] activities is to be clear and distinct, then one must prefer the fields of intellectual endeavor in which the greatest care is devoted to exactitude and in fact the greatest exactitude is attained” (I:14).

⁴⁴ Method’s version of the question is, What am I doing when I am knowing (M:25)?

⁴⁵ Rehg, p. 158. He adds that “[Lonergan’s] analysis is ‘formal’ in so far as it surveys different contexts of knowing in order to arrive at the formal structures governing a broad spectrum of cognitive acts.”

questions would not arise in the first place.⁴⁶ Lonergan, it is fair to state, is highly suspicious of grand abstractions concocted without recourse to, or in isolation from, historical pronouncements.⁴⁷

Through Euclidean and Riemannian geometry, Aristotelian and Newtonian laws of motion, Galileo's falling bodies, probability theory, notions of space and time, rationalist and empiricist epistemologies, relativity theory, psychology, and so on and so forth, Lonergan detects a pattern of activities that are common to all these heuristic structures. Seeing, hearing, touching, imagining, inquiring, understanding, conceiving, formulating, reflecting, marshaling and weighing evidence, and judging are among the operations which precipitate discoveries as banal as Archimedes' solution to King Heiro's problem ("Weigh the crown in water!"), or as arcane as Planck's constant ($h = 6.624 \cdot 10^{27}$), or Derrida's proclivity toward differance (with an "a"). The expressions which signify the operations are clearly subject to change; the operations, on the other hand, are the condition for the possibility of change.

Although the illustrations can be extremely abstract and often demanding, they are actual instances of direct and inverse insights.⁴⁸ As an expert pedagogue, Lonergan

⁴⁶ Thus Lonergan could say at the end of his career, "All my work has been introducing history into Catholic theology" (quoted in F. Crowe, p. 98). In the language of Method, this means the shift from classical to historical consciousness (M:xi, 154f.).

⁴⁷ Lonergan would agree with Michel Foucault that "there is no external position of certainty, no universal understanding that is beyond history and society" (P. Rabinow, "Introduction," in The Foucault Reader, ed. P. Rabinow [New York: Pantheon Books, 1984], p. 4). Rather than an "external position of certainty," Lonergan opts for internal positions of probability and, if we are lucky, of relative certainty.

⁴⁸ The question in Part One of Insight is not whether one appropriates the conceptual content of X's noetic activity as true, or renounces it as false. Lonergan defers this issue until

leads the reader slowly through a menacing terrain of intelligence which finds a worthy parallel in Virgil, who navigates Dante as a faithful companion through the cavernous halls of bitter woe and strife. We learn that the hell of personal disorientation and bewilderment, with regard to matters of knowing, cannot be genuinely eradicated through quick and easy answers.⁴⁹ The long and weary route of personal experience is marked out by Lonergan as the only real alternative to instant solutions, the goal of which is to recognize the difference between parroting impressive formulas and understanding them.

The purpose for this "recondite" expedition is very practical indeed. "My aim," Lonergan says, "was neither to advance mathematics nor to contribute to any of the specialized branches of science but to seek a common ground on which men of intelligence might meet" (I:7). Authentic interpersonal relations among academics might be another way of putting it, so long as this is not conceived as some cloistered, ivory-tower community little interested in the affairs of the day-to-day world. Lonergan has said too much about "common sense," and its inherent dangers, to advance such a way of being. The world envisioned here is one in which physicist, mathematician, philosopher, theologian, psychologist, etc., may meet in a spirit of respect toward the exigencies that bring about their varying perspectives on "reality." Supercilious comportments, strongly associated with one's field

chapter 14 of *Insight* (Part Two) where he discusses the "problematic" tier of metaphysics, positions and counter positions. His aim in Part One is strictly to achieve, as he puts it, a "merely" heuristic account of subject (I:419).

⁴⁹ "It has to begin from the polymorphic subject in his native disorientation and bewilderment" (I:422). Martin Luther was right after all: "We cannot reach heaven until we first descend into hell."

of interest, must be checked at the door in favor of an authentic pursuit of truth, which is multifaceted.

There is, though, an implicit claim in this practical program which for many proves to be overwhelmingly contentious. Put quite candidly, it is not only talk of a common ground that agitates several Insight readers, but that Lonergan sets the agenda for such a ground. Karl Rahner's controversial "anonymous Christianity" well describes what I mean at a theological level. Maurice Boutin makes the interesting point that Rahner's purportedly daring notion is commensurate with the imperative: "to understand someone better than he or she understands him or herself," which probably dates back to Immanuel Kant's first Critique.⁵⁰ Even a casual reading of Insight, written under the sanguine conviction that a set of ideas of fundamental importance have been hit upon (I:24), reveals a similar sentiment. Just as nobody appreciates being told, "You don't know who you are, but I do," so too tacit claims like, "You don't know what knowing is, but I do" can be, and are in fact, terribly troubling.

However, Lonergan does not reach this understanding of others from "the outside," apart from a close relationship to them or their subject matter.⁵¹ His understanding of others comes only after a long, personal struggle with the flight from insight (I:9), un-

⁵⁰ See M. Boutin, "Anonymous Christianity: A Paradigm for Interreligious Encounter?", Journal of Ecumenical Studies 20/4 (1983): 620f. Boutin contends that Rahner's notion is predominantly "pragmatic," similar to what is being argued for here in connection with Lonergan's epistemology.

⁵¹ For the full implications of this and the following sentences, see M. Boutin, pp. 621-25.

derstanding himself, coincident with the noematic structure of others', better than he did before. It seems only natural that he should publish the outcome of his struggles, which envision a common ground "rather impalpable at a time when neither mathematicians nor scientists nor men of common sense were notably articulate on the subject of insight" (I:7). What is being determined is not the shortcomings of others' knowing. Such a program would hardly merit the attention given to Insight. Rather, the "essence" of that knowing is sought after, with special reference to the noematic elements of technical patterns of being. To borrow Rahner's designation of the possibility and existence of anonymous Christians, Lonergan's account of cognition is "very keen" in the sense that its development requires concrete, recurrent acts of personal intellectual conversion on the part of academics themselves.⁵²

With respect to how Lonergan gets to the subject, then, we may conclude that it is through fastidious feats of engaging disparate domains of conceptual content—not by any means final or definitive⁵³—and through self-understanding continually prompted by personal experience, at times upsetting and painful, in relation to this content. Lonergan's

⁵² See Boutin, p. 625. - It is possible, of course, to argue along with Charles Davis that Lonergan's search for a "common ground" is nothing short of Christian triumphalism bent on securing its hold on the supposed "free" rein of truth; a program that is "adjectivally modern and substantivally Roman Catholic." See C. Davis, "Lonergan and the Teaching Church," in Foundations of Theology, Papers from the International Lonergan Congress 1970, ed. P. McShane (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971), pp. 60-75. The only problem with this proposition—although we can certainly be grateful for its leery reading of what might be potentially hazardous—is that it does not address Lonergan's proposals directly. Surely, there is more to ideas than possible intentions which go into creating them.

⁵³ See I:xix-xx (n. 19), 9, 24, 782 (n. 1).

notion of the subject is not simply given, but the result of an unfolding personal history as it inquires into the data of history.

Let us turn now to the kind of "center" Lonergan means. The "essence" of subject is the noetic operations of subject, which are, speaking noematically, constructed in participial form (-ing). "In other words, not only are we writing from a moving viewpoint but also we are writing about a moving viewpoint" (I:20). Essential and existential staticity are ruled out as an error of cognitional counterposition that inadvertently imagine knowing to be looking. Thus, on this score, "substance" may be thought to lie underneath "extension."⁵⁴ For Lonergan, however, central potency (experiencing), form (understanding), and act (judging), isomorphic with conjugate potency (experienced), form (understood), and act (judged), is always in potency (to-be-knowing) for still higher systematizations, rendering an integrative system that is always on the move (I:460-67). Notwithstanding their numerous, perhaps irreconcilable, differences, Lonergan's notion of the dynamism of subject/operator (in the sense of Ereignis) shares in common Heidegger's verbal meaning of physis/Wesen (es west) and Derrida's notion of functional center (fonction).⁵⁵

But how can an event be invariant? It may be admissible in mathematics to posit a "function" which remains unchanged when a specified transformation is applied, but

⁵⁴ I:462. - F. Copleston says of philosopher John Locke (1632-1683) that he speaks as though "substance were an unchanging substratum hidden beneath the changing phenomena" (A History of Philosophy, Vol. 5: Hobbes to Hume [New York: Doubleday, 1959], p. 94). Hidden in the sense that, were it possible, an extremely powerful microscope might be able to reveal it (see J. Locke, Essay, IV, iii, 24, 26).

⁵⁵ See M. Heidegger, Identity and Difference, p. 33 (n. 1); J. Derrida, "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," p. 271.

in philosophy or theology? Here, the performative aspect of pragmatics is valuable, for invariant refers to recurrent operations of consciousness that may be “glimpsed” concurrently with analysis. The subject-as-subject is the motor, if you will, of integrative conceptions of “itself” (the subject-as-object) in the process of conception. To say that it is variant is to be susceptible to the argument of invariancy. “For any human reviser would appeal to experience, understanding, and judgment; and there is no use arguing that men might be other than they are” (I:758). Contingent fact is what is at issue here, not necessity, “and the fact is established not prior to our engagement in knowing, but simultaneously with it” (I:356, emphasis added).

There can be no doubt that Insight is one among many objectifications of this contingent, eventual order. The nature of the topic is such that only readers can determine for themselves whether Lonergan has in fact “hit upon a set of ideas of fundamental importance.”⁵⁶

Our query has led us to deduce a double aspect of Insight which is commensurate with its aim (upper context), and the manner in which it is reached (lower context). The basic rudiments of that aim are semantically burdened with the problem of correlation—better: equiprimordiality. A tentative solution to this problem is Lonergan’s notion of differentiation in the intellectual (systemic) pattern of experience. Due to the elusive nature

⁵⁶ I:24.- Lonergan says as much: “No one else, no matter what his knowledge or his eloquence, no matter what his logical rigor or his persuasiveness, can do it for you” (I:13). And again, “No one can understand for another or judge for another. Such acts are one’s own” (I:421).

of act, the “break” of insight, which disseminates (un)conscious compression, is coupled with the “link” of self-appropriation in order to bind content to act at a higher, differentiated level of equiprimordiality. The question of procession must be seen within this light, if we are to escape linear argumentation that is grossly inattentive to a simultaneity which pervades the whole order.

The second aspect, which serves somewhat as the panoramic context within which the semantic implications of Insight are to be grasped, ties Lonergan’s program to “the pulsing flow of life” (I:13). No “outside” position of certainty is granted from which we can assess burgeoning objectifications of human subjects. The way to the “subject” (act) may only be found through the “object” (content). Irrespective of its highly abstract form, Insight is practically constituted to benefit the academic community. Nevertheless, there are those within and without the academic community who, though clearly not ostracized by Lonergan, are uninterested in such useful affairs; their’s is an interest which Heidegger—as well as Bultmann—deems fit to evaluate as “*Beschäftigungen*.”

DIALECTICAL ANALYSIS OF LONERGAN'S NOTION OF THE SUBJECT

2.1 Lonergan and The Subjectivist Turn: Background

A cursory glance through the Index of Insight will reveal that the historical framework within which Lonergan develops his notion of subject (acts of consciousness) is Modern. The renowned philosopher René Descartes (1596-1650) is often conveniently pegged as the father of modernity due to his meditative reflections on the nature of res cogitans and, as a consequence, res extensa, the basis for which is “his” indubitable Cogito (“Je pense, donc je suis”).¹ Kant’s Kritik der reinen Vernunft (“Critique of Pure Reason”) (1781), having critically examined the views inaugurated by Descartes and brought to a crisis of major proportions through the work of David Hume (1711-1776), provides the rigorous epistemological foundations for the subjective turn.²

¹ St. Augustine (354-430), as was pointed out to Descartes, is the precursor of (subjective) “indubitability.” In his Contra Academicos Augustine states, “I know most certainly that I exist and know and love. About such truths I fear no arguments from the Academy’s skeptics [Neo-Platonists]. ‘What if you are deceived?’ they protest. If I am deceived, I exist! For one who does not exist, cannot be deceived. Consequently I exist if I am deceived” (in Medieval Philosophy: From St. Augustine to Nicholas of Cusa, ed. J.F. Wippel and A.B. Wolter [New York: The Free Press, 1969], p. 40).

² As G. Sala states, “Die Hinwendung zum Subjekt ist das Formalprinzip des kantischen Denkens, wodurch Kant bis heute Anfang der Neuzeit geblieben ist” (Das Apriori in der menschlichen Erkenntnis: Eine Studie über Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft und Lonergan

According to Schubert M. Ogden, the modern turn to the subject is constituted by a transposition of traditional metaphysics into subjective, epistemological categories.³ Preoccupation with substances remained, but the focus shifted. No longer did philosophy concern itself with the primary form of known facts ("this stone is grey") from which metaphysics could begin its generalizations. Rather, the subject took its place ("my perception of this stone is grey") due to an overwhelming discovery of conscious experience, namely Descartes' Cogito. We will return to the provocations of Ogden's analysis shortly. In the meantime, we simply note that his description is entirely in keeping with Lonergan's deliberative actions.⁴

Both Verbum and Insight, to mention only two of Lonergan's pre-Method works, are purposely crafted with this modern transposition in view. As a Roman Catholic trained in the precisional, though hardly innovative, stratagems of Pre-Vatican II scholasticism, Lonergan, mindful of its incongruence with the then current intellectual tide, felt the tug of modernity leading him beyond conventional modes of thought.⁵ In the summer and fall of

gans Insight, ed. G. Schischkoff, Monographien Zur Philosophischen Forschung, Band 97 [Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain, 1971], p. 4). See C2:70 (n. 2).

³ S.M. Ogden, "Lonergan and the Subjectivist Principle," The Journal of Religion 51 (1971): 155-172. - Reprinted in Language, Truth and Meaning, Papers from the International Lonergan Congress 1970, ed. P. McShane (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972), pp. 218-235.

⁴ In his response, Lonergan does not dispute Ogden's Whiteheadian analysis of the shift from macro- to micro-experiential reflection (see "Bernard Lonergan Responds," in Language, Truth and Meaning, pp. 306-312).

⁵ See Q. Quesnell, "A Note on Scholasticism," in The Desires of the Human Heart: An Introduction to the Theology of Bernard Lonergan, ed. V. Gregson (New York/Mahwah:

1933 in Montreal, Lonergan did some firsthand reading of the *Summa*, which led him to believe that "St Thomas was not nearly as bad as he is painted."⁶ His eleven-year apprenticeship to Aquinas, however, did not begin until 1938, when the dissertation topic on *gratia operans* was suggested to him incidentally by his thesis director Charles Boyer.⁷ Contrary to popular opinion, which excises the erroneous view that *Insight* is merely a by-product of Thomist categories, Lonergan's philosophical development did not commence with St Thomas, but took a round-about route from John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801-1890) to Augustine, from Augustine to Plato, and then to Aquinas.⁸

The intellectual milieu in which Lonergan found himself had experienced, and was continuing to experience, the revolutionary changes brought about, for example, by Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886) and Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911). Although Lonergan was only able to assimilate the work of the German Historical School later in his career, judging from a

Paulist Press, 1988), pp. 144-149: "[Pre-Vatican II] Theology consisted in learning, appreciating and passing on what the Church had always taught. One could expand its content by applying it to new situations or by drawing logical conclusions from it. But no one would have dreamed of advertising a new theology book in the way which has become familiar since Vatican II: 'Full of new insights ...'; 'exciting ...'; 'revolutionary ...'; 'casts doubts on the whole procedure of the past ...'" (p. 148).

⁶ B. Lonergan, letter to Henry Keane (Lonergan's provincial superior), 22 January 1935, quoted in F. Crowe, pp. 22, 40.

⁷ See Crowe, p. 40f.

⁸ UB:350. - In his "Response to A Symposium" held at the University of Notre Dame in 1967, Lonergan makes the following point: "[T]here is the question whether my prior allegiance to Thomism did not predetermine the results I reached [in *Insight*]. Now it is true that I spent a great deal of time in the study of St. Thomas and that I owe a great deal to him. I just add, however, that my interest in Aquinas came late" (C2:38).

fascinating file he kept entitled "History" and numbered 713 ("File 713"), which dates back to the late 1930s, he was keenly aware of the problems history posed for traditional Catholic theology even at this early stage. In his Nottingham lecture of 1959 on "Method in Catholic Theology," two years after *Insight*, Lonergan speaks of a "historical sense" by which he means "an awareness that concepts are functions of time, that they change and develop with every advance of understanding, that they become platitudinous and insignificant by passing through minds that do not understand, and that such changes take place in a determinate manner that can be the object of a science."⁹

By 1972 Lonergan alludes to a "classicist notion of culture" that envisions one culture, both universal and permanent, over against which he pivots an "empirical notion of culture," his notion of culture. The latter refers to a set of meanings and values which inform a way of life (*Dilthey's Leben*) in the process of development or decline, though it may remain unchanged for years. Under the strictures of classicism, "theology is conceived as a permanent achievement," the static nature of which is sought by its adherents. An empirical situation recognizes theology to be "an ongoing process" in need of rigorous methodologies to expound its kinetic operations (M:xi). Lonergan's agenda is plain: to introduce history into Catholic theology.¹⁰

⁹ B. Lonergan, "Method in Catholic Theology," published for the first time in *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 10 (1992): 16f. - This and other revealing remarks on the historical should be read in conjunction with Quesnell's absorbing "Note on Scholasticism" (see n. 5 above). See also Lonergan's strikingly sophisticated Cincinnati Lecture of 1959 on "History" in TE:233-257.

¹⁰ See chapter 1 (n. 46).

Such a historical emphasis includes the need for explicit reflection on the nature of human subjects, who are not only a part of history, but who also produce it—in Lonergan's terms, the history that happens and the history that is written about. Because "historical sense" is missing from medieval thought,¹¹ its notion of subject is often couched in metaphysical or in unhistorical terms. The upheaval effected by the Enlightenment—not without its own problems, of course—demands a rethinking of traditional categories which are incommensurate with ever fluctuating contexts. For Lonergan, living in an age swayed by Freudian and Jungian psychology meant turning Aquinas' cognitional theory, which is expressed almost exclusively in metaphysical terms and established by metaphysical suppositions, upside down: from the rhythmic accentuation on metaphysical reality, to the depths of psychological acts of consciousness.¹²

2.2 Lonergan and The Subjectivist Bias: The Transposition

In chapter one I alluded to the kind of subject Lonergan means almost in passing. It remains now to develop this in light of Schubert M. Ogden's critique which may be summarized as the illegitimacy of "the subjectivist bias."

¹¹ See Lonergan, "Method in Catholic Theology," p. 17.

¹² C:142; see V:45; I:432. - Lonergan does mention certain exceptions in Aquinas' case (see *Summa*, 1, q. 84, a. 7 c; 1, q. 88, a. 2, ad 3m). - R. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, is a current example of one who seeks to further Lonergan's emphasis on the psychological in an effort to transpose "Christian theological claims from the metaphysically-based scholastic categories in which often they were originally formulated into the psycho-logically-based methodical categories required in our present day" (M. Vertin, "Lonergan on Consciousness: Is There a Fifth Level?", *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 [1994]: 35).

I have already stated in no uncertain terms that Lonergan is entirely conscious of the fact that his cognitional theory is Aquinas' metaphysics turned upside down.¹³ Ogden describes such a procedure, primarily in reference to Descartes, and with a sidelong bow to Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), as a usurpation of traditional metaphysical categories. The main object of Ogden's attack is the primacy often given to self-reflection in modern philosophical circles, which Lonergan tends to exemplify rather well. What troubles him most is not only that the subject is regarded as "the key to philosophical understanding, but also that the subject can be understood only by breaking out of the limits within which understanding tends to move, even in understanding itself."¹⁴

Ogden's response to the subjective-primacy position is that it fails to realize that its so-called "primacy" is derived from classical metaphysics. Moreover, "the experiencing self is vastly more than understanding, especially the fully reflective understanding properly sought by philosophy, and that it most seriously misunderstands itself when, forgetting this, it supposes that its sense perception is its only direct experience of reality beyond."¹⁵

¹³ Lonergan prefers "transcendental method" (the "Thomism for Tomorrow") to describe what he does as opposed to "Classical Thomism" (C2:47-52). S. Jaki's polemical designation "Aquikantism," which he feels more appropriate than "transcendental Thomism," irreparably blurs the distinction between Kant and Lonergan (see The Keys of The Kingdom: A Tool's Witness to Truth [Chicago, IL: Franciscan Herald Press, 1986], pp. 155-159). See I:439; C:192-197; Sala, Lonergan and Kant, *passim*. - For a brief summary of only one aspect of this see n. 70 below.

¹⁴ S.M. Ogden, p. 225f. - I refer to the edition of Ogden's article in Language, Truth and Meaning (see n. 3 above).

¹⁵ S.M. Ogden, p. 225. - I take it that by "reality beyond" Ogden means beyond the experiencing subject, whatever or whomever that may be.

Despite Ogden's usual circumspective composure, his venomous arrows—informative indeed—are clearly off the mark here. A number of important omissions may have cleared the air somewhat. His comparative analysis of Lonergan and Descartes through Whitehead has contributed methodologically to the oversights he was bound to attribute to Lonergan.¹⁶ However, let us turn to the data, since argumentative charges should never take the place of good solid evidence.

Even though Lonergan turns Aquinas' metaphysics "upside down," a kenotic, non-metaphysical subject is the furthest thing from his mind. In a sense, the subject is metaphysics—at first latent (preconceptually operative), then explicit (conceptually operative as an organizing structure of proportionate being).¹⁷ The latent metaphysical subject refers to the subject in his or her bewildered, polymorphic state. The in-between predicament, or the "problematic" tier, constitutes the subject in the perdition of managing that polymorphism. "Explicit metaphysics is a personal attainment" (I:421) which involves being reasonably capable of explaining that and other structures (inside- and outside-things).

Although the primacy question has most certainly not been subverted by the foregoing comments, they serve to show that for Lonergan tl. transposition is not a bad thing,

¹⁶ Lonergan caught this when in response to Ogden's persistent claim that he had things wrong side up (i.e., starting from understanding to understand experience, rather than the other way around) he said: "If Professor Ogden were to discover that Whitehead meant something similar when he took his stand on experience, the distance that separates us would in some measure be reduced" ("Bernard Lonergan responds," in Language, Truth and Meaning, p. 310, emphasis added).

¹⁷ "Metaphysics ... is not something in a book but something in a mind. Moreover, it is produced not by a book but only by the mind in which it is" (I:421).

nor has it "overthrown" metaphysics in the slightest. It is metaphysical reflection at a different level which takes seriously the modern turn to the subject. But the subject envisaged here "is not some general or transcendental or absolute subject" (I:421), of which Ogden is rightly apprehensive—the flip side of what Charles Taylor has come to describe as "an inwardness of self-sufficiency."¹⁸ Such excessive views, still flimsily shouldered by vestiges of Enlightenment enthusiasm, have no bearing on the question of the subject as Lonergan conceives it. As we saw earlier, the thatness of noetic operations are to be distinguished from the whatness of noetic objectifications, which may, and often do in fact, take the form of anthropocentric absolutism. This is not Lonergan's intention with regard to the "primacy" of the subject in speculative endeavors of whatever viewpoint.¹⁹

Before I get to Ogden's claim that the epistemological tradition in which Lonergan toils "supposes that its sense perception is its only direct experience of reality beyond," let us pause for a moment to consider the charge of disciplinary or perspectival superiority ostensibly propounded by Lonergan, who "not only speaks in the traditional terms but also thinks in the traditional categories."²⁰

¹⁸ C. Taylor, Sources of The Self: The Making of the Modern Identity (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 158.

¹⁹ "[F]rom the viewpoint of the writer," Lonergan says, "it is any particular subject that can experience, can inquire intelligently, can reflect critically, but from the viewpoint of the reader the particular subject is the subject that he or she is" (I:421).

²⁰ S.M. Ogden, p. 227.

Loneragan would wholeheartedly agree with Ogden that "the experiencing self is vastly more than understanding."²¹ Even in *Insight*, written in a phase of Lonergan's life which longtime disciple and friend Fredrick Crowe describes as "rather intellectual,"²² we hear of various "patterns of experience" other than that of the "intellectual," which are rated equally valid in their own right.²³ In a word, the primacy question for Lonergan is essentially a methodological one. A knowledge of the processes of cognition enables one to sketch out, as it were, a heuristic plan with which to approach the measureless "horizon" of the to-be-known, and to critically evaluate the lower-context level of the purportedly already-known. Although there can be no question that for Lonergan cognitional process (the subject-as-subject) is the appropriate place to start methodologically, he unequivocally states that the

²¹ "Man is not a pure intelligence" (I:237).

²² F. Crowe, p. 97. And yet we have to be careful, as Fr. Crowe mentions elsewhere ("The Genus 'Lonergan and ...' and Feminism," in *Lonergan and Feminism*, ed. C.S.W. Crysedale [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994], p. 21). In "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J." (1971) reissued in *A Second Collection*, Lonergan makes the following point: "Without feelings ... experience, understanding, judgment [are] paper-thin. The whole mass and momentum of living is in feeling" (C2:221). In his usual unpretentious manner, Crowe confesses: "We tend to associate this concern with the later Lonergan, but there is ample evidence for it in the earlier Lonergan too; many of us were simply slow to notice the data" ("The Genus 'Lonergan and ...' ...," p. 21) He concretizes this by pointing out how the entries under "feelings" in the index of the latest edition of *Insight* have noticeably increased in comparison to the first edition, which he himself compiled (I:9) ("The Genus 'Lonergan and ...' ...," p. 30 [n. 20]).

²³ These are the biological, aesthetic, and dramatic patterns of experience (I:204-214). Added to the list on p. 410 are the artistic, practical (which is really elemental or foundational for the "intellectual" as such) and mystical patterns of experience. In his Halifax lectures (1958) Lonergan is quite clear that these differentiations only "provide suggestions, arrows, pointing to possible points of reference which in different combinations may give one some approximation to what the pattern of experience at any given moment in any given individual may be" (UB:106).

ontological and the cognitional are expressionally independent and legitimate ways of being within the circle of meaning.²⁴ He says in effect, "Start where you please, but complete the circle, from cognitional to metaphysical and back to cognitional, or metaphysical to cognitional and back to metaphysical; further, one must go round the circle over and over, expanding and deepening one's understanding" (C:286 [n. b]).

"Metaphysics" here does not necessarily mean Lonergan's metaphysics, which consciously presupposes the transposition referred to earlier. The issue is not to undermine metaphysics done from a different perspective, as Ogden seems to insinuate.²⁵ The real issue, for Lonergan, is to lay out the subjective moorings of a Whitehead and/or a Heidegger, whose "explicit" metaphysical reflections contain a "latent" operator that is heuristically predisposed toward the universe of Being. As Lonergan says in chapter one of *Insight*: "Archimedes had his insight by thinking about the crown; we shall have ours by thinking about Archimedes" (I:28). A complementarity is imagined that can only make investigative procedures much more efficient.

In *Method*—which appeared soon after the proceedings of the 1970 International Lonergan Congress—Lonergan delineates the transposition in terms of the "stages of meaning," with special emphasis given to the work of Bruno Snell and Ernst Cassirer.²⁶ There the

²⁴ More will be said about this circle in chapter 3.

²⁵ See S.M. Ogden, p. 234.

²⁶ B. Snell, *The Discovery of Mind* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1960); E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, 3 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953, 1955, 1957); *The Problem of Knowledge: Philosophy, Science, and History since Hegel*, trans. W.H. Woglom and C.W. Hendel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950).

evolution of "the subjective turn" is traced, assuming its legitimacy, through three epochal stages of human self-conscious development.²⁷ The movement outlined is generally one from undifferentiated (1st stage) to differentiated consciousness (3rd stage), with a theoretical mode in the middle (2nd stage) of which we are presently experiencing the tail-end. They are progressively, temporally related, so that "one has to be in the first stage to advance to the second and one has to be in the second to advance to the third" (M:85). Differentiated consciousness represents a sublated, ideal form of the prior stages. Rather than "stating the truth about this or that kind of reality" (1st stage) or aiming at truth through theoretical precision (2nd stage), the third stage, according to Lonergan, heads toward the unification of truth not through feats of logic (2nd stage), but through method (M:94). "Method" in the sense of that which provides "a [general] framework for collaborative creativity" (M:xi), and not rules to be followed scrupulously by a dolt.²⁸

If we revert our attention back to the question of the subject, the third stage is Lonergan's attempt to think the subject as such instead of simply stating its reality or recognizing certain theoretical principles about the subject, upon which everything else may be

²⁷ Lonergan stresses that the stages are "ideal constructs," "theoretical divisions" of the Western tradition which are not to be understood chronologically (M:85).

²⁸ See J. Miller, *In the Throe of Wonder*, pp. 1-9, for a pejorative sense of method which resembles Heidegger's *Ge-stell* ("enframing"). This type of method, he agrees, is not owned by Lonergan (p. 199 [n. 6]). Indeed, toward the end of his career Lonergan wittily reaffirms what he says in *Method* (xi): "[Method] is not just a list of materials to be combined in a cake or a medicine It yields ongoing and cumulative results, and so it differs from the New Method Laundry which keeps on repeating the same result whenever it is used" (C3: 140). Method as *Ge-stell* is the deteriorative element (the "standing-reserve") of Lonergan's second stage of meaning.

based. At times it does sound as if Lonergan holds to the latter position (I:22, 769f.); but we must be careful not to confuse appearances (terms) with reality (the meaning of terms which have either been ill-chosen or have procured negative connotations with the passing of time). The "formal pragmatic" aspect of Insight indicates that intuitive, non-historical pronouncements regarding the subject are part of the first and second stages of meaning, which Lonergan attempts to sublimate with a view to ascertaining the structure that underlies such pronouncements.²⁹ Judging from millennia of contemplative life, "the structure" on this side of eternity is not likely to change, although its expression clearly will, and already has. Among other things, the nature of self-appropriation, which binds content to act, guarantees this as the recurrent-cycle principle of self-discovery. In this sense, then, reflection on the subject can never be foreclosed; it always remains proleptically open-ended.³⁰

One wonders how this poses a serious threat to "the subject in the manner or with the results of someone following Whitehead."³¹ Ogden seems to pin the difficulty on modernist conceptions of sensation which champion the position that sense data are our only direct experience of reality beyond. By linking Lonergan somewhat reluctantly to this tradi-

²⁹ Thus Lonergan's disdain toward intuitive notions like "perception," though equally critical, is stated less provocatively than Derrida: "Now I don't know what perception is and I don't believe that anything like perception exists. Perception is precisely a concept, a concept of an intuition or of a given originating from the thing itself, present itself in its meaning, independently from language, from the system of reference" (Derrida, p. 272).

³⁰ Crowe, fully cognizant of this fact, perspicaciously notes that "Insight, though a monumental piece of work, is not a finished product. I would go further and say that it never will be finished, and indeed never should be finished" (Lonergan, p. 73).

³¹ S.M. Ogden, p. 234. - Unless, of course, the evidence does not measure up to the experience of attentive, intelligent and rational subjects.

tion, Ogden further suggests that he is subject to the same Cartesian errors Whitehead succinctly pointed out over a generation ago.

Whitehead distinguishes two modes of perception in order to escape the modernist trap, which tacitly identifies perception with sense-perception. What is usually understood as "perception" is really only a derivative form of a primordial type of perception Whitehead calls "prehension," which humanity shares with the rest of sentient life. It is responsible for our direct, nonsensory perceptions which exert "causal efficacy" upon us, so that not only are we capable of perceiving clearly and distinctly our past decisions in a non-sensate manner, but also our bodily parts affecting our present experience.³² "Presentational immediacy" refers to the other pure mode commonly, though erroneously, regarded as "perception" proper. In itself, this mode offers us nothing but data that are apprehended immediately. They do not proffer anything near an explanation concerning their possible origin or meaning. They are simply "there" (ontic realities) to be perceived.

According to David Griffin, who also follows Whitehead, by equating human perception in its fullness with presentational immediacy modern philosophy "has eliminated any basis in experience for sense-data to refer to anything beyond themselves."³³ He goes on to say that Whitehead uses the doctrine of prehension "to explain our knowledge that there

³² See D.R. Griffin, "Postmodern Theology and A/Theology: A Response to Mark C. Taylor," in *Varieties of Postmodern Theology*, ed. D.R. Griffin, W.A. Beardslee and J. Holland (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1989), p. 45.

³³ D.R. Griffin, p. 46, emphasis added.

is a real world beyond ourselves."³⁴ Solipsistic monism engendered by the modernist turn cannot be escaped unless prehension is recognized as that which precedes, occasions and supports apprehension. This arrangement comprises "the right side up" for Ogden: starting with experience (prehension) to understand experience (apprehension), rather than the other way around.

Ben Sirach's admonition to "weigh thy words in a balance" (Sir 28:25) cunningly captures what is lacking in Ogden's otherwise insightful analysis. I contend that the problem really is "semantic," and that a closer inspection of Lonergan's intentions, as he himself insisted, actually reduces in some measure the distance which separates Ogden/Whitehead from Lonergan.³⁵

The primacy of experience which, Ogden argues, is a—if not the—way out of the subjectivist bias, refers to the primitive nonsensory mode of prehension. Since perception (Lonergan's "experience") cannot allow for experiences beyond the immediate sensate qualities of data, we obviously have to do with a truncated version of reality that fails to grasp simple apprehension as "a late derivative phase of complex integrations" that "only illuminates the more primitive types of prehension so far as these prehensions are still elements in the products of integration."³⁶ Is it any wonder, then, that for Lonergan "any experience we have

³⁴ D.R. Griffin, p. 45.

³⁵ See n. 16 above.

³⁶ A.N. Whitehead quoted in S.M. Ogden, p. 224.

of beings other than ourselves consists entirely in what we are able to perceive of them by our five senses"?³⁷

Ogden's error is due, among other things, to a confusion over Lonergan's "outer" and "inner" word, which he interprets as "sense" and "consciousness"—the so-called traditional categorical distinction between "sense" and "intellect." This is a misreading, a modernist reading of traditional medieval categories. To equate Cartesian dualism with Aquinas' inner and outer word is to grossly obscure their disparity. Since we treat Aquinas' distinctions in chapter one (§ 1), suffice it to say here that "inner" word indicates the explicative content of an act of insight, "outer" its expression (spoken, written, imagined or meant). "Outer" taken in Ogden's sense refers to things out-there or in-here which merely "are" in spite of (methodical) inquiry. "Inner" words are concepts of out-there/in-here things generated by acts of insight without which "prehensional" or "apprehensional" data remain data, potentially intelligible but actually unthought of. Millennia separate Democritus' matter-in-motion from Whitehead's prehension.

Additionally, to argue that Lonergan's notion of experience requires the perceptual immediacy of other beings in order to have experiences of them is a curious oversimplification. Experiencing other beings can come in a variety of forms. We "experience" them through memories, letters, books, internet, telephones, and so forth. However, such experiences for Lonergan are not merely experiential, if by that we mean "data" (presentational immediacy). The images or phantasms of these mediums constitute "experience" in Lonergan's

³⁷ S.M. Ogden, p. 227, emphasis added.

gan's sense. What is required, what is in fact operative, is the "experience" of meaning which encompasses the activity and content of understanding. Thus, we "experience" mediated worlds of past and present meaning through communicative agencies which are perceivable "In themselves they are just data. The "real" experience of other beings, whether present or absent, happens in the realm of meaning, understanding."³⁹

It seems that Ogden's emphasis on prehension (perception as causal efficacy: experience) is an attempt to secure the ontological/metaphysical primacy of non-sensory outside-facts over against cognitional experience of sensory outside-facts (perception as presentational immediacy: experience); Ogden appears little interested in non-representational inside-facts (the data of consciousness: experience). But unless he is willing to argue for some sort of vague intuition of prehensional data, he has to admit, with Griffin, that prehension is a "doctrine" (concept) due to an understanding of experience, non-sensate or otherwise, which is determined to explain a real world beyond human subjects. The first part of *Insight* aims at no more or no less than this. Methodologically, then, Lonergan does have it "the right side up": starting with understanding (the act of insight) to understand (concept of ap/prehension) experience (the "reality" of ap/prehension).

³⁸ This is not far from what Whitehead, according to Griffin (p. 45), understands by the causal efficacy of prehension, which is non-sensory like Lonergan's insight/understanding, although perspectively different. - See P.J. Drilling, "Experience in Lonergan's Theological Method," *Science et Esprit* 31 (1979): 303-327, who detects three different roles experience plays in Lonergan's methodology: (1) experience of data in general, (2) experience of data on the existential subject, and (3) experience of existential subjectivity in the concrete world order.

³⁹ How else does Ogden hope to account for Lonergan's unflinching belief in the reality of God, which is clearly not perceivable?

Ogden's approach is characteristic of the second stage of meaning, which is given to the logistics of theoretical pronouncements. It is entirely logical to argue for prehensional reality that serves as the sine qua non of simple apprehensional reality. However, Ogden never asks how he, or Whitehead, knows this to be the case; he accepts it in accordance with certain canons of logic he latently presupposes. Lonergan's efforts are spent on explicating (explicitus) this latent structure (implicitus) which enables him to say: "... what Whitehead called the bifurcation of nature ... is really the bifurcation of understanding."⁴⁰

2.3 Lonergan, Language and Mental Acts of Meaning

The relatively recent linguistic turn has brought into serious question the kind of mental exertion Lonergan pours over the now contentious issue of pre-linguistic acts of meaning. The later work of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), namely his Philosophische Untersuchungen ("Philosophical Investigations"), published posthumously in 1953, is often invoked as having administered the fatal deathblow to such endeavors. Indeed, George A. Lindbeck considers Lonergan's apparent emphasis on a kind of privacy in the origins of language to be "more than doubtful" in the shadow of Wittgenstein's discoveries.⁴¹ More recently, Richard Topping has seen fit to declare Lonergan's "transcendental foundationalism"

⁴⁰ UB:65. - The "really" points to the constitutive nature of Whitehead's pronouncements (the act of intelligere). This is not to deny their reality (their meaning), but only to affirm that prehensional or apprehensional data by themselves do not provide this knowledge. See D.R. Griffin, p. 45, who says this only of sense-perception. I prefer, in light of the previous discussion, to include prehension.

⁴¹ See G.A. Lindbeck, The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984), pp. 38, 43 (n. 18).

incoherent according to the strictures of a Wittgensteinian reading.⁴² A leading complaint—enticed by a cankered form of Ockham's so-called razor-principle—is that Lonergan's inordinate propensity for the complex unnecessarily clouds a process served best by simple, albeit incomplete, hypotheses.⁴³ One wonders, however, in what sense Wittgenstein's program, or that of other serious philosophers, can be deemed any less cumbersome.⁴⁴ Theoretical simplicity is relative to the knower.

Of consequential worth to the present analysis is the real object of Wittgenstein's anti-mentalist attack. What, in other words, incites him to say, "Mental processes just are queer"?⁴⁵ As with Whitehead/Ogden, Wittgenstein's philosophical canon points heartlessly in the direction of Cartesian dualism, the mind-body, inner-outer dichotomy. Descartes' conception of the disembodied, isolated ego (*res cogitans*) underlying bodily functions is at the

⁴² See R. Topping, "Transcendental Method and Private Language," *ARC* 21 (1993): 11.

⁴³ Thus Lindbeck states that thinkers like Lonergan "resort to complicated intellectual gymnastics and to that extent are unpersuasive" (p. 17, emphasis added). Topping, too, complains of gratuitous complexity on the part of Lonergan, and adds that Wittgenstein "provides theologians with a less cumbersome account of how religious language and experience are related" (p. 11).

⁴⁴ Norman Malcolm recalls how walks with Wittgenstein were "very exhausting. Whatever we talked about, he turned his mind to it with great seriousness and intensity, and it was a formidable strain on me to keep up with his thoughts." Uncertain ambulations, he adds, were "conjoined with the most exacting conversation! The freshness and depth of Wittgenstein's thinking, no matter what the topic, was highly demanding of his companion. His remarks were never commonplace" (*Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir* [London: Oxford University Press, 1958], p. 31). Can one say less of his published material?

⁴⁵ Wittgenstein quoted in J. Fitzpatrick, "Lonergan and the Later Wittgenstein," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 10 (1992): 32.

heart of Wittgenstein's sustained attack.⁴⁶ The ramifications of this conclusion cannot be stressed enough, for it determines in many ways how Lonergan's understanding of pre-linguistic acts of meaning will be approached.

Consider Topping's assessment. By assuming—presumably not without careful consideration—that Wittgenstein's account of language opposes Lonergan's cognitional theory, Topping has unwittingly placed Lonergan in a Cartesian "hot seat," so that not only is Lonergan made to sound as if he contends, as opposed to Wittgenstein, for "a privileged account of reality,"⁴⁷ but also that he seeks "to justify" determinate linguistic practices with reference to an invariant cognitive structure.⁴⁸ It is not a far leap on this account to pivot Wittgenstein's emphasis on socio-linguistic usage over against Lonergan's "privatized," foundational option—the former being pragmatically superior to the latter.

Topping's inkling that Wittgenstein and Lonergan differ on a number of points is correct, but he fails to diagnose the situation adequately. And so superficial contrasts are set up about which Wittgenstein and Lonergan do, in fact, agree. Take, for instance, the claim that Wittgenstein's critique of private languages, if accurate, indicates that "it simply is not possible to determine apart from all particular 'language-games' or 'forms of life' the logic to which they must, if they are to be objective, conform."⁴⁹ Is this not what Lonergan

⁴⁶ J. Fitzpatrick, p. 36.

⁴⁷ R. Topping, pp. 23, 24.

⁴⁸ R. Topping, p. 19.

⁴⁹ R. Topping, p. 19. - A statement that makes Lonergan out to be a logical positivist.

says? Topping has lost sight of the "pragmatic" moorings of Insight.⁵⁰ Consequently, it is not a question of "must" (necessity is ruled out by Lonergan), but a question of "that" (contingent fact) determined, a fortiori, by the "what" (content).

Inadvertence to this and other details has contributed to Topping's portrayal of Lonergan in terms which imply no more than a modified version of Cartesian foundationalism.⁵¹ Thus, under the illusion of a *carte blanche* on reality, Lonergan "seeks to ground" (rather than "thinks the ground" of) determinate linguistic practices, and he "attempts to provide" transcendental concepts (rather than "recognize" the language which supports them within particular language-games). What is even more disappointing is Topping's desire to document Lonergan's "incoherence" based on a Wittgensteinian perspective the coherency of which is placed in question.⁵² Hardly the type of philosophical modesty worthy of Wittgenstein's passionate rigour.⁵³

⁵⁰ See 1.4 of the present analysis.

⁵¹ In all fairness to Topping, he does recognize that Lonergan's version of foundationalism is not subject to typical anti-foundationalist critiques, since its "rock" is pre-propositional and pre-conceptual (pp. 16, 24 [n. 4]). Hence, "the problem of finding a critic." Nevertheless, his treatment does paint Lonergan, unwittingly perhaps, in a manner resembling the Cartesian program, albeit a modified version—as is to be expected from his methodological starting-point.

⁵² "Whether Wittgenstein's account of language and experience is more coherent and satisfactory than Lonergan's is difficult to say" (Topping, p. 23).

⁵³ Despite the fact that Wittgenstein was usually very hard on himself, so that he could write in the preface of the Investigations that it is not "a good book," "this," writes Malcolm, "was not a characteristic attitude. He expounded and defended his ideas in argument with confidence and power. He did not think of the central conceptions of his philosophy as possibly in error. He certainly believed, most of the time, that he had produced an important advance in philosophy" (p. 60).

Better is Joseph Fitzpatrick's view that Wittgenstein and Lonergan are at one with respect to their "negative" contribution (critique of Cartesian dualism), but at odds when it comes to their "positive" proposals (the nature and role of insight). This allows one to see the significant differences without confusing the issues to which they would both probably concede. We should be wary of arguments that diametrically oppose erudite thinkers, especially when we are not so sure about the consistency of their positions.

In the Philosophical Investigations Wittgenstein counsels philosophers to resist talking about meaning "in the head" (inner states), and to start scrutinizing linguistic expressions, the question of meaning, within the forms of life that give them purpose.⁵⁴ Importance is attached to language use rather than self-reflection conceived epistemologically as an examination of inner states, which are by and large unavailable (hidden), and do not provide criteria by which we may judge the validity of particular claims.⁵⁵ It is a difference between traditional philosophical endeavors, typified by Wittgenstein's earlier work, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (1918), the foundational investigations of Gottlob Frege (1848-1925), Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), Rudolf Carnap (1891-1970), and Cartesianism in general, which, according to Wittgenstein's portrayal in the Investigations, are bewitched by prejudices and preconceived notions regarding so-called a priori knowledge; and between grammatical or purely descriptive philosophy, typified by the Investigations, which "leaves everything as it

⁵⁴ See M.H. McCarthy, The Crisis of Philosophy (Albany, NY: SUNY press, 1990), p. 132.

⁵⁵ See J. Fitzpatrick, p. 32.

is."⁵⁶ The former is held captive by mental picturing supported by ostention; the latter recognizes the true support to be socio-linguistic practice with a view to particular language-games.

Wittgenstein's accent on socio-linguistically determined practices intends to impair needless exertion—and anxiety—spent on the disembodied "I" of philosophical reflection, as if there were mental processes to be had without the language-games which notionally give them rise in the first place. This "intellectualist" *coup d'état*, Wittgenstein argues, deserves to suffer the embarrassment of unveiling: "What we are destroying is nothing but houses of cards and we are clearing up the ground of language on which they stand."⁵⁷ Lonergan joins Wittgenstein in his deconstructive efforts when severely criticizing the notion of subject conceived "as an isolated center of consciousness, detached from the body and the world 'out there' which it confronts and comes to know by some form of mental picturing ['in here'] supported by ostensive definition."⁵⁸ For Lonergan, we are born into a world ever mediated by meaning, which imposes its order on us and in which we participate. The privileged world of immediacy is really only a meaningless (*sinnlos*) experience of presentations, fleeting at that, and reserved for infants. Rarely, if recollectively ever, have we experienced "reality" immediately.

⁵⁶ M.H. McCarthy, p. 137. - "The purpose is not to justify language, to supply new information about it, or to unify it theoretically, but to assemble reminders so that actual patterns of our linguistic practice are made clear" (loc. cit.; cf. §§ 124, 127 of the *Investigations*).

⁵⁷ L. Wittgenstein quoted in M.H. McCarthy, p. 139.

⁵⁸ J. Fitzpatrick, p. 42.

How, then, does Lonergan propose to argue for pre-linguistic acts of meaning? Does he truly believe (*contra* Wittgenstein) that there is a way out of the linguistic web? To answer this question we have to appeal to the Method distinction of "ordinary" and "original meaningfulness"—a slightly developed version of "genetic" expansion in the expression of meaning in Insight (I:614). This will put us in a better position to address the problem of differences (Wittgenstein's and Lonergan's "positive" proposals).

By ordinary meaningfulness Lonergan means the sustaining flow of expression that may or may not be linguistic, and within which intellection moves and understands Being. It is, no doubt, essentially public and only derivatively private, so that what is in common use is due not to some isolated individual who decides its meaning, but to a group of individuals who do and understand so. Here, learning how particular language-games are used is a chief concern. Original meaningfulness refers to the genetic (developmental) aspect of meaning-expression.

Now developments consist in discovering new uses for existing words, in inventing new words, and in diffusing the discoveries and inventions. All three are a matter of expressed mental acts. The discovery of a new usage is a mental act expressed by the new usage. The invention of a new word is a mental act expressed by the new word. The communication of the discoveries and inventions can be done technically by introducing definitions or spontaneously as when A utters his new verbal constellation, B responds, A grasps in B's response how successful he was in communicating his meaning and, in the measure he failed, he seeks and tries out further discoveries and inventions. Through a process of trial and error a new usage takes shape, and, if there occurs a sufficiently broad diffusion of the new usage, then a new ordinary usage is established. Unlike ordinary meaningfulness, then, unqualified meaningfulness originates in expressed mental acts, is communicated and perfected through expressed mental acts, and attains ordinariness when the perfected communication is extended to a large enough number of individuals. (M:255f.)

Escaping the linguistic web is too restrictive a way to describe what Lonergan maintains here. For besides prejudging the matter as one of imprisonment, out of which one must hopelessly escape to save "occult" activities, it overlooks Lonergan's appreciation of the equiprimordial tension of the sustaining role of language (content-expression) and the dynamism (acts) which energizes the whole process. Ordinary or normative linguistic practice supports original contributions⁵⁹ which in turn become ordinary. "Human knowing is cyclic and cumulative" (I:399). It is not by accident that Lonergan delineates conscious activity along the lines of a heuristic structure.

Noam Chomsky, noted linguist and philosopher of MIT, has recently tackled the mentalist/language problem in a manner that unintentionally supports Lonergan's claims.⁶⁰ Chomsky speaks of an innate "language faculty" or, as is sometimes called, "universal grammar" which forms a language to determine presented data and a wide range of potential phenomena that are, strictly speaking, non-representational. In its "initial state," it is determined by genetic endowment only to pass through series of states, under the shaping influence of experience that are, after puberty, relatively steady, changing only in peripheral respects. Each state is, as it were, managed by "cognitive systems" which store information accessed through "performance systems." The language faculty supports both, providing instructions

⁵⁹ We are not, of course, in the language of Scripture, talking about a *bârâ'* (in the Qal) type of "original," reserved for the Creator alone; but rather the milder form *yâsar*, a term used of human as well as divine agency, to denote a "fashioning"—or in our case "re-fashioning"—of what already exists.

⁶⁰ See Hugo Meynell who concludes similarly (p. 154f.).

to performance systems that play a role in articulation, interpretation, referring, and expression, within which the cognitive system is embedded.⁶¹

In terms of Lonergan's program, the language faculty is essentially a component of intelligere functionally operative through invariant performance systems (act).⁶² The cognitive system constitutes, as Chomsky suggests, the lower level of knowledge assimilation (content). Both philosophers agree that to pin meaning entirely on language use alone—ability serving as its principle requirement—is only part of the story (content), and, as a result, tends to leave creativity out in the cold.⁶³ What pushes the whole process forward? Do Wittgenstein's proposals amount to no more than a "clever" use of language? What is it that comprises "language-games" as his own conception? Were it mere ability to communicate, any name besides Wittgenstein's would suffice in a dictionary entry.⁶⁴

A Wittgensteinian rejoinder might protest that the issue has been exaggerated. The point of contention is not whether mental acts or, more specifically, a language faculty

⁶¹ See N. Chomsky, Language and Thought, Anshen Transdisciplinary Lectureships in Art, Science and the Philosophy of Culture, Monograph Three (Wakefield, Rhode Island & London: Moyer Bell, 1993), pp. 47-49; Language and Problems of Knowledge: The Managua Lectures (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1988), pp. 35-40.

⁶² Chomsky describes performance systems as "fixed" and "invariant" on the basis of ignorance: "There is no evidence that this simplest assumption is false" (Language and Thought, p. 48). Lonergan appeals to experience for the claim.

⁶³ Chomsky in particular has some strong things to say about this opinion: "To say that [language] is all just 'knowing how' [i.e., ability to communicate], hence unproblematic, is merely a form of anti-intellectualism, little more than an expression of lack of curiosity about features of the world, in this case, central features of human nature and human life" ("Language and Problems of Knowledge," p. 516).

⁶⁴ It should be remembered that we are talking about yâsar, not bârâ.

exists, but whether such phenomena, supposed to be at the base of linguistic innovation, can even be conceived.⁶⁵ It would appear that the act-content relation is understood too linearly by so-called proponents of Wittgenstein's position, which we argue a close reading of *Insight* will help remedy.⁶⁶ Thus, alternative positions are construed as desperate measures taken to desert the linguistic web, rather than attempts to situate understanding fastidiously within linguistic reality, which, consequently, is only one instrument of thought.

This brings us to the "positive-proposal differences" of Lonergan and Wittgenstein.⁶⁷ Fitzpatrick points out that throughout the *Investigations* Wittgenstein presents understanding as a kind of inner picturing or inner pointing, which mirrors his understanding of a private language. "And just as his thinking on language was corrected by the notion of 'grammar' so his thinking on understanding required the wider context of public action and behavior to become philosophically acceptable."⁶⁸ Claims concerning the nonconceivability of mental acts and, as a logical corollary, the socio-linguistic basis of understanding should be seen in this light. On this view, inner or mental processes are nothing more than feelings

⁶⁵ See R. Topping, p. 22, who appears to follow G.A. Lindbeck, p. 43 (n. 18).

⁶⁶ See 1.3 of the present analysis.

⁶⁷ The former has current interpreters of Wittgenstein in mind. Chomsky, for instance, labors against Anthony Kenny who contends that to know a language means ability to speak, read and understand it. Chomsky interjects that ability can improve without changing one's knowledge of a language, and may be lost for a period of time (due to an accident of some sort) and then regained with the help of drugs without having lost the language at all.

⁶⁸ J. Fitzpatrick, p. 33f.

or sensations or psychological states, capricious and fleeting, to be distinguished from understanding and knowing, which are rule-governed mechanisms rooted deeply in social reality.

In my reading of Lonergan the latter half of the equation does not really pose a major problem. "I have no doubt," he says, "that the ordinary meaningfulness of ordinary language is essentially public and only derivatively private" (M:255). Obviously, it is with what is excluded from so-called private languages that Lonergan has serious difficulties. Its exclusion is only a symptom of the problem. What does it "mean" to say that mental acts are inconceivable? Clearly, one can conceptualize "realities" that are, at best, doubtful.⁶⁹ Wittgenstein, presumably, has no trouble with such a suggestion, for his contention is that the logical positivist view of intellection grossly obscures the facts. And so it does. But feelings, sensations and psychological states are also concepts which require precise delineation, if we are not simply to feel, sense, and so on (biological pattern of experience). In other words, mental states of whatever quality are, once we begin to discourse on them, *ipso facto* conceivable. To conclude otherwise betrays a picture thinking—contrary to Wittgenstein's intentions—that is offended at what it cannot imagine or see.

⁶⁹ See W.L. Rowe, "The Ontological Argument," in Reason and Responsibility: Readings in Some Basic Problems of Philosophy, 7th ed., ed. J. Feinberg (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1989), pp. 8-27, for an interesting discussion of precisely this point.

Understanding ("insight"),⁷⁰ for Lonergan, is a mental act that cannot be imagined; it can only be understood, conceived through itself. Pre-linguistically grounded in ontic reality, it is determined linguistically (ontologically) by individuals who are evidently concerned with an understanding (conception) of understanding (mental act). Whether it is social or individual is beside the point philosophically, since we are born into a world mediated by the "ordinary" meaning that carries "original" contributions (*yāsar*). Nor is it a matter of stepping outside the linguistic structures of understanding to ascertain ("to look at") some evanescent, occult entity. The pre-linguistic aspect of the process (act) is determined a posteriori from within socially maintained practices (content). This allows for an equilibrium between the social lifeline of meaning and individual contributions that go beyond established orders and, at times, even challenge and change it.⁷¹

⁷⁰ An unfortunate metaphor (probably of Scandinavian and Low German origin) to describe an inherently non-ocular process: in-sight = "to see into" (something). - While the term bears a metaphorical relation to Kant's *Anschauung* and *anschauen* (sometimes translated as "intuition," "intuiting," "to look [at]"), it does not, according to Giovanni Sala, bear a technical relation to Lonergan's philosophy (see *Lonergan and Kant*, pp. 41-80). "All our intuition," for Kant, "is sensible." Although our sensible intuition contains *intellectual species* (*Verstand-Vernunft*)—and here one is apt (perhaps too hastily) to make a connection with Lonergan's levels of "insight" and "judgment"—they stand unequivocally in its service. As Sala notes, "Sensibility—in the case of the *K[ritik der]R[einen]V[ernunft]*, empirical intuition—decides what reality is and what the criterion for the knowledge of reality is" (p. 59). The reverse is true for Lonergan (and Aquinas): reality—not "appearance" as in Kant—is in the judgment ("ens iudicio rationali cognoscitur"). Insight, precipitated by questions for intelligence (*quid sit*), and judgment, precipitated by questions for reflection (*an sit*), are reality constituting. In this way Lonergan eliminates the gratuitous ontological duality inherent in *Ding-an-sich* thinking, which owes its noematic aporia to what Sala calls a prioristic content- or object-constitutive queries.

⁷¹ See J. Fitzpatrick, p. 46.

Wittgenstein's critique of mental acts and private languages successfully thwarts various versions of picture thinking, which suffer gravely from Cartesian influences (in-here/out-there dichotomy). Yet, it is not entirely proof against the Cartesian persuasion:

For Wittgenstein understanding is akin to pictorial representation; it is a kind of inner picturing or inner pointing. The supposed relationship between understanding and the world is the same as that between a name and its object. Since he rejects the latter he naturally rejects the former. It is clear that he sees the problem of understanding in the same dualistic way as that in which Descartes conceived res cogitans and res extensa; as a matter of legitimizing the move from "in here" to "out there."⁷²

Those who invoke Wittgenstein's analysis as proof positive that Lonergan's endeavors are suspect tend to overlook this. The "understanding" under Wittgenstein's decisively critical eye is not the same as that which Lonergan puts forward. Hence, Wittgenstein's notion of understanding as "the linguistic ability to use correctly an expression and to give an explanation of that use"⁷³ must be recognized for what it is: an alternative precipitated by a flawed understanding of understanding. The superiority of that alternative may be held in counterdistinction from its immediate object of humiliation, but cannot be pivoted satisfactorily over against an object that transcends that kind of attack. Attempts to do so, as we have seen, misconstrue the issues and ultimately fail. This allows for a greater flexibility on the part of Wittgensteinians, who can appreciate their mentor's insights without having to conclude that understanding is just a matter of language use.

⁷² J. Fitzpatrick, p. 44.

⁷³ R. Topping, p. 25 (n. 8).



PART TWO

TRANSCENDENT STRUCTURE OF GIFT



THE REDUPLICATION OF DIFFERENTIATED CONSCIOUSNESS

3.1 *The Question of The Religious Subject*

Persons absorbed with the question of a religious subject will be doubtlessly disappointed as they scurry across the first eighteen chapters of *Insight*. However, a “religious” theme does impress itself on the attentive reader in the notion Lonergan delineates as “the desire to know.” Now it need not necessarily be interpreted religiously—Lonergan would probably advise against it—but the temptation seems almost instinctive.

Desire is a rather humdrum way to describe the itching propensity for intellectual illumination. Since it is interminable, proposing God as its final “end-object” (unrestricted act of understanding) seems natural.¹ Indeed, Stephen Hawking has no trouble equating a “complete theory” of the physical universe directly with knowledge of the mind of God.² Whatever one makes of the claim, it is clear that we have to do with one man’s

¹ “An unrestricted desire to understand correctly heads towards an unrestricted act of understanding, towards God” (I:711).

² See S. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (New York: Bantam Books, 1983), p. 175. J. Polkinghorne, former Cambridge professor of mathematical physics, interrupts Hawking’s eagerness by stating that “[t]he claim is rhetorically extravagant and philosophically dubious, for the achievement would only be the beginning of an understanding of physics itself, let alone more complicated aspects of reality” (*Reason and Reality: The Relationship Between Science and Theology* [Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991], p. 9).

aspiration to grasp what he, speaking as a theoretical physicist, takes to be the "mind of God." The desire does not recognize disciplinary boundaries in its drive to assess the ultimate character of the universe.

In Insight Lonergan avoids interpreting this datum of knowledge religiously, which leads him to an entirely rational, twenty-six point demonstration of the existence of God based on the intelligibility of the universe (I:680-692), whereas in Method his addendum to the question of God finds a place in a chapter entitled "Religion." Interestingly, the drive to know, or what he calls "the possibility of inquiry," is harped on as the datum which allows for the question of God to surface. Irrespective of the diverse answers given to the question and, in turn, the further questions the answers raise, "at their root there is the same transcendental tendency of the human spirit that questions, that questions without restriction, that questions the significance of its own questioning, and so comes to the question of God" (M:103).

Still, can this be deemed religious? Lonergan would have no qualms answering negatively. Rather, it is instinctive, "natural," which heads for the same end-object religion knows through revelation. Two different, and what some for the longest time have seen as opposing, realms are not at issue here, but distinct patterns of experience driven by a desire "to know" reality, truth, God. Besides the four panoramic patterns of chapter 6 of Insight, Lonergan also speaks of a mystical pattern touched by indeterminate Love. "Why do you ask my name? It is too wonderful" (Judg 13:18b). It is a pattern he sharply distinguishes from other desires and their multifarious expressions, both commonsensical and theoretic-

cal.³ This will be developed further below. What is important to decipher here is the qualitative distinction between “the desire,” functionally operative in the biological, aesthetic, artistic, and intellectual patterns of experience, and “the grace” which cajoles and meets it on its journey to ever higher sublations.

Because the reality of God is a question of human concern, Lonergan pays considerable attention to the cradle out of which it conceptually develops: human consciousness.⁴ As the great reformer John Calvin (1509-1564) noted, knowledge of God consists of the knowledge of humankind: “it is not easy to determine which of the two precedes, and gives birth to the other.”⁵ Lonergan’s pendulum swings methodologically in the direction of contingent being, but not, of course, to the denial of the superior viewpoint of the Absolute. Humans, as we are only too painfully aware, do not possess a God’s-eye view on things, and so our concentrated efforts to understand must begin in the minimal context of human reality. How, then, are we to account for the knowledge of God in light of our situation? The question presumes that revelation occurs in isolation from human reality, perhaps to another order of being. And indeed it may, but to determine so would mean to speculate about such an order from a perspective that is identifiably human.

³ We may note a bit of hyperbole on the part of Lonergan who says, “What a mystic experiences I do not know” (I:348). This is quite out of character with one who often quoted Rom 5:5b approvingly to describe such an experience, and who in 1977 could speak of “twenty-four years of aridity in the religious life” which were cancelled out by over thirty one years of (mystic?) joy in it, that is, since about 1946 (Lonergan, letter of 16 August, 1977, to Louis Roy, quoted in F. Crowe, p. 7). But see n. 23 for a further qualification.

⁴ “The question of God ... lies within man’s horizon” (M:103).

⁵ J. Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion (trans. Henry Beveridge) I, i. 1.

In terms of Lonergan's philosophy, ontically preeminent Being, unrestrained and free, gives itself ontologically to the *logos* of human consciousness, equipped with infinite capabilities,⁶ yet limited in nature—"and so by our nature we desire what by our nature we cannot achieve" (I:394). Declarations concerning qualitatively distinct Being/beings emerge within a particular matrix that requires, correlative to an awkward exigence for authenticity, a self-scrutinizing awareness of the temporal condition. Hence, Lonergan's emphasis on the mediating role of theology, and the question of God "on the side of the subject" (M:xi, 101-103).

Yet if we are not to confuse mystical patterns for properly intellectual ones, how are we to view the matter? Part of the answer has already been given in the concept of "pattern," but the workings of it remain to be seen. What, for instance, gives Lonergan licence to separate the natural desire and its end-object from religion? How is religious "experience" related to its "expression"? Are such experiences really requisite for understanding prior expressions like the Bible or the Koran? Are we in fact merely talking about religious upbringing, not personal experience *per se*? These questions cut to the nub of Lonergan's contribution to religious studies, and are somewhat symptomatic of the scholarly interest it has solicited beyond Catholic borders.⁷

⁶ Lonergan is in agreement with Aquinas in describing the human intellect as "*potens omnia facere et fieri*" (I:394).

⁷ The critical evaluations of G.A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, and W. Pannenberg, "History and Meaning in Lonergan's Approach to Theological Method," pp. 88-100, are among the most notable. See also K.B. Nielsen's modest introductory article, "Bernard Lonergan and Protestant Theology: The Kernel of the Issue," *Studia Theologica* 47 (1993): 59-68. Eastern Orthodox assessments are rare—if any.

3.2 The Patterns of Experience and the Differentiations of Consciousness

Perhaps the best way to introduce the pending categorizations is through a personal experience encountered not too long ago with Vivaldi's L'Estro Armonico Op. 3, no. 9. I certainly cannot boast of any musical training of worth, but the first time the rapturous sounds of the "Largetto" fell on my ears I can distinctly remember feeling drawn to the sombre, melodious notes of the recorded violin, as all objects of thought and sense receded to the periphery of my consciousness. Of course, as soon as I took note of this—restrained myself, as it were—no longer did the violin exercise its musical authority over me. I had stepped out of a particular way of being to a reflective one detached from the "immediate" experience of inadvertent participation. Although a number of factors probably evoked the synchronistic enchantment of aesthetic and affective pleasure, about which I am not ready to comment—nor am I qualified to, the unprecedented experience of transitional awareness was as vivid as the computer screen before me.

Lonergan delineates what I have just described in terms of a shift from one pattern of experience (aesthetic) to another (commonsensical-intelligent). Suppose I were a classically trained musician sensitive to obtuse and skilled interpretations of the concerto in question, would that constitute a drastic change in circumstance? In a sense it would, for the disciplined ear becomes accustomed to the odious and the laudable, reacting courteously (it is hoped) to the object meant to instill aesthetic delight. As in all fields, theoretical instruction and years of practice tend to segregate lay responses from those of the specialist. However, the ultimate character of the experiential pattern does not change, no matter

what the scale of participant expertise. The degree of elation doubtlessly varies, but reflective awareness introduces another dimension to the experience no longer simply aesthetic.⁸

Although the explanation sounds rather mysterious—as though I were describing some hidden experience revealed only to the initiate—it is really quite common. Everyone is drawn to some aspect of aesthetic expression, be it the color coordinating brilliance of Hollywood films, the resplendent poetry of a Wordsworth or a Shakespeare, the creative/ erratic movements of dance, the crashing rhythms of heavy-metal music, and so on. “Le style est l’homme même.”⁹ Whether the content of the pattern is later abhorred as aesthetically displeasing, for whatever reason, does not alter the authenticity of the initial, non-instrumentalized experience. Relative changes in aesthetic taste leave the pattern functionally unharmed, if not enriched.

Similar variations can be found in the work of theology. For convenience sake, let us delimit its numerous functions—Lonergan detects eight—to three basic categories of religious being: experience, expression, and differentiation. Familiarity with Lonergan’s theological method will quickly reveal that the order is anything but fixed. Thus, for instance, if one takes the linear approach, the mediating phase of theology (research, interpre-

⁸ Perhaps we should recall Lonergan’s disclaimer as to the difficulty of being dogmatic with regard to distinct patterns in the continuum of life. It should be remembered that the notion is of analytic differentiation, and only provides one with “suggestions, arrows, pointing to possible points of reference which in different combinations may give one some approximation to what the pattern of experience at any given moment in any given individual may be” (UB:106). - For a deeper understanding of Lonergan’s thought on the aesthetic pattern see his lecture of 1959 on “Art” (TE:208-232).

⁹ A phrase from Buffon which Lonergan fondly translates as “Style is the man” (I:211, 791 [n. k]).

tation, history, and dialectic) precedes the pivotal point of the mediated phase (beginning with foundations). In other words, this aspect of religious experience does not necessarily antecede expression as such. Indeed, expression, already laden with individually acquired meaning, often triggers or occasions a new-found awareness of the Ineffable relative to the situation in hand. Additionally, and in contradistinction, conversion may happen fifthly to the atheist or agnostic theologian, who is “overwhelmed” by the content of his or her expert mediation, but rarely to the “ordinary” non-believer. A host of other instances could be evoked which place straightforward categorizations of Lonergan’s position into serious question.¹⁰ Having said that, we can now turn to a rudimentary analysis of the previously mentioned distinctions.

In the Preface of volume one of Mircea Eliade’s majestic trilogy, A History of Religious Ideas, the following phrase makes an intriguing appearance: “the ‘sacred’ is an element in the structure of consciousness.”¹¹ Intriguing because it is just what one would expect on a reading of Lonergan’s cognitional theory and theological method, not to mention a host of other thinkers who have come to the same conclusion. The question of God

¹⁰ An example of this might be Lindbeck’s “experiential-expressivist” classification, which even a linear reading of Lonergan’s methodological approach throws in disarray. See C.C. Hefling, Jr., “Turning Liberalism Inside-Out: A Review of The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Post-Liberal Age by George A. Lindbeck,” Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies 3/2 (1985): 51-69. For a more recent assessment of what many consider to be Lindbeck’s categorical reduction of Lonergan, see P.B. Riley, “Religious Studies Methodology: Bernard Lonergan’s Contribution,” Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies 12/2 (1994): 239-249.

¹¹ M. Eliade, A History of Religious Ideas, Vol. 1: From the Stone Age to the Eleusinian Mysteries, trans. W.R. Trask (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. xii.

(or “the sacred”) is rooted in human being. “La religion est l’homme même.”

There lies within [humanity’s] horizon a region for the divine, a shrine for ultimate holiness. It cannot be ignored. The atheist may pronounce it empty. The agnostic may urge that he finds his investigation has been inconclusive. The contemporary humanist will refuse to allow the question to arise. But their negations presuppose the spark in our cloud, our native orientation to the divine. (M:103)

Although the irreparably religious constitution of humankind does not count as “proof” for God—laying aside the criterial equivocality of both sides of the debate—its psychological comportment suggests, to recall St. Augustine’s insight, an order of Being “more interior than the innermost.”¹²

In Method Lonergan characterizes this realm as one of transcendence, which is set off from three other realms he calls common sense, theory, and interiority. The affinity between these realms and the patterns of Insight is not too difficult to see. However, there are peculiar differences, discovered in the interim, which attest to a need Lonergan felt for categorical expansion and/or ordering. Insight is explicitly concerned with the latter (interiority), treating the question of God as a logical consequence of intelligibility. The realm of transcendence is different in that the emphasis falls on the “healing vector” from above, rather than the “creative vector” from below.¹³ In this order of things, talk of “consolation

¹² Augustine, De Trinitate, VIII. 11. See Acts 17:27b-28.

¹³ Lonergan’s later spatial metaphors to depict two different kinds of human development (C3:100-109). Interesting to note is that the development, for Lonergan, occurs within human consciousness, not without it as theologies of the recent past tended to insinuate in their utilization of “from below” (historical) and “from above” (suprahistorical), or, to use other terms, intrinsic historical processes and extrinsic supernatural causes.

with a content but without an object" makes plenty of sense.¹⁴

Yet a number of problems remain. Besides the multiple types of religious experience one could name, there is also the problem of "levels" (of consciousness), and the quandary of presentational/presentationless experience in all four patterns or realms of meaning.¹⁵ Part of the problem resides in understanding spatial metaphors like "level" too literally, which should be interpreted as an analytic category of differentiated consciousness.

The question of "levels" of consciousness in Lonergan is highly complex, divided as it usually is in two stages, with a possible third: three Insight-levels (experience, understanding, judgement) and four Method-levels (experience, understanding, judgment, decision). The third stage is presently being debated by Lonergan scholars. Robert Doran proposes that we speak of a fifth level or an enlargement of consciousness created by the gift of God's love for us.¹⁶ Michael Vertin expresses doubt concerning such an added level, arguing that it does not follow strict or wide Lonerganian usage of the word "level."¹⁷ The

¹⁴ Lonergan quotes approvingly Karl Rahner's (1904-1984) interpretation of St. Ignatius Loyola's (1491-1556) "consolation without a cause" (M:106 [n. 4]).

¹⁵ H.N. Malony explains that religious experience "can be theistic or nontheistic, individual or group, passive or active, novel or recurring, tradition-centered or not, initiatory or developmental, expected or spontaneous; types may include ascetic, mystical, or prophetic, either reviving, affirming or converting, either confirming, responsive, ecstatic, or revelational" ("Religious Experience," Abingdon Dictionary of Living Religions [Nashville, Tenn: Abingdon Press, 1981], p. 613).

¹⁶ See R.M. Doran, "Consciousness and Grace," Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies 11/1 (1993): 51-75, especially p. 62f.

¹⁷ See M. Vertin, "Lonergan on Consciousness: Is There A Fifth Level?" Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies 12/1 (1994): 1-36 - Vertin distinguishes between a "strict" (ordinary data, transcendental notions) and a "wide" (ordinary data, transcendental notions,

answer, I believe, is to be found somewhere in the middle, open to the innovative perspicacity of Doran and to the non-controversialist approach of Vertin.¹⁸

Lonergan places the experience of "grace," which he describes in peculiarly Christian fashion, on "the highest level," the fourth level, of consciousness (M:107). We might identify this level (or, more preferably, stage) as the meeting zone of the creative and healing vectors of conscious being, in which the "uncreated gift" of God's love resides (i.e., Spiritus Sanctus). To speak of it in terms of a fifth level, in order to demarcate the experience from the gift itself, is not altogether inaccurate. But the addition tends to be rather top-heavy, as though God's gift were absent in prior stages or not already "more interior than the innermost" before the created awareness of it. Psychologically, though, the innovation has merit, as it seeks to plummet the communicative depths of divine-mortal interaction, stressing the former, divine part of the equation (the superlative bond of the healing vector).

We propose Doran's second option, "enlargement of consciousness,"¹⁹ as an adequate description of the transcendence realm in reciprocal relation to the other three. In

agapic datum) sense of the word "level" as used by Lonergan, and complains that Doran has either incorrectly employed "level" in its wide Lonerganian sense or has confused it with a non-Lonerganian sense (p. 35). Either way, Vertin contends, Lonergan himself denies a fifth level, and is even in the habit, in his later talks and publications, of emphasizing his earlier Insight-levels of the proportionate knowable, terminating in judgments of fact and of value (p. 22f.).

¹⁸ For a sense of the term "non-controversialist" see M:158f.

¹⁹ Actually, the phrase appears several times in Insight (I:636-38) but not, strictly speaking, in connection with "the transcendence realm." Nevertheless, what Lonergan means by the phrase is equally applicable to the expansion effected by a religious exigence.

this way we dispense talking of religious experience in terms of another level of consciousness, whether in a wide or non-Lonerganian sense, and, at the same time, re-introduce Insight's mystical "pattern" as the most viable alternative. After all, Lonergan does not say that the gift of God's love is the fourth (or fifth) level of consciousness, but its ground and root, taking over "the peak of the soul, the apex animae."²⁰

Insight is almost wholly preoccupied with ordinary data and the transcendental notions; an understanding and judgment of "the given."²¹ On this account, the question of God arises out of intelligent and reflective seeking—the pure notion of being (unrestricted desire to know) heading toward, in each and every act of knowing, the transcendent idea of Being (the content of an unrestricted act of understanding), God. Lonergan concludes "aporetically" that humankind will never enjoy an unrestricted act of understanding, "for then [its] capacity to know would not be limited, and [it] would have no need for critical investigation" (I:666). The key is to chart one's way through the labyrinth of Being isomorphically with the structure of consciousness.

Unlike the organization of the given, the datum of unconditional love, experienced and posited in religion, sublates and expands qualitatively the field of con-

²⁰ M:107. - This is, admittedly, to stretch Lonergan's verbal choice in the passage, namely, that the gift of God's love "occupies" the ground and root of the fourth level.

²¹ The given refers to the elementary constitution of inside- and outside-things developed in chapter 1, and not, a fortiori, to their conceptual constitution. As D.B. Burrell asserts, "... if anything can be said about Lonergan, it would be that he campaigned as strenuously as Wilfred Sellars against the 'myth of the given'—epitomized in the key chapter in Insight entitled 'Things'" ("Lonergan and Philosophy of Religion," Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies 4/1 [1986]: 1).

scious awareness. But we are getting ahead of ourselves. What is crucial to observe here is that two types of data—including the inside-outside combination of things—separate the realm of transcendence from common sense, theory and interiority as such. Our thesis is that a kind of reduplication occurs which is normally expressed in commonsensical manner and flourishes through systematic and critical exigencies. However, we must lay aside delusions of sequential absolutism for the more honest poise of general approximation. From whatever viewpoint we attempt to speak, it always remains a limited one.

3.2.1 Religious Experience

We have already noted in passing the kind of religious experience Lonergan intends. The phenomenon is so multifaceted that it is almost unchartable. Compounding variations will also depend on how “experience” is interpreted, so that, for instance, it might include the most mundane of occurrences, like the singing of hymns, to the ecstatic elation of the visionary prophet. For that reason the sketchy nature of Lonergan’s idiosyncratic understanding may be pardoned as pedagogically desirable, and susceptible to the moorings of more exacting analyses.

Religious experience for Lonergan is first and foremost a matter of affection, an unrestricted being-in-love with God, which is the fulfilment of our capacity for self-transcendence. It is not necessarily the esoteric episode of the mystic who, after having renounced all things common, attains union with the Sublime through rigorous feats of contemplation; for that may be an indication of acquired grace. “Take comfort, you would not

be seeking me if you had not already found me."²² *Insight* tends to reserve this pattern to the peak experiences of the mystic, but an equivocity remains that anticipates the fluidity of the depiction in *Method*.²³

Like the aesthetic pattern described earlier, the religious or "mystical" pattern refers to a particular disposition of being, but one that is stung by the shaft of a celestial bow. Its expression is highly symbolic, and even crude at times, unrepentant of the anthropomorphism that permeates its understanding. Non-linguistic in character, the sensitive experience of the *mysterium tremendum*, filtered through certain demand functions of neural patterns, finds psychic representation in consciousness. Of course, the degree of the encounter will fluctuate from person to person and must not be imagined to occur in isolation from the rest of experienced reality, linguistic or otherwise. Interpretations, too, will vary from the most militant of exhibitions to the tottering laxness of religious reservationism.

3.2.2 *Religious Expression: Common Sense*

Common sense, Lonergan writes, "has no use for a technical language and no

²² Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) quoted in M:341 (n. 6).

²³ Thus, we hear of the arcane absorption of the mystic who eliminates the sensitive flow of presentations and the imaginative flow of representations (I:495). The activity presupposes some pre-formulated insight into the known unknown which leads the participant into demanding exercises of self-denial. Religious experience, it seems, is reserved for the sensitive integration of imaginative representations as symbol or sign (I:555-558); and yet it is prior to, or distinct from, articulate faith (I:756). Although religious experience and the mystical pattern in *Insight* are hardly synonymous, we have taken the liberty to stretch Lonergan's equivocity, namely the mystical pattern, to include religious experience. See M: 118, 273 for their close, if not identical, relation.

tendency towards a formal mode of speech. It agrees that one must say what one means and mean what one says" (I:200). This captures well the locutionary stance of religious expression in the West, particularly its revelatory sources and accompanying devotional literature—even though their subject matter may be "deep." Conscious compression dominates its otherwise expanded horizon. Its concern with the concrete life of believers causes it to eschew or frown upon the standard practice of specialists, insofar as their intellectual generalizations upset so-called simple messages of faith. Yet Lonergan appreciates the continuity between both realms (common sense and theory) in their journey toward individual, communal and global authenticity.

A few illustrations are in order here, especially if we are to escape the charge of overgeneralizing. Determining the elemental meaning of the Koran is perhaps the best place to start, since its aim is to proclaim one basic, pulsating truth: God is one sovereign Lord.²⁴ This truth grounds its basic *élan* which, according to Fazlur Rahman, is moral, and points to social and economic justice.²⁵ One does not turn to its pages in order to discover sophisticated ex-planations of how the immutable moral law is tied to God's nature and yet

²⁴ See R.S. Ellwood, Many Peoples, Many Faiths: An Introduction to the Religious Life of Humankind, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1992): "The Koran is intended only to state one basic truth; it repeats itself to reinforce that one simple truth. As A.J. Arberry has put it, it is like being surrounded by a gallery of paintings on the same subject" (p. 343).

²⁵ See F. Rahman, Islam, 2nd ed. (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 33f.

is not identical to God's Being.²⁶ Mohammed would probably turn a blind- or confused-eye to such proceedings, insisting, in the language of transcendence, that "[t]he faithful Spirit brought it down into [his] heart, that [he] might warn humankind in plain Arabic speech" (Sura 26:193-195). The experience of "Gabriel on the clear horizon" translated into an abhorrence of Meccan polytheistic practices, and what Mohammed recognized as the polytheistic beliefs of seventh-century Christian trinitarianism.²⁷

The case of the Judeo-Christian Bible, though complicated by its diverse material and historical evolution, is similarly constituted. Even if we incorporate the semi-differentiated Wisdom corpus, we are not quite in the realm of theory. A simple comparison of the book of Qoheleth ("Ecclesiastes") with the Peripatetic Metaphysics is sufficient evidence of this. The former, filled with conventional ideas almost everyone can appreciate,

²⁶ F. Rahman, p. 33. - This is usually described as making explicit what is implicit in literary expression (see n. 4 of the Introduction)—not to be confused with the "thatness" (implicit) and "whatness" (explicit) of the present study. We prefer to say "differentiations of consciousness," since such explanations are those of the reflective participant, and not that of the literary form under consideration, even if its author is analytically acute.

²⁷ M. Eliade points out that Mohammed's information concerning Christianity was "rather approximative" (A History of Religious Ideas, Vol. 3: From Muhammad to the Age of Reforms, trans. A. Hiltebeitel and D. Apostolos-Cappadona [Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1985], p. 77). His reaction to the trinitarian doctrine was no doubt a symptom of his conscious compression—as it was in the primitive church's hesitancy to equate the title "God" directly with Jesus, the definiens of which gradually broadened to include both Father and Son (see R.E. Brown, Jesus: God and Man [New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1967], pp. 33ff.). For Mohammed, and many others, the "simple" nature of one God is compromised when so-called exigencies of reason try to complicate matters by making it "three." "The systematic exigence not merely raises questions that common sense cannot answer but also demands a context for its answers, a context that common sense cannot supply or comprehend" (M:82).

summons the mind to greater depths than afforded by habits of immediacy,²⁸ while the latter barely gets beyond the door of the mythical well-read layperson, to say nothing of professional critics. The difference is so obvious that it requires little comment.

Biblical scholar and literary critic Sean McEvenue devotes much time to the elucidation of this elemental realm in sacred literature. Our post-biblical mindset, he argues, is inclined to confuse simple meanings of the Bible, which are not easily retrieved, with the theoretical/post-theoretical vortex of modernity:

In current culture, serious questions are formed in philosophically precise language, and are answered within philosophically complete systems. Religious truth in the Bible cannot be found in that manner of thinking. The fact is that theological questions have been asked within Western tradition which forms all of our thoughts whether or not we are believers. It is a tradition which begins with the Bible but continued through an evolution in which philosophically accurate modes of thought have translated biblical (and other) meaning into systematic meaning, have translated elemental preconceptual meaning into conceptualized meaning.²⁹

McEvenue suggests a kind of shock treatment which faces up to the concerns of the Voice in texts.³⁰ This, he feels, will doubtlessly jolt us into a better position of savouring “original

²⁸ “[T]he supreme canon of common sense is the restriction of further questions to the realm of the concrete and particular, the immediate and practical” (I:201).

²⁹ S. McEvenue, *Interpretation and Bible: Essays on Truth in Literature* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1994), p. 20.

³⁰ By Voice McEvenue means “the Speaker” of a text which includes and overrides “named speakers” (e.g., the formula: “and Moses said ...”; “and God said ...”; “and Jesus said ...”; etc.), “unnamed narrators” (e.g. Gen 1, Mark), “unnamed editors” (e.g. Dt 1:1-2; 4:44; 29:1; 33:1), and “external speakers” (e.g., those who read texts that are culturally and historically removed from the Speaker). See McEvenue, *Interpreting the Pentateuch* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990), pp. 44-56.

meanings," and also of distinguishing them from "effective" ones (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) that so often disrupt participant joy—although their study is crucial for an understanding of acquired meanings, and the consciousness which it has effected.

McEvenue's stylistic analysis of the Pentateuch, drawing heavily—though not exclusively—on the source-critical insights of the Wellhausen school, is particularly interesting, seeing that the elemental meaning of specific biblical traditions are openly and clearly stated. The political dimension, for example, fascinates the Yahwist (J) as the revelatory arena in which God acts.³¹ An emotional lacuna left open by J is sparsely filled through the affectively charged narratives of the Elohist (E). For E, God is revealed in the realm of feeling and interpersonal friction: "Salvation occurs where the heart is torn by conflict of personal values ..., by misunderstanding between friends ..., by alienation between family members ..., by death."³² The Priestly writer (P), on the other hand, is concerned with the faithful religious observance of the liturgy in the midst of a people's hopelessness and despair: "God saw all that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen 1:31a). In the Deuteronomic source (D) we find a revelatory expectancy given to ethical, social and economic realms. Unlike J, who expects God to bless and curse other nations in order to secure Israel politically, leaving her free to take responsibility for herself, D reverses the roles

³¹ For the Yahwist, McEvenue concludes: "God is passionately involved in preserving the larger social political order, and the order of nature. We must then accept and trust these things, and actively cultivate communal awareness of social unity and common values" (*Interpreting the Pentateuch*, p. 86).

³² S. McEvenue, *Interpreting the Pentateuch*, p. 114.

and has God directly blessing and cursing Israel for her ethical, social and economic conduct.³³

Both Rahman and McEvenue provide ample evidence for the nonchalant relationship of religious experience and expression at this practical level. This is not, of course, to mistake easy-going, witty expression for facile experience. The narratives themselves attest to the hardships of life (e.g., E and P) for which they supply perspectively variant "religious" answers. Examples can be multiplied ad infinitum. But we would be amiss to think that undifferentiated consciousness or conscious compression does not properly understand its experience of the divine simply because it is pre-conceptual, that is, non-theoretical. Biases of spheric homogeneity are grossly misguided, according to Lonergan; for each realm comprehends its known objects through certain internal relational congruences and differences as they fulfil various functions in their interaction. "As one may approach theoretical objects from a commonsense starting-point, so too one can invoke commonsense to correct theory. But the correction will not be affected in commonsense language but in theoretical language, and its implications will be the consequences, not of the commonsense facts that were invoked, but of the theoretical correction that was made" (M: 82). A complementarity ensues which breaks down seemingly impenetrable walls dividing descriptive knowledge (*quoad nos*) from explanatory knowledge (*quoad se*).

³³ See S. McEvenue, *Interpreting the Pentateuch*, p. 151.

3.2.3 *Religiously Differentiated Consciousness: Theory and Interiority*

Lonergan does not, to the best of my knowledge, speak about the “reduplication” of intellectually differentiated consciousness, which is the objective of that aspect in the structure we earlier referred to as given.³⁴ Notwithstanding a threefold conversion Lonergan mentions in *Method*, belaboringly committing us to additional reduplications with each passing spheric differentiation—Doran notes nine!³⁵—we recognize only one, owing to the basic, macroscopic distinctions of the “given” and “gift.” Put in different terms, the nature of the data (“thatnesses”) in both organizational structures permit the non-compounding conclusion of only one reduplication.³⁶ Alas, there is analytical simplicity in all this madness.

No methodological discrepancies exist between intellectual theory and interiority, and its religious counterparts. “However true it is that one attends, understands, judges, decides differently in the natural sciences, in the human sciences, and in theology, still these differences in no way imply or suggest a transition from attention to inattention, from intelligence to stupidity, from reasonableness to silliness, from responsibility to irre-

³⁴ In *Collection* Lonergan calls self-knowledge (knowing knowing) a reduplication of the structure of consciousness (C:208), which in *Method* is submitted to a fourfold description of intentional conscious operations (M:14); but this is not what we are discussing here.

³⁵ See R.M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, pp. 530-536.

³⁶ What is at issue here is not something that lies outside the field of “given” objects, but a transmogrification of that field to encompass an even broader horizon, which, according to the Christian tradition, is a “gift” from God (Mt 16:17).

sponsibility" (M:23). The same structure abides though the object ("thatness") changes.³⁷

The exigencies that separate the realm of theory from common sense and the realm of interiority from theory are named "systematic" (for the first pair) and "critical" (for the second). These functional distinctions seem gratuitous, since systematic dispositions do not usually preclude a critical stance, except that Lonergan intends them to characterize two general categories of intelligent, and in our case, religious being.³⁸ In the first instance, it is a difference between the "what" and "when" of Augustine's prayerful question: "What then do I love when I love my God?"³⁹ The when-clause betrays a stance overtaken by religious love, supported and confirmed through commonsensical modes of expression: "Tolle lege! Tolle lege!"⁴⁰ The what-clause presupposes the intimate relation of the former as it seeks to contemplate the alluring quality (*mysterium fascinans*) of its object. Agitated by fascination, it migrates to a higher viewpoint at which it can order its thoughts. In a word, the spheric contrast gyrates around the religious thatness of experience and

³⁷ An object for Lonergan is anything known through a pattern of judgments (I:399-409). What this means, of course, is that objects are not necessarily perceivable data out-there or in-here, but rather explicative concepts (commonsensical and/or theoretical) that are affirmed. Thus, subjects become objects through intelligent and reflective activity.

³⁸ Seeing that we treat the former in 1.2 of the present analysis, we quickly jump over, as it were, into the realm of transcendence.

³⁹ Augustine, *Confessions*, X.7.

⁴⁰ Augustine, *Confessions*, VIII.12. - The fact that Augustine's reading of Romans passed through the intellectual grid of a semi-differentiated consciousness bears no significant weight on the present discussion. It remains that Romans, recognizably profound, is the work of "compact consciousness," to borrow Eric Voegelin's quaint phrase.

devotion—most certainly not without a sustaining, linguistic content, and a systematic propensity to better grasp the whatness of that elemental horizon.⁴¹

By critical exigence we may understand an inherent need (inherent, that is, once one is immersed in the universe of theory) to discover the thatness underlying an initially troubling eclectic whatness—in the sense explained in chapters 1 and 2. But how does this differ from the realm of the same name in the intelligent structure of the given? Actually, it does not at all. Questions regarding interiority, understood in Lonergan's sense, are the same whether they be asked in philosophy, religion, psychology, sociology, or wherever. They are granted admittance in the philosopher and the physicist who is hard-pressed to accept Eddington's two tables, appearance and reality, the real and the really real; in the theologian who works with sacred scripture and philosophically exacting categories; in the psychiatrist who must alternate between commonsense reportage and theoretical explanations; and so forth. It is the point of adequate differentiation, "when the subject relates his different procedures to the several realms, relates the several realms to one another, and consciously shifts from one realm to another by consciously changing his procedures" (M:84).

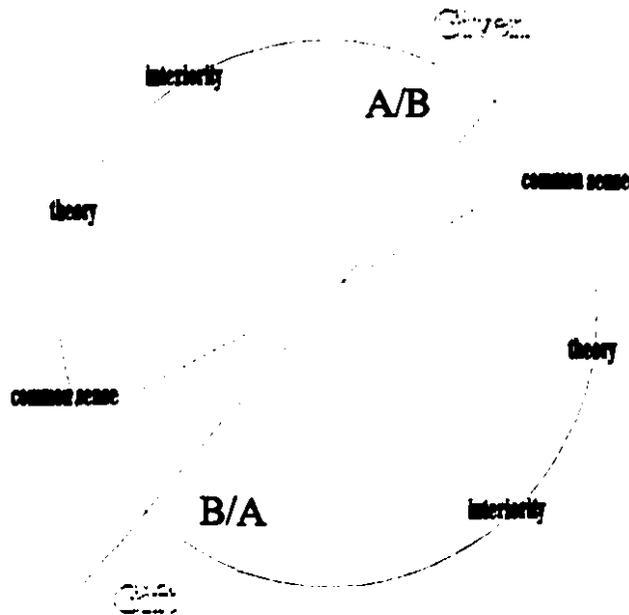
Interiority is Lonergan's Anknüpfungspunkt ("point of contact") with other realms of discourse. In religion, more precisely still theology, this means the appropriation of the content of commonsense expression (3.2.2)—in McEvenue's terms, being chal-

⁴¹ Disparaging connotations which usually accompany terms such as "elemental" and "simple" are to be dropped when considering these differing realms of meaning. They simply describe "fundamental" states within the dynamism of consciousness.

lenged, and ready for conversion if necessary, while engaging the foundational stance of a Speaker— and genuinely appreciative, though not at the mercy, of its numerous systematizations. A religiously differentiated consciousness, continually threatened by paternalistic arrogance, shuns obscurantism, whatever its spheric and disciplinary form, in a conscious effort to experience, understand, and judge responsibly its many-named exigencies.

3.3 *Conscious Circle: A Strategy of Cumulative Meaning*

Speaking of a reduplication of the structures of gift and the given automatically sounds as if we were propounding a linear account of conscious differentiation. To evade this overwhelming image, I have chosen to qualify my proposal in terms of a cross-reduplication within a circle. Hence the figure:



To begin with, what this does is delimit the imagined suggestion that one must first traverse the modes in the Given half-circle before the fruits of Gift, and its reflective modes can commence. Actually, if there is a standard to be found it is "the crossover norm" depicted in the figure by the dotted line, from common sense (A/B) to common sense (B/A).⁴² There is no question that for Lonergan the common sense of one's time (intelligent, moral and religious) facilitates theoretical breakthroughs, even though it customarily functions negatively: either as that which belittles systematic reflection as useless intellectual preoccupation or, conversely, as the object of theoretical ridicule, owing to its restricted vision. Interiorly differentiated consciousness recognizes the legitimacy and limits of both realms.

The dotted line also symbolizes the pivotal motion of an axis, shifting from realm (A/B) to counter-distinctive realm (B/A). Thus, those given to, say, the history of ideas (theory A/B) have no choice but to amass peculiarly religious systematizations (theory B/A), without, of course, having to appropriate its experiential datum (Gift). The reverse is also true. No theologian and/or religionist can afford to get along without at least a piecemeal knowledge of other related fields.

Interiority is another matter entirely, seeing that it is uniquely related to Lonergan's notion of conscious differentiation—an other name for which is intellectual conversion (Method) or self-appropriation (Insight). Secured to the general structure of rational self-

⁴² The letter captions (A/B) and (B/A) speak not only of a relativity in the circular progress, but also of a simultaneity from sphere to sphere. The historical case in the West of "transcendent" theory affecting, if not serving, "intellectual" theory is just one example.

consciousness, it abets commonsensical and theoretical expression of every stripe at a sublated, critically conscious level. And yet it is not an end in itself. The axis rotates endlessly proportionate to "the pure desire" (to know), and is inhibited only by a lack of curiosity, the failure to ask the little words "what," "why," "how." "[O]ne must go round the circle over and over, expanding and deepening one's understanding" (C:286 [n. b]). Initial differentiation is no cure for the biases that continue to loom beneath the surface of conscious life.⁴³

Religiously differentiated consciousness implies a double conversion in the service of transcendence. In the structure of the Given (A/B), conversion occurs at the height of spheric expansion-appropriation (interiority), requiring the daunting task of submerging oneself in the potentially infinite resources of human intellection. If we are permitted an analogy from Lutheran theology, it is an emphasis on the Law/Works segment of the Law/Grace, Works/Faith dichotomy. Working through chapters one to five of *Insight* is by far the simplest proof of this. However, in the structure of Gift (B/A), as we conceive it, conversion occurs at the elemental, experiential level (solid line) as a result of being open to the thatness of divine love. "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (Eph 2:8). Gift-interiority is (with a bit of imagination) well represented by the tension in the so-called "straw epistle" of James. Faith, we are told, functions along with Works and cannot be separated to reckless extremes (2:22).

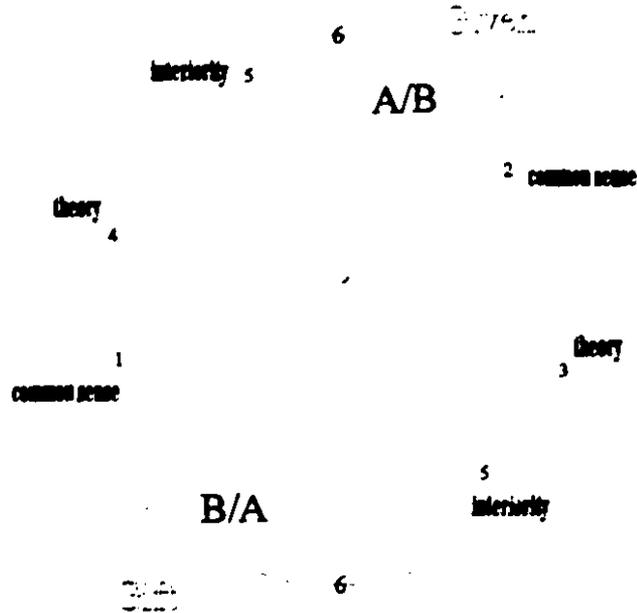
⁴³ "Bias" is an especially negative term in Lonergan, the exorcizing of which does not entail "neutrality" or "objectivity" (terms employed to expose the unrelated, asinine attempt).

So, too, in the business of theology the work of intellectual conversion is inextricably related to authentic explanations of the data of faith

Still, the axis imagery admits even further qualification. Individual experience often frustrates tidy characterizations, inciting unnecessary antagonism toward ideal structures. Lonergan recognizes the residual comportment of undeniably real instances of the particular, but is quick to add that such occurrences do not take away from the validity of abstraction, "to grasp the essential and to disregard the incidental, to see what is significant and set aside the irrelevant, to recognize the important as important and the negligible as negligible."⁴⁴ For instance, tracing my own intellectual and religious history within (## 1-5) and around (# 6) the circle⁴⁵ does not upset the general validity of the scheme, except that it, too, is a product of abstraction, an analytic concept.

⁴⁴ I:55. - For a more elaborate understanding of Lonergan's related notions of "abstraction" and the "empirical residue" see I:109-114, 50-56. A complementarity is imagined that allows for the insights of the "classicist" and the "statistician."

⁴⁵ See figure on p. 91.



The “separation” of the natural desire and its end-object from religion may be understood as a perspectival question. Are its contents asked from the standpoint theory/interiority A/B—which in some cases, as we will shortly see, inherits its form from its theoretical counterpart—or theory/interiority B/A? Let us take our initial reference to Stephen Hawking as an example. The title “God” is given by Hawking to a complete theory of the physical universe. The connection presupposes the traditional divine quality of omniscience, and we have here an instance where theory B/A has unequivocally influenced theory A/B. Hawking rightly notes that a complete theory of the universe would reveal the mind of God. Yet among several difficulties of the claim is its asymptotic nature. Hawk-

ing's "complete" is not complete enough, even for his own choice of words. For the idea of Being is not merely the content of this or that act of understanding, but an unrestricted act that grasps everything about everything (I:688). John Polkinghorne catches this when he says, "There is more to the mind of God than physics will ever disclose."⁴⁶

The relation of what we have just described to religion is quite incidental. Barring the obvious historical ties to physics, and a frequent borrowing of terms, the two are relatively independent ways of understanding reality, the known and the to-be-known.⁴⁷ For A/B, God is a peripheral concern that is contingently related—if at all—to its description and explanation of the given.⁴⁸ God's mind is a possibility afforded us by a complete theory. In B/A, on the other hand, assuming the appropriation of Gift, a posture of fear (*yir'â*) takes over that sets up a new horizon in which divine love is said to transvalue our values and to transform our knowing (M:106). No complete theory is anticipated, since

⁴⁶ J. Polkinghorne, Reason and Reality, p. 9.

⁴⁷ We do not mean by this to excuse out of hand positions which maintain a point of contact (*Anknüpfungspunkt*). How, for instance, theories of science affect particular doctrines like creation, providence, and human nature. But such a ground cannot possibly be that of physics or religion since, as we have been arguing, their data and their individual questions are qualitatively distinct. The integration of various ideas from either viewpoint will inevitably include the horizon of that viewpoint from which the "synthesis" is made. Thus, Ian Barbour can argue for a middle ground—he calls it "systematic metaphysics"—which posits a coherent vision of reality, allowing for "the distinctiveness of differing types of experience" (The Gifford Lectures 1989-1991, Vol 1: Religion in An Age of Science [New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1990], p 30). Lonergan's interiority realm is concocted with a view to complementing such endeavors.

⁴⁸ I use the terms "description" and "explanation" here in Lonergan's sense to describe two different ways of understanding the same object, quoad nos or quoad se. See I:316-317.

infinite love knows no (theoretical) boundaries⁴⁹ Burying its face in a mantle (1 Kgs 19 13), consciousness B/A tempers its aspirations in the painful realization of its limitations The "ultimate triumph of human reason"⁵⁰ can only be one that loses itself not in theory, but in the depths of unfathomable Love.

The question ("proof"), then, of God's existence is particularly interesting, in that its appearance in chapter nineteen of *Insight* marks the height of intellectual yearning. This is Lonergan's way of saying that the inner dynamism of inquiry (i.e. desire) is the datum which "provides the reconciliation, both completely general and completely concrete, of the independence of other fields and of the universal relevance of theology" (I:765-766). The "proofs" are the work of philosophical theology (theory B/A) and are grounded in the universal datum of desire (Given); their relevance, therefore, lies directly in their rational structure as "proofs," not in the object they wish to prove.⁵¹ From the perspective of the healing vector, the thatness of God pertains to the order of Gift, not the Given.

⁴⁹ "It is part of religious consciousness," writes Wolfhart Pannenberg, "that the divine reality transcends all conceptions of it" (*Systematic Theology*, trans. G.W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994], II, 260).

⁵⁰ S. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time*, p. 175.

⁵¹ Pannenberg's assessment of cosmological arguments for the existence of God (among which Lonergan's may be numbered) captures the heart of the issue. "All that is maintained," he urges, "is that we are referred to an unfathomable reality that transcends us and the world, so that the God of religious tradition is given a secure place in the reality of human self-experience." He goes on to say that so-called "proofs" say something "first about reason's demand for meaning face-to-face with the world's contingency," making "talk about God intelligible" (*Systematic Theology*, trans. G.W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991], I, 93, 94).

In Lonergan's response to the colloquium held in his honor the "five ways" of Aquinas are mentioned as presenting us with a puzzle

The article concludes with the statement that what has been proved to exist is what everyone means by God. But what is this meaning known by everyone? Is it that everyone in some fashion or other does prove the existence of God? Or is it that God gives sufficient grace to everyone, that the one sufficient grace is the gift of charity without which nothing else is of avail (1 Cor. 13), that that gift orientates one to what is transcendent in loveliness, that that orientation can occur without any corresponding apprehension, that it can be, in Rahner's phrase, a content without a known object, that such a content is an orientation to the unknown, to mystery? Such an orientation to mystery, in my opinion, is a main source of man's search for God.⁵²

The desire is now seen as Gift, a kind of transmogrification of the Given which orients us toward Itself. To put it in different terms, the seeking (act) is a sign of transcendent Being (Act), the content of which is made explicit, commonsensically and theoretically, by the intelligent activity of conscious being. The "synthesis" affected here, as Ian Barbour puts it, is clearly derived from religious tradition and experience (Christian),⁵³ which we have seen fit to describe in terms of the transcendent structure of Gift, namely, common sense and theory B/A.

Even though Lonergan's proof is provisionally secured to a datum experienced by everyone ("desire"), its efficacy and true meaning is grasped in the a posteriori realm of

⁵² B. Lonergan, "Lonergan Responds," in Language, Truth and Meaning, p. 309.

⁵³ I. Barbour, p. 27.

Gift-theory and interiority (i.e., after the experience of grace)⁵⁴ Thus Bernard Tyrrell can state

[F]or Lonergan such things as "proofs" for the existence of God are not generally worked out by the unconverted but by those who are already believers and are seeking a deeper understanding of what they believe and an intelligent grasp of the meaningfulness, reasonableness and worthwhileness of their religious commitment. It is then conversion rather than proof which is all-important and the separation of natural theology from systematic theology has tended to obscure and even threaten this basic truth.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ In answer to the question raised earlier, namely whether the experience of grace is really requisite for understanding expressions like the Bible or the Koran, Lonergan answers affirmatively. See Conclusion for more details.

⁵⁵ B. Tyrrell, "The New Context of the Philosophy of God in Lonergan and Rahner," Language, Truth and Meaning, p. 305. See also "Bernard Lonergan Responds," in Foundations of Theology, p. 232, where Lonergan states that the theological principle he has implemented for an authentic method in theology (the structure of Gift) is conversion.

CONCLUSION

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OR THE OBJECTIVE NORMING OF TRADITION?

At the end of such a study it is hard to evade the implications of what has been said for religious studies in general, and the Christian tradition in particular. If the foregoing discussion of the reduplication of differentiated consciousness is valid, we have to do with two general types of experience (Given/Gift) that are understood eclectically in proportion to various stages of meaning (common sense, theory, interiority). These macro-experiential data admit still more focused differentiations within their generalized field. But it is to be noted that the differentiations vary according to the inquirer's understanding, and not just according to his or her "experience" of the given or granted data. Albert Einstein's (1879-1955) "postulational method" provides a good example of what I mean here.

The never-before imagined relation of gravity to geometry came into being, according to Heinz Pagels, through "nothing more than physical intuition"—what I prefer to call intelligere, insight.¹ Of course, it did take the meaning of the equivalence principle to discover its presupposition. Nevertheless, the so-called data (inside of outside-things) which Einstein's theory ("absolute postulate") meant to explain had not been supported by the world of experience (given outside-things) prior to his insight. "For the creation of a theory, the mere collection of recorded phenomena never suffices—there must always be

¹ H.R. Pagels, The Cosmic Code: Quantum Physics as The Language of Nature (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), p. 40.

added a free invention of the human mind that attacks the heart of the matter"² The data of Einstein's hypothesis is an "added" (discovered) dimension to the structure of the given.

The psychic facts of depth-psychological reflection are of similar constitution and may be said to mediate the experiential organization of Gift.³ Such notions as the id, the ego, the superego ("the structural hypothesis") are nowhere to be observed. A theoretical construction or metaphorical representation is what they are, even though we might agree with their ex-positors that they lie "wholly within the bounds of experience."⁴ Yet experience—especially the elementary range of inside-things—"knows" no pre-linguistic fact before the required insight into its structure (inside of inside-things). And that, I hope to have shown, is an addition to, or noetic production of, the hidden character of its potentially knowable being: a formulation of analytic consciousness. From this standpoint, then, the "true" flux (*Fluß*) is the evanescent mind attentively, intelligently and reasonably aware of the running stream, the levels of consciousness, the expanding universe.

Lonergan's notion of (religious) experience has roused heated controversy, especially among Protestant theologians who have been challenged in some way or another by his methodological proposals.⁵ To be sure, Lonergan is not without Catholic rivals; but

² A. Einstein quoted in H.R. Pagels, p. 41, emphasis added.

³ See Part Two of the mammoth work of R.M. Doran, Theology and the Dialectics of History, pp. 139-352, for the possible workings of psychic mediation.

⁴ Carl G. Jung, The Portable Jung, ed. J. Campbell, trans. R.F.C. Hull (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), p. 24.

⁵ See G.A. Lindbeck and R. Topping. See also K.B. Nielsen's cautiously descriptive approach for a Protestant alternative.

the area of concern does not appear to lie in his notion of religious experience per se as it might for the Protestant reared in a tradition wholly given to the objective norming of God's written word, the Bible.⁶ The problem is a very real one which unannounced commitments at times, in the name of academic objectivity, seek to resolve by summoning the articulate insights of a so-called religiously neutral philosophy that does not conflict but actually "incidentally"—supports the implicit claims found in the denomination of one's choice. A generalized empirical method does not have to be interpreted so specifically that it obviates the idiosyncratic expressions of divergent traditions.⁷

"Immediacy" is the term Lonergan employs to describe "the unmediated experience of the mystery of love and awe" (religion). The term is somewhat problematic in that it conjures images of a blank-tablet, tabula-rasa form of existence which quite frankly does not exist. It is difficult, if not impossible, to escape linearity in writing, for the direction of a text always moves within the parameters of a beginning and an ending.⁸ This is also true

⁶ And yet one is sure to find supporters even in the Catholic wing (a possible point of ecumenical contact), since scripture and tradition are the objective authorities to which the faithful usually, though not unreservedly, bind themselves.

⁷ See G.A. Lindbeck, "Protestant Problems with Lonergan on Development of Dogma," in Foundations of Theology, pp. 115-123, who concludes similarly in relation to the question of dogma (i.e., the Protestant principle sola scriptura). Religious experience and mental acts of meaning, however, serve as a serious point of departure for him, as is evidenced by his The Nature of Doctrine (1984). But does this not place his earlier assessment ("Protestant Problems with Lonergan on Development of Dogma" [1971]) regarding the neutrality of Lonergan's method in question?

⁸ See E. Voegelin, Order and History, Vol. 5: In Search of Order (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), pp. 13-47, for an interesting philosophical reflection on "the beginning of the beginning" in the experience of writing.

in terms of individual explanations within the textual world. For example, Lonergan posits a "beforeness" to experiential grace and a process of "moving out" of the world mediated by meaning to describe the same realm of God's "prior" word of love (Gift) (M:112, 107). It is possible to concede to the circularity of experience even though one can hardly escape the linearity of the textual universe. And yet this does not make an understanding of Lonergan's notional experience, "in which image and symbol, thought and word, lose their relevance and even disappear" (M:112), any easier. Such a difficulty may be tentatively resolved in light of the equiprimordiality notion understood in the context of patterns of experience, which are the subjective data of various realms of meaning. Here, the personal experience of a musical score, described above (3.2), finds worthy parallel. The only difference is that the content of the experience of Gift is, excluding post-conversion views of the objective field (Ps 19:1), psychically mediated. God is not an object out-there to be observed or postulationally confirmed like quantum particles. Augustine's "more interior than the innermost" eloquently captures the psychological relation of conscious being to this utterly transcendent object, which evidently permits objectifications but is restricted by none.

The "immediacy" of the experience refers to the compactness or compressive nature of the relation, with the exception that it does not necessarily terminate in analytic mediations.⁹ Contrary to the meaningless (*sinulos*) immediacy of unconscious compression, Lonergan's religious immediacy speaks of the directness of an experienced object that is yet

⁹ This does justice to the "beforeness" and "moving outness" mentioned earlier.

to be made explicit by the participant subject¹⁰ Since “[s]uch being-in-love has its antecedents, its causes, its conditions, its occasions” (M 105), the context within which it takes place is entirely meaningful, assisting in the process of making sense one’s personal experience of “ultimate dependency,” as Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) expressed it

Where does “tradition” stand in all this? Wittgenstein attributes an all-encompassing role to tradition, so that for an experience to be religious it must be the result of training in the conventions of a particular tradition¹¹ And yet dwindling membership in mainline establishments seems to indicate that conventional worship (“training”) is what drives most people away¹² Wittgenstein’s observation needs qualification Religious experience of some sort, succoured perhaps through prior instruction, is what renders tradition meaningful, brings it into being, as it were, with each passing development “New wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved” (Mt 9 17) Equiprimordially again comes into play, binding act (experience) to content (tradition) in a way that does not imprison us to the straights of a strong-alternative argument

Lonergan’s reference to religious experience intends a shift of focus from the sustaining psychological comportment of intersubjectivity, “the earlier ‘we’ that precedes the distinction of subjects and survives its oblivion” (M 57), to a personal dimension of

¹⁰ Contrary to R. Topping’s interpretation (p. 21).

¹¹ See R. Topping, p. 20.

¹² It is no accident that certain fundamentalist groups emphasizing personal conversion continue to capture the hearts and (unfortunately) the minds of people everywhere, no matter what the cultural background.

meaning within an intersubjective, artistic, symbolic or linguistic climate. Among Lonergan's favorite phrases to communicate the reality is Cardinal Newman's cor ad cor loquitur, "heart speaks to heart" or, as Lonergan seems to prefer, "love speaks to love" (M:73, 113). Love is elemental meaning, a matter of the heart, which conscious compression and analytic differentiation (knowledge-expression) rush into other modes of being or patterns of experience. To do so is to instrumentalize what is purely experiential with a view to enticing participant joy and, finally, decision.¹³ The compactness of the cor ad cor relation suggests the tautness of affection, with nothing interfering except the direct action of loquitur ad. If immediacy in Lonergan's sense means anything, it is this. Love knows no mediation apart from itself as that which binds or rivets subjects together.

The "beforeness" and "moving outness" of God's "prior" word of love are relative ways of situating the experience, which Lonergan says is ordinarily not objectified.¹⁴ "It remains within subjectivity as a vector, an undertow, a fateful call to a dreaded holiness" (M:113). The world mediated by meaning, which instrumentalizes the experiential word, is its livelihood, sustaining and surrounding it with a common fund of knowledge (sophia) meant to direct and to offer interpretations of transcendent love encountered. The possibility—indeed, inevitability—of a non-authentic appropriation of such a world indicates the

¹³ On "instrumentalization" see M:212-214. - Lonergan understands Heidegger's call to Being, its necessity, structure and priority, as a peculiar call (philosophical instrumentalization) to the elemental meaning of existence (pure[st?] pattern of experience).

¹⁴ This "ordinarily" is perplexing. Does it refer to the "universal" experience of transcendent love which, if universal, is clearly not always objectified? or to the qualitative nature of the experience which can never be fully objectified?

importance of the objective role of tradition (M:80). Yet it is the thatness of religious experience which invigorates the potential drag of traditional whatness, guarding the faithful from the accusation that they break God's commandment for the sake of their cherished traditions. "This people honors me with their lips, / but their hearts are far from me" (Mt 15:8 // Isa 29:13a).

A circularity ensues which renders meaningless linear characterizations like the disjunction "experience or tradition." The undertow about which Lonergan speaks is not necessarily confined to the transcendent structure of gift. In *Insight*, for example, the experience may be entered consciously through the intelligent structure of the given, in the commonsensical or theoretical realization that there is more to the universe of Being than one's questions can answer, that the intellectual desire demands more than mere answers, "and then [one] will endeavor to enter into the mystical pattern of experience" (I:758). A knowledge of common sense B/A and, perhaps, theory B/A may be tacitly operative in one's conscious decision, but the experience, however moderate, is what affects a change of heart—from indifference or disdain toward religion, to an acknowledgment of its possibility.¹⁵

Just as the equivalence principle is crucial for the identification of gravity and geometry, so too tradition is crucial for religious experience and a deeper, more personally meaningful understanding of God. In this way, the "additions" of the human mind, the hid-

¹⁵ See N. Malcolm, p. 70, for a description of a similar change of heart in Wittgenstein.

den data posited about things divine, head toward a differentiated awareness of the psychologically compact experience of Gift. Compactness here does not refer to an absence of commonsensical wisdom or epistemological erudition, but to an abundance of affection, which explains why the end of the transcendent structure is God (“beatific vision”), not differentiated consciousness per se.

However, with regard to Lonergan’s notion, unmediated immediacy of Gift (thatness: religion proper) is to be distinguished from its mediated immediacy (whatness) as an analytic insight of differentiated consciousness. To explain it, as he does, is to translate it from the experiential instant (implicit compression), to the archival logs of signification (explicit differentiation), to the endless play of signs directing meaningfully to its Infinite end.

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