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Self-Appropriation

Part One

Insight may be described as a set of exercises in which, it is hoped, one attains self-appropriation. The question naturally arises, what does that mean and why go to all the trouble? Unfortunately, the question is so fundamental that to answer it is in a way more difficult than to attain self-appropriation.

You may have heard this story or legend about Columbus. When he was hailed before the grandees of Spain for some misdemeanor or crime he alleged in his defense the greatness of his exploit in discovering America. They said to him, "Well, there was nothing wonderful about that. All you had to do was get in a boat and travel west. You were bound to hit it sometime." To make his point Columbus asked, "Which one of you can make an egg stand on its end?" All of them thought about it and some tried it but none succeeded. "Well, can you?" they demanded.

Columbus took the egg, gave it a little tap, and it stood on its end. "Well, that's easy!" they said. Columbus replied, "It's easy when you know how."

More generally, it is much simpler to do things than to explain what you are trying to do, what the method is that you are employing in doing it, and how that method will give you the results. In other words, the simple matter of attaining self-appropriation can be complicated by an enormous series of surrounding questions that are all more difficult than the actual feat of attaining self-appropriation. For that reason I do not start talking about the method of the book Insight until about Chapter Fourteen. Prior to that there is a method, but it is pedagogical--the type of method employed by a teacher who does not explain to his pupils what he is trying to do but goes ahead and does it. He has a method, but they are being cajoled. They have their attention held, one thing is given them after another, and they get there. But if the teacher had to answer such questions as, what are we trying to do?" and "How are we going to get there?" he would never succeed in teaching anything. Questions about method and questions about the possibility of knowledge are much more difficult than the knowledge itself or the actual achievement. Still, because there is needed perhaps some framework for these lectures, I will begin by discussing self-appropriation.[1]

1. The Pursuit of the Unknown

First, then, seeking knowledge is seeking an unknown. If you knew what you were looking for when you were/ ~~are~~ seeking knowledge, you would not have to look for it, you would have it already. If you want a motor car you know exactly what you want, but when you want knowledge you cannot know what you want.

Aristotle spoke about heavy bodies seeking the en/ centre of the earth. They had a natural appetite to fall, but it was an unconscious appetite. In us, when we are hungry we seek food and when we are thirsty we seek drink, and in that there is a conscious tendency, a conscious feeling. It is not merely a tendency towards an object, it is a conscious tendency. In seeking knowledge, not only do we tend towards it, not only do we do so consciously, but we also do so intelligently. Furthermore, we do so critically. We examine what we have been given and wonder if it is right, and we test it and control it. Moreover, one can seek knowledge quite deliberately. One can travel all the way from California to follow a course of lectures here/ and discussions. That is a deliberate act--not only conscious, intelligent, and rational, but deliberate. Scientists seek knowledge, aim at something, seek an unknown, and yet they go about it methodically. They have a series of well-defined steps which they take. This deliberate, methodical seeking of an unknown that is found in science is quite different from the deliberateness and method, for

example, of a construction company in putting up a new building. They have blueprints. They know exactly what they want all along the line. But when you are seeking knowledge you are seeking an unknown.

2. The Natural Desire to Know

There is a combination, then, of knowledge and ignorance--knowledge in the sense that knowledge is sought consciously, intelligently, rationally, deliberately, methodically and, on the other hand, ignorance, because if you already knew you would not have to bother seeking. This combination indicates the existence of an ideal, the pursuit of an ideal. And moreover, it is a built-in ideal. It is based upon innate tendencies. Aristotle's Metaphysics begins with the statement "All men naturally desire to know. . ." He goes on to add "particularly with their eyes", but the point is that there is a natural tendency, a natural desire to know.

The Scholastics distinguished between natural, acquired, and infused habits. Supernatural habits are said to be infused. Faith, Hope, and Charity do not come by nature or by the efforts of nature but by the grace of God. Acquired habits: You are not born knowing how to play the violin, nor are you born with an innate tendency to type write so many words per minute; you have to acquire the habit. But besides infused and acquired habits there are also habits, tendencies, with which you start out and which you must have to start. If a child nevers asks

questions, you cannot teach him. You class him as retarded or lower than retarded. There has to be something to start with and that is this tendency towards the ideal. The pursuit of knowledge, then, is the pursuit of an unknown and the possibility of that pursuit is the existence of an ideal.

3. The Development of the Ideal of Knowledge

This ideal is not conceptually explicit. It becomes explicit only through the pursuit of knowledge. I will illustrate this first from science and then from philosophy.

You all know that Pythagoras proved the theorem about the square of the hypoteneuse equal in area to the sum of the squares of the other two sides of a right-angle triangle. But the Pythagoreans also made another famous discovery, that of the harmonic ratios. The harmonic ratios are the reciprocals of an arithmetical progression: thus, 1/2, 1/4, 1/6, . . . are harmonic ratios because 2, 4, 6, . . . form an arithmetical progression. The Pythagoreans ~~made the discovery~~ discovered that those fractions corresponded to the tension or the length of the strings on a musical instrument, and that discovery was a knock-out--that there was a connection between mathematics and the sounds that were harmonious! They discovered not only that the mathematics was very interesting in itself, but also that it had a relation to what is listened to, the music. It accounted for the harmony in music. You can see

where the Pythagoreans got the notion from that, that the whole of reality is made up of numbers. The ideal that the universe is to be explained by numbers came as a generalization of this discovery. That, at least, is a fair guess about the origin of that Pythagorean doctrine.

The discovery of the relation between numbers and sensible phenomena was developed by Archimedes. ~~Archimedes~~ He made the famous statement "Give me a place to stand and I'll lift the earth"; he discovered the law of the lever. He wrote a treatise on floating bodies in which elementary principles of hydrostatics are worked out in the same way as geometry was worked out by Euclid. In the modern world Galileo put forward the ideal that what one is seeking in knowledge is the mathematization of nature, expressing nature through numbers. He discovered the law of falling bodies: ~~W~~hen bodies fall in a vacuum the distance traversed is proportional to the square of the time elapsed. Such is the mathematical formula for the free fall of a body. Kepler discovered his law of the planetary motion, that the planets move in ellipses, that the sun is at one of the foci of the ellipse, that the area covered by the radius vector is a function of the time. There are two foci; the radius vector is the line from a focus to the perimeter; the planet moves around the perimeter; the moving radius vector sweeps over equal areas in equal times; and the square of the period (the time taken by the planet to complete a circuit) is proportional to the cube of its

average distance from the sun. These further discoveries are all analogous to the Pythagorean harmonic ratios: Archimedes' law relating displacement and buoyancy; Galileo's law of falling bodies; and Kepler's three laws of planetary motion. In each case there was formulated a mathematical expression verifiable in concrete data.

An enormous further step was taken by Newton in his Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy. He went from particular laws, such as Galileo's and Kepler's, to system. In other words, just as Euclid posited a set of definitions, axioms, and postulates from which followed a series of ~~problems~~ theorems/problems and ~~theorems~~, similarly Newton proposed not just particular laws but a whole system. Just as Euclid demonstrated his theorems, so Newton proved that if a body moves in a field of central force with some velocity v, then that body will move in a conic section.*/ He established not merely a particular law but from a set of axioms regarding laws of motion he deduced the movements of the planets. Kepler discovered, inductively, by examining the data on the movements, ~~what the figure was.~~ the figure, Newton explained deductively why it had to be that figure, why it had to be an ellipse or some other conic section, after the fashion of Euclid deducing his theorems from his definitions and axioms.

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system; and its great achievement was Newtonian system. It lasted for a couple of centuries but it had been on the basis of Euclidean geometry. Einstein moved it to another basis, a more general geometry, and Quantum Mechanics has taken us right out of the field of law and system. The fundamental ideal has become states and probabilities. The ideal, then, not only develops. It changes. So one's ideal of knowledge, what one is seeking in knowledge, is something that is not conceptually explicit. It becomes explicit in the pursuit of knowledge.

This particular line of development starts from particular discoveries and moves to Newtonian system and beyond that to the system of relativity. When scientists still fail to get theories that satisfy all the data they change the ideal itself from law and system to states and probabilities. They begin working towards a different ideal of what knowledge really would be if they ~~got there~~ reached it.

Now let us take another example, one that runs concomitantly. The Scholastic definition of a science is certain knowledge of things through their causes. Certain knowledge of things expresses common sense. If through certain knowledge of things (for example, I know this is a table) I work out all the causes, I have moved into science. This notion of science has an implication. If you are seeking certain knowledge of things through their causes, you start out from the thing and work to the discovery of the causes. When you have the causes, you

So want to check/ ~~From the causes~~ you work back until you from the causes can construct things out of them. The Scholastics called the first part of the movement resolution into the causes, resolutio in causas, analysis. The second part of the movement was compositio ex causis, synthesis. So from the idea of science as knowledge of things by their causes you get the two ideas of analysis and synthesis: Movement from the thing to the causes and then movement from the causes back to the thing.

Moreover, Aristotle had a very precise idea about things and an equally precise idea about causes. What is a thing? A thing falls under the predicaments: substance, quantity, quality, relation, action, passion, place, time, posture, habit. There are ten and a thing is what fits under those. What are causes? There are four: end, agent, matter, and form. The end moves the agent, the agent moves the matter, and from the matter being moved arises the form which is the end as realized.

Now what happened? There you have an ideal: science is knowledge of things through their causes. The ideal implies a double movement, analysis and then synthesis--analysis to discover causes, synthesis to go from causes to the things. What happened is that the analysis and the synthesis survived but not the things and causes as understood by Aristotle. This can be illustrated in two ways, first from Trinitarian Theory and then from science.

In the New Testament all we are told regarding the Blessed Trinity is the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Ghost. After a series of Greek councils we arrive at three persons and one nature. There is nothing in the New Testament about persons or nature. These technical terms do not occur. Since the three persons are distinct we find, in the Cappadocian Fathers, the treatment of the properties of the distinct persons. Each person must have something proper to himself, otherwise he would be the same as the others. Further, the Cappadocian Fathers and also Augustine had the idea that these properties must be relative. They cannot be something absolute--God is simple. If these properties are to be reconciled with the simplicity of God they have to be relative. Where do the relations come from? They come from the processions. Augustine explained the processions by a psychological analogy. He said they were something like the movement in the mind from understanding to conception, from judgement to willing. So we have missions, persons, nature, properties, relations, processions.

What do we find in Saint Thomas' Summa Theologiae, Part One, Questions 27-43? Saint Thomas does not start out from the missions. Missions come last in Question 43. He is making the other movement from causes to things, synthesis. He begins from a psychological analogy and moves to the processions, to the relations, to the persons, to the missions. The order of discovery is just the

opposite of the order of doctrine. In doctrine one starts off from principles and draws up all the conclusions. But in discovery one discovers one conclusion after another and gradually moves on to principles.

In Trinitarian Theory, then, we have analysis and synthesis. We have the analytic movement up to Saint Thomas and the synthetic movement in Saint Thomas' Summa Theologiae. But we have not got things and we have not got causes. God is not a thing in the sense of the Aristotelian predicaments and the generation of the Son by the Father is not a matter of causality. The Son is not another God and neither is the Holy Ghost. Things and causes vanish, but the analysis and synthesis remain. That is a theological illustration.

Where do we have the study of things and causes in science, in chemistry for example? There are over 3 by 10^5, over three hundred thousand, compounds that present-day chemistry knows about, and those are not mixtures but compounds. Chemists explain all of these compounds by a periodic table of about one hundred elements. On the one hand there is the composition of the compounds from the elements, sometimes in fact and sometimes just in theory (for they cannot always synthesize the compound and it takes a lot of trouble to try and do it). On the other hand there is the analysis of the compounds into the elements. But these elements are not Aristotle's things. In a chemistry course you may be given an introductory

definition of hydrogen--hydrogen is an odourless gas with various sensible properties--but you very soon forget it and you operate in terms of the atomic weight, the atomic number, and other properties implicit in the periodic table. The one hundred elements are defined by their relations to one another. They are not defined in terms of substance, quantity, quality, and so on, as these terms are taken in a simple view, in their ordinary meaning.

Thus you have what is called the bifurcation of nature. You have Eddington's two tables. One of them was brown with a smooth surface on four solid legs and pretty hard to move around. The other was a pack of electrons that could not even be imagined. Which of the two tables is the real table? For the chemist the elements are atoms and we do not see atoms, so he moves away from the field of things in the Aristotelian sense and from causes in the Aristotelian sense of end, agent, matter, and form. He thinks in terms of analysis and synthesis. The ideal of knowledge, then, develops in the pursuit of knowledge. The ideal becomes explicit through the pursuit of knowledge.

Our first point was that seeking knowledge is seeking an unknown, and this implies an ideal, a set of tendencies. Further, this ideal is not explicit. It becomes explicit in the process of seeking knowledge and that becoming explicit involves changes in the ideal. In Newton science achieves law and system and that ideal is pursued up to

Einstein. But there follows a phase in which what is sought is not law and system but states and probabilities. Similarly and concomitantly, science starts off with an ideal in terms of things and causes and moves to a practice that is a matter of analysis and synthesis. The question arises, what is going to happen next? Scientists have gone from law and system to states and probabilities. Is there going to be another change and, if so, what will that be? They have gone from things and causes to analysis and synthesis. Will there be another change and, if so, what will that be? And above all, what on earth can the philosopher be aiming at? If he is seeking knowledge he is seeking the implementation of some ideal. What can that ideal be?

There was the ideal of pure reason resulting from the transference from mathematics to philosophy of the ideal of a set of fundamental, analytic, self-evident, necessary, universal propositions from which, by deduction, equally necessary and universal conclusions are reached. Philosophy becomes the product of the movement of pure reason from self-evident principles to absolutely certain conclusions. That was an ideal. It was implemented by Spinoza, Leibniz, and Wolff.

Kant's Critique of Pure Reason is a critique of that ideal. He is criticizing an ideal of knowledge and introducing into philosophy the same type of movement as we find in the movement of scientific ideals. Briefly, his

criticism is that in mathematics pure reason can arrive at satisfactory results because it can construct concepts, because it can represent, as he puts it, in a pure a priori intuition the concept itself. But that cannot be done in philosophy and, therefore, philosophy cannot successfully follow the method of pure reason. There you have an ideal in philosophy, a deductivist ideal proceeding from analytic propositions to universal and necessary conclusions, and a criticism of that ideal. In fact, the ideal of pure reason is the Euclidean ideal. It is what in contemporary Scholastic circles is called essentialism.

might/ /would be put by a Hegelian regarding the ~~making~~ explicitation of ideals. It/ involves six terms: implicit, explicit, abstract, alien, mediation, reconciliation. To illustrate the transition from the implicit to the explicit there is the ideal of temperance, as during the prohibition period. When you are seeking temperance, you are expressing a tendency towards the ideal. That ideal arouses a lot of enthusiasm. But that expression of man's capacity for the ideal is abstract. It does not express the whole of man's desire and capacity for the ideal. It is inadequate to it. It does not deal with the whole, concrete situation and in that way it is an abstraction. Because it is an abstraction there is an opposition between the expressed, explicit ideal and the subject in whom the ideal is implicit, between that ideal and the subject. That

opposition is the alienation. The pursuit of temperance through prohibition gave rise to considerable alienation and the laws of prohibition were repealed. For while temperance is a fine ideal, still that particular means of bringing it about led to all sorts of abuses. The expression of the ideal, because it was just an abstraction, something inadequate to the subject in whom the ideal is implicit, was alien and that alien aspect brings to light the opposition between the subject and the ideal. This alienation mediates or draws forth from the subject a more adequate expression of his ideal. When that is drawn forth, you have reconciliation.

A Hegelian would argue that since any expression of any ideal is bound to be abstract it cannot be adequate to what is implicit in the subject. Law and system is one abstract expression. Certain knowledge of things through their causes is another abstract expression. Because they are abstract these expressions really are alien. The more you use them, the more you will bring out that aspect of antithesis, alienation, opposition and, consequently, you will call forth something else to correct it. So there is a movement from law and system to states and probabilities, from knowing things through their causes to analysis and synthesis. But analysis and synthesis and states and probabilities are also abstract. In due course the inadequacy of those realizations will become apparent and we will move on to something else.

Let us take another example from philosophy. In the nineteenth century there began to appear and there may still exist books on epistemology that started from the existence of knowledge. Universal scepticism is self-contradictory and because it is contradictory, knowledge exists. But just knowing that knowledge exists is knowing something very abstract. What kind of knowledge exists? What is the knowledge that exists? If you express the knowledge that exists abstractly, what will follow? You will have a mere abstraction and it will give rise to alienation. It will give rise to what has been called the Catholic Ghetto. Catholics are holding on to this idea of knowledge while the rest of the world is paying no attention to it. To merely assert the existence of knowledge without saying as fully as you can just what knowledge is, is to utter an abstraction which gives rise to alienation. No solution is reached until that alienation is changed into a means by which something else is brought forth which is at least less abstract. However, the Hegelian difficulty probed rather deeply. It attacked <u>any</u> explicit ideal of knowledge.

4. The Problem

Perhaps I have given enough illustrations to enable me to say there exists a problem. What have we seen? The pursuit of knowledge is the pursuit of an unknown. It is not only a conscious pursuit but an intelligent, rational, deliberate, and methodical pursuit. The pursuit of building a house when you have a set of

suffer from the same difficulty. The problem exists not only theoretically but concretely. You cannot take a single step without presupposing or implicitly invoking some ideal of knowledge, and a great part of the exercises throughout these lectures will be adverting to this fact. In all one's questions, in all one's efforts, one is presupposing some ideal of knowledge, more or less unconsciously perhaps.

5. The Solution: Self-Appropriation

The solution to this problem offered by Insight is self-appropriation. So self-appropriation is being introduced in terms of a problem. The ideal we seek in seeking the unknown, in trying to know, is conceptually implicit. There does not exist naturally, spontaneously, through the whole of history a set of propositions, conceptions, and definitions that define the ideal of knowledge. Conceptually it is implicit. But while it is implicit as far as statements you can make go, while these statements differ in different places and at different times (they are historically conditioned), still that does not mean that it is non-existent. While the conception of the ideal is not by nature, still there is something by nature. The ideal of knowledge is myself as intelligent, as asking questions, as requiring intelligible answers. It is possible to get to these fundamental tendencies of which any conceived ideal is an expression and if you can turn in upon these fundamental tendencies, then you are

b/ blue/prints is clearly deliberate and methodical. But how do you proceed methodically and deliberately to the attainment of something that you do not know, something which if known by you would not have to be pursued? One has to acknowledge, then, the existence in man of something like a natural ideal that moves towards knowledge. Moreover, this ideal is not explicitly conceived by nature. While the tendency is innate, while it belongs to man by nature, while it is not something acquired like c/ facility on the violin or the piano or the type writer, still the exact goal of this tendency is not explicitly conceived by nature. Man has to work out his conception of this goal and he does so insofar as he actually pursues knowledge. In the working out, this ideal becomes concrete or explicit in a series of different forms in the sciences and in philosophy. Therefore there exists a problem.

The ideal of pure reason has been criticized on the one hand by Kant for his reasons and on the other hand by most contemporary Scholastics by their objections to what they call essentialism. That ideal is wrong. But what is the right one? If it is not pure reason, then philosophy is not a matter of going from self-evident, universal, necessary principles to equally certain conclusions. What is it a matter of? What are you trying to do? Moreover, there is the Hegelian difficulty. Any explicit ideal is going to be an abstraction and will be found to be inadequate. Another will arise and this new one will

on the way to getting hold of matters of fact that are independent of the Hegelian objection. You are capable of getting hold of fundamental matters of fact in terms of which you can have a fairly definitive account of the cognitional ideal.

What you hear are words. If the words mean something, then there are concepts in the mind, acts of meaning. If you or I hold that the words mean something that is true, then there is judgement. It is in judgements, concepts, and words that you make your ideal, your goal in knowledge, explicit. The trick in self-appropriation is to move one step backwards, to move backwards to the subject as intelligent, asking questions, having insights and being able to form concepts, as weighing the evidence and being able to judge. We want to move in there where the ideal is functionally operative prior to its being made explicit in judgements, concepts, and words. Moving in there is self-appropriation. Moving in there is reaching what is pre-predicative, pre-conceptual, pre-judicial. In what may resemble Heidegger's terminology, it is moving from ontology which is the logos, the word about being, the judgement about being, to the ontic, where you are, which is what one is.[4]

How does one move in there where the ideals are functionally operative in tendencies and achievements? What exactly happens when you are trying to achieve self-appropriation? Let us consider the ambiguity of the word 'presence'. First, you can say that the chairs are present

in the room, but you cannot say that the chairs are present to the room or that the room is present to the chairs. The latter is a different, second sense of presence: being present to someone. It has a meaning with regard to animals. A dog walks along the street, sees another dog on the other side, and crosses over. The other dog is present to him but not in the sense that the chairs are present in the room. Again, I am present to you and you are present to me, and this presence is different from the presence of the chairs in the room. Moreover, there is a third meaning of presence. You could not be present to me unless I was somehow present to myself. If I was unconscious you would not be present to me in that second sense. If you were unconscious I would not be present to you in that second sense. There is therefore a third sense of presence: Presence to oneself. So there is a merely material sense of presence: The chairs are present in the room. There is a second sense: One person is present to the other. There is a third sense: A person has to be present to himself somehow for others to be present to him. The third presence is the one that is of interest in self-appropriation. You are there and that, your being there to yourself, is the type of presence we are concerned with.

What on earth do you do to get that presence of yourself to yourself? Do you crane your neck around and look into yourself to see if you are there? First of all, it cannot be done. You cannot turn yourself inside out

and take a look. In the second place, even if you could it would be beside the point. Why is that? Because if you could, what you would arrive at would not be the third type of presence but only the second. You would be looking at yourself, you would have yourself 'out there' to be present to you. But we want the you that is present to whom you would be present. What is important, in other words, is the looker, not the looked at, even when the self is what is looked at. So it is not a matter of introspection in any spatial sense, in any sense of looking-back-into, because what counts is not the presence of what is looked at but the presence of the subject that looks, even when he is looking at himself.

That third presence is the fundamental presence. But simply as presence it is empirical consciousness. You can go a step higher beyond empirical consciousness. You need not be just there. When you are teaching a class, for example, you can see from the looks on students' faces who is getting it and who is finding it rather dull. If it is clicking, if it means something to them, then there is not merely presence, empirical consciousness, but also intellectual consciousness. They are catching on; they are understanding or they are trying to understand; they are very puzzled or tense. On the level of intellectual consciousness you are present to yourself as trying to understand; as saying "I've got it!", and as conceiving and expressing. But beyond that there is still a third

level on which you are present to yourself, rational consciousness. When you do understand, you think "After all, is that just another bright idea or have I really got it properly?" The question then is "Is it true or false?" on the level of rational consciousness, the level of reflection. But when your judgements move on to action you have, fourthly, rational self-consciousness. Then your reflection is about yourself. It is conscience in the ordinary sense, "Am I doing right or wrong?" and rational reflection is concerned with your whole action.

What, then, is this business of moving in on oneself, of self-appropriation? It is not a matter of looking back into yourself because it is not what you look at but the looking that counts. It is not just the looking, it is not being entirely absorbed in the object, but it is adverting to the fact that when you are absorbed in the object you are also present to yourself. If you were not, it would not count. If there were no one there to see, there would be nothing present to the seer. That to whom other things are present, that which must be present to itself for other things to be present to it, is not merely there. He or she is intelligent, rational, rationally self-conscious. So our concern in Insight is a series of exercises in which we move towards the functionally operative tendencies that ground the ideal of knowledge. The first part of Insight is primarly concerned with moving in there. In the second part we start drawing the conclusions

and that is the thing that some people want to argue about. But there is very little point to the argument unless they have been in there, because that is what we are trying to express, that is where the evidence lies. That is the point that has to be made.

Again, the book Insight is a series of exercises in self-appropriation, in reaching the factual, functionally operative tendencies that express themselves successively in the series of ideals found in the sciences and in philosophy and, for that matter, in theology (and that is why I am interested). In fact, Chapters One through Eight are concerned with understanding understanding, insight into insight. In those eight chapters there is a series of insights, and the point is not having all the insights--you do not have to have them all. The point is noticing when you have them, adverting to them, and moving into this self-appropriation. Chapters Nine and Ten are concerned with understanding judgement, the next level. Chapter Eleven is concerned with affirming your understanding and your judgement. That roughly is the technical side of the problem.

6. The Existential Element

But there is a joker in this business of self-appropriation. We do not start out with a clean slate as we move towards self-appropriation. We already have our ideals of what knowledge is and we want to do self-appropriation according to the ideal that is already

operative in us, not merely in terms of the spontaneous natural ideal but in terms of some explicit ideal. I do not suppose any of you will want to do self-appropriation by way of measurements and experiments, but a lot of people would say that our results cannot be really scientific unless we do it that way. Perhaps some of you will think that the thing to do is to define your terms very clearly, establish your self-evident principles, and then proceed with deducing. And people can have other ideals besides these that govern their procedure. Moreover, the results we may arrive at may not fit in with pre-existent explicit ideals and there will arise another conflict. In other words, this business of self-appropriation is not simply a matter of moving in and finding the functionally operative tendencies that ground ideals. It is also a matter of pulling out the inadequate ideals that may be already existent and operative in us. There is a conflict, there is an existential element, there is a question of the subject, a personal question that will not be the same for everyone. Everyone will have his own difficulties. There is an advantage, then, to having a seminar on the subject. It gives you a chance to talk these things out with others. There is a set of concrete opportunities provided by the seminar that cannot be provided by any mere book. The more you talk with one another and throw things out--and do not be afraid to speak, thinking to yourself, "Well, I'm not going to say anything

until I'm absolutely certain that I'm right"--and the more you probe, the more you express yourself spontaneously, simply, frankly, the more quickly you arrive at the point where you get the thing cleared up.

Again, we are talking about, aiming at, an explicit ideal of knowledge based upon self-appropriation. But you know the latin tag, Qualis quisque est talis finis videtur ei, the end seems to vary with each man. The kind of man you have determines what his ideals will be. In other words, the kind of ideal you have at the present time is a function of your past experience, your past study, your past teachers, your past courses in philosophy. Insofar as there is a struggle about agreeing with Insight or disagreeing with it, that struggle arises on a very fundamental existential level. It is akin to Heidegger's classification of men as authentic and inauthentic and this involves a criticism of the subject. Something similar comes up in Insight--the existential problem.

Let us take another illustration. I believe that the notion of insight or the fact of insight is explicitly and with complete universality acknowledged by Aristotle and determinative in Aristotle's thought. I believe that the same is true of Saint Thomas. But in an article published in Gregorianum by Peter Hoenon on the knowledge of first principles, in which he was trying to draw

attention to this matter, he said that he could find only seven Scholastics in the course of seven hundred years that adverted to the possibility.[d] Why is it, if I am right in saying that insight is fundamental in Aristotle and Saint Thomas, that in the course of seven hundred years only seven Scholastics advert to the possibility and only some of those accept it? It is this existential problem. It is the presence of a ready-made ideal of what knowledge must be, blocking self-appropriation.

That, then, is a fundamental issue that comes up in Insight. Those of you who have read the book will probably know about it. I certainly know about it, I certainly have experienced insight in myself or I would not have written the book. But why is it that insight has been neglected? It is because if you frankly acknowledge that intellect is intelligence you discover that you have terrific problems in epistemology. It is much simpler to soft-pedal the fact that intellect is intelligence than to face out the solution to the epistemological problem. At least that is my opinion on the matter. I am throwing it out. I cannot force you. Self-appropriation is what you do yourself. So much, then, for the general question, what is self-appropriation and why bother about it?

7. Summary

We said that this type of talk is really much more difficult than self-appropriation itself because we are talking around the subject. To work out the theory of how you make the egg stand on its end is much harder than giving it a little tap and having it stand there as Columbus did. And in general, questions of method, questions of the possibility of knowledge, are in the second remove and they are much more difficult, much more abstract, much more complicated than the business of doing it. However, to have a framework for our lectures and evening discussions we put down a series of points that give some idea of what self-appropriation is. But note that this is just a framework. It is not a premise from which we are going to draw conclusions. It is an invitation towards self-appropriation. What are you trying to do and how do you move towards it, and why bother about it?

Our first point was, seeking knowledge is seeking an unknown. Our second point was that the movement to that unknown is the movement towards an ideal that is not conceptually explicit. It becomes conceptually explicit as an axiomatic system, as observation in an experiment, and in many other ways in the course of pursuing knowledge. Thirdly, we gave illustrations from science of the development of the ideal. There is the movement from Pythagoras, through Archimedes, Galileo, Kepler, Newton,

and Einstein. In that movement the ideal of law and system is worked out fully and when it is deserted we go on to an ideal of states and probabilities. There is the ideal of certain knowledge of things through their causes which implies analysis and synthesis. Analysis and synthesis survive while things and causes in the Aristotelian sense are not operative in that scientific knowledge. A chemist does not bother his head about matter or form or end but talks about agents and reagents and so on. In other words, this ideal assumes explicit forms historically. Fourthly, the philosophic problem arises when the one ideal of knowledge, namely pure reason as developed by Spinoza, Leibniz, and more systematically in school/book fashion by Wolff, was criticized by Kant. Kant's Critique of Pure Reason is a critique of a particular ideal of knowledge. But then there is, in addition, the general Hegelian objection that any explicitly formulated ideal is going to be abstract. Because it is abstract it is going to come into conflict with the source of the ideal and be, consequently, a source of further discomforts that change that explicit formulation. Fifthly, we presented our answer to that Hegelian objection and the answer is not an easy one. You cannot put it into a formula. But our approach, our way to get around that, is to move in on the concrete subject where the tendencies that are expressed in the ideal of functionally operative. That

turning in is a matter of consciousness and we have distinguished three senses of the word 'presence'. The chairs are present in the room. We are present to one another. And we are all present to ourselves. Furthermore, as present to ourselves we are not looking at ourselves, we are not objects, we are subjects. It is the present subject that counts. Moreover, that present subject is not only present but intelligent, reasonable, and self-conscious when he makes decisions. Finally, there is a joker in the problem. There are already existing ideals and there are people who want self-appropriation spontaneously and naturally. Your ideal of knowledge will govern your attempts at self-appropriation and, unless your ideal is perfectly correct before you start, it will prevent you from arriving. There is the need, then, of some sort of a jump, a leap.

Part Two

Now we shall move on to the exercises themselves. The exercises of the first type are for the purpose of getting hold of the idea of an insight. In Insight there is, first of all, a lengthy description of Archimedes' discovery. Then we take the insight behind the definition of the circle. But here we will take a few other examples. There will be two things to note. First there will be the example and, secondly, advertence to what is happening

in oneself when the insight occurs.

1. Insight in Plato

In the Meno, one of the early dialogues of Plato, Socrates is interested in establishing his theory of anamnesis, recollection, memory. The ideas are known by remembering them. We remember them because we were in some previous state. To prove this fact of anamnesis, of the recollection of the ideas known in some earlier state, Socrates summons a boy. In the dust he draws a square, ABCD. (~~Illustration 1~~). He then asks the boy to draw another square the area of which is exactly double the first. The boy says, "That's easy." He produces the side AB so it is double its original length. Socrates says, "Well, draw the whole square." So the boy draws it, having to produce sides equal to the base all the way around. Socrates makes the observation that it seems more than double, that it seems to be four times the area. He adds the lines CH and CE and we can see that each of the four squares are equal, that what the slave boy arrived at was a square four times as big as the original and not twice as big. Socrates then points out that the square wanted is not only double ABCD but half AFGJ, and he asks the boy to find that square. Finally, the boy stumbles upon line BD (~~Illustration 2~~) and he can come up with a square that is double the original one and half the bigger one. Triangle ABD is equal to BCD, DHJ

is equal to CDH, EGH is equal to CEH, BEF is equal to BCE, so the square BEHD in the centre is half the bigger square.

Now the boy does not know Pythagoras' discovery, namely that the square of the diagonal is equal to the sum of the squares of the two sides, but he stumbles upon the answer through the diagram, through the concrete instance. By asking questions and without giving him the answers, Socrates brings the slave boy to the point where he finds the square that is double the original one. And Socrates asks, "How did he know? I didn't tell him. I just asked him questions. He must have had the idea from before." Aristotle did not believe much in this remembering from before but he figured that the diagram had something to do with it, and it has.

2. Insight in Euclid

Take another instance. Euclid's first proposition is to construct an equilateral triangle on a given base in a given plane.[12] The solution is to take centre A and radius AB and draw a circle (~~Illustration~~ 3). Take centre B and radius BA and draw another circle. We obtain point C. Join CA and CB. Because AB and AC are both radii of the same circle they are equal. Because BA and BC are both radii of the same circle they are also equal. Things equal to the same thing are equal to one another, therefore all three sides are equal. We have got an equilateral triangle.

Now if you are familiar with geometry you know that Euclid has ~~cheated.~~ slipped. Euclid undertakes to solve his problems and prove his theorems in virtue of his definitions, axioms, and postulates. But there is one step here that is not covered by any of Euclid's definitions, axioms, or postulates, namely that the two circles will intersect at the point C. There is no way of proving that from the whole set of definitions, axioms, and postulates. But you are certain they must intersect. If you do not know that from Euclid's definitions, axioms, and postulates how do you know? Euclidean geometry, as worked out at the present time, introduces different axioms to be able to handle this sort of thing. But what you can see immediately is that if there are two circles and the distances between their centres is greater than the sum of their radii they cannot intersect. Again, if there are two circles and the distance between their centres is less than the sum of their radii one may be inside the other. And there is a third case between the case when they are outside one another and the case when one is inside the other. It is an intermediate case in which the circles must intersect and for which you can find a formula that expresses when the circles in the same plane must intersect. The conditions for this third case can be laid down, but for centuries most people did Euclidean geometry without bothering about that. They just saw

it in the diagram. They saw that it had to be so, that if you start with base AB and draw the circles with AB as the radius of both you are bound to get intersecting circles. You see, then, in the concrete instance what is universally true. But you cannot see, imagine, a must. ~~Your~~ understanding that it must, and that understanding with respect to diagrams, with respect to images, is insight.

Let me take a second example from Euclid. In the first book, ~~around~~ propositions ~~14, 15, and~~ 16, Euclid proves the exterior angle to be greater than the interior opposite. Take the triangle ABC (~~Illustration 5~~). Produce the side AC to D. BCD is the exterior angle which he wants to prove is bigger than BAC, the interior opposite. His method is to bisect the side BC, join AE, produce AE so that EF is equal to it, and join FC. By bisection BE is equal to EC. By construction AE is equal to EF, and because opposite angles are equal these two triangles, ABE and FCE, are similar in all respects. Thus the angle FCD is equal to the angle BAC. But manifestly BCD is bigger than FCD, therefore the exterior angle is greater than the interior opposite.

What Euclid does not prove is that the line FC falls within the angle BCD. If it does not fall within the angle you have no proof that one angle is bigger than the other. If the line produced from F were to fall elsewhere the proof would not hold. This is another

reason why modern geometers have an entirely different set of axioms. With the different set they can do the proof in different ways. There is more than one set in which you can prove all of Euclid's propositions but Euclid's propositions do not suffice by themselves as a rigorous deduction. However, you can see that line FC has to fall in the angle by an imaginative experiment. First, the size of the triangle makes no difference. Secondly, it makes no difference which side it is on. The whole construction can be put on the other side. But if you observe that construction you see that the line FC is bound to lie in the angle. You can see it in all possible cases by supposing you have rigid rods and by moving them in imagination so that the two sides of the triangle take all possible positions (following according to the laws of) construction. You can see that no matter how you twist or turn those two lines, line FC always lies within that angle. You see what must be so in the image. But you do not imagine the must, you understand it. Imagination and sense present what is there. I can see a piece of yellow chalk but I cannot see that there must be a piece of yellow chalk. You cannot see a must. You just see facts or the factual or the empirical or the given. So we have here another example of an insight, a casual insight that existed for centuries before ~~the geometers caught on to it and noticed that old Euclid is not as good as~~ geometry textbooks made it explicit.

~~we thought~~. He says he is proving everything from these definitions, axioms, and postulates but he really does not. He uses casual insights as he goes along.

Water-tight sets of definitions and axioms have been worked out. Once such a set is worked out one's geometry can be done without having any insights. Everything is up in the axioms. Now if the whole geometry can be done without insights, a machine can do it. So we get the sentential calculus, the symbolic logic, which exhibits what can be done by a machine, by a digital computer. There are no insights occuring during the whole operation. An intelligent man is needed to set up the machine and he has to have all the insights before doing symbolic logic ~~he starts~~/ but ~~setting up the machine~~ is not a matter of working along on a problem, getting an insight, getting around the problem, and continuing to the next problem. It is a matter of setting down rigid axioms right from the start to cover all eventualities. When that is done the machine can do the whole of geometry for you. Of course, you have to know the geometry better than Euclid did to be able to draw up these axioms.

I have drawn your attention to Euclid's use of casual insights. You see intellectually, you grasp a must in the image, and if you get hold of all of these insights an expression can be found for them in a set of axioms. When that is accomplished the machine can do the geometry and ~~get out~~ all the right answers at every

crack, if there is nothing wrong with the machine. The machine does not have to be intelligent. It just has to follow directions. But to do geometry the way Euclid did it you have to be having insights as you go along.

3. A Note on Advertence

Because Euclid uses casual insights, these examples illustrate insight very clearly. On the other hand, symbolic logic, the mathematical logic, illustrates proceeding without any insights. Now our attention has been on the object but when we were attending to the object something happened in us. We saw that it must. We have spoken of intellectual consciousness. It is wanting to see, it is trying to see, it is catching on. Saint Thomas says that whenever you try to understand anything, you form images in which, as it were, you see the solution to the problem. He is talking about insight. Beyond the level of sense--colours, sounds, odours, tastes, feelings--and beyond the level of imagination, there is this must and can be and cannot be that you get hold of. Getting hold of that is the insight. It is that event that is our first object of attention.

4. The Rise of Symbolic Logic

Why have mathematicians moved off into a symbolic logic in which the whole of geometry is built up without having any insights? It is because they have been stung.

They thought they had an insight and they discovered that it was wrong. It regarded Euclid's parallel postulate. (~~Illustration 6~~). If a line AB cuts two straight lines, CD and EF, in such a way that the two angles, α and β, are less than two right angles, then the lines CD and EF will intersect. The postulate has been put in different ways, but the implication is that if the angles are exactly equal to two right angles the lines are parallel, lines that never meet on either side no matter how far they are produced. Why is it that the insight is right with regard to the intersecting circles and right with regard to the external angle but wrong with regard to this? It is because this case involves an infinite phantasm, an infinite image, and we have not ~~to~~ infinite images. We have images that can extend indefinitely and which, if extended according to the parallel law, give us Euclidean geometry. But we need not extend them according to the parallel law. Space could keep getting roomier the farther we move out, or it could get tighter the farther we move out. Maybe we have a different kind of space, one in which the parallel law does not hold.

It is because of their suspicion about this case of what seemed to be just as good an insight as those regarding the intersecting circle and the external angle that mathematicians first discovered that one can have

a completely coherent geometry and hold that even if the angles are both right angles the two lines will intersect. Further, one can hold that there can be several straight lines through the same point, none of which intersect with another coplanar line. It can be proven quite simply that these other geometries are coherent, because if they are wrong the Euclidean geometry of the surface of ~~an~~ the ellipse or the Euclidean geometry of the surface of the hyperbola have to be wrong. Euclid cannot be right and these geometries incoherent. That is the reason why the mathematicians are shy of insights. In this case they were satisfied that a mistake was made. Consequently, they have moved off into symbolic logic, the purely automatic, the development from acknowledged axioms, and this gives rise to further problems on the foundations of mathematics. What axioms are mathematical axioms? How do you know which axioms to take? Which ones give mathematics? Those are further questions.

5. Insight in Aristotle

I have said that insight is in Aristotle. When discussing the eclipse Aristotle says the moon suffering an eclipse becomes darker and darker. He says that for us to explain the eclipse of the moon is rather difficult. But if you were on the moon you would see the earth cutting in between the sun and the moon causing the shadow, and you would know why there had to be an eclipse.

That is an instance of an insight. If you can see the earth cutting in between the sun and the moon you know why the moon is thus darkened.

to be noted here/ But there is another point ~~in Aristotle. He~~ divides Aristotle/ questions into four types: 1) What? What is it? 2) Is it? 3) Why is it so? 4) Is it so? "Is it so?" and "Is it?" are just factual questions, questions of existence, questions of some determination of what exists. "What is it?" and "Why is it so?" are questions for intelligence. Aristotle wanted to know the meaning of 'what'. What are we looking for when we ask "What is it?", ~~quid~~ quid sit? Cap/ Aristotle's answer was not the quiddítas. That was a technical term that was invented in the Middle Ages. Aristotle's answer was that 'what' means 'why'. How can 'what' mean 'why'? He says that, in some cases, it is quite easy to see. You can change the 'what' question into a 'why' question.[13] If you ask, for example, "What is an eclipse?" you can say "Why is the moon thus darkened?". The reason why the moon is darkened in this way is what an eclipse is, namely a blocking of the sun's light on the object that is eclipsed. The answer to the 'why' question and the answer to the 'what' question is the same. However, Aristotle says that there are some cases where you cannot break it up in this way. When you say "What is a man?" or "What is a house?", what do you change 'man' or 'house' into? If you can make an eclipse a darkening of the moon, if you can say "Why is the moon

thus darkened?", you can change the 'what' question into a 'why' question. But how do you break 'man' up into two words so that you can say "Why is this a man?"? Aristotle did not tackle this problem in the Posterior Analytics but he does deal with it in the Metaphysics, Book Seven, Chapter Seventeen. There you will find his doctrine of matter and form arising out of this problem. You ask, "What is a man?" You mean "Why is this a man?" You have this, what you point to, the materials. The answer is the soul. It is the soul in this matter that makes it a man. If there is a different kind of soul you do not have a man. Soul is what you know by insight into the sensible data. Just as you have insight into sensible data, so in matter there is form. Aristotle's matter/form distinction is tied right in with his insight.

6. Insight in Kant

It is not only Aristotle that adverted to insight and it is not only Plato that used it. Kant in his Transcendental Doctrine of Method where he is giving the fruits of his labours distinguishes between mathematics and philosophy.[14] Both use pure reason but in mathematics you can construct your concepts while in philsophy you cannot. What does Kant mean by constructing concepts? It is exhibiting the concept in a pure intuition. He uses the triangle for an example. One can imagine the triangle that ~~has conformed~~ exactly to one's definition

of a triangle. Because one can have ~~that~~ an image that conforms exactly to the definition and represents it perfectly, it is possible to have in mathematics synthetic a priori principles and not only analytic principles. In an analytic principle there is a subject and a predicate and the predicate says what belongs to the subject. But the synthetic principle is a universal and necessary proposition in which the predicate is not just part of the subject but goes beyond the subject. There are synthetic principles in mathematics because in mathematics one can have this image, one can construct an a priori intuition. Of what? Of the concept of the subject. And because one has that construction one can add on a predicate that is not contained merely in the idea of the subject.

Kant has a very good point. What he is talking about, it seems to me, is materially the same sort of thing we were illustrating from Euclid. How do you know that the circles must intersect? If you attend just to the Euclidean definitions, axioms, and postulates you can derive analytic propositions and necessary conclusions from those propositions. But it is only when you appeal to the image of the circles in the three cases--one inside the other, one totally outside, and the two intersecting--that you can define the conditions under which the two will intersect. In that case, because you can appeal to the image, you can have a synthetic a priori proposition.

Kant, Aristotle, and Saint Thomas all knew about insight. The differences between Kant on the one hand and Aristotle and Thomas on the other is this: Kant's a priori is independent of experience. The a priori is in intellect independently of experience, absolutely independent of experience. You have the concept and when you have the concept you can exhibit it in an image, but Kant does not think of the image as causing the insight. It is still more complex than this, but this is the contrast simply put.

In Aristotle and Saint Thomas on the other hand you have the insight and the concept. They are distinguished. And you have the phantasm, the image, causing the insight. In Kant there is no talk about the insight, but only the concept and the image and the concept governing the image. Kant's synthetic a priori presupposes the insight already to exist and the concepts already to be formed. Given those presuppositions you then control your images. But for Kant the images do not cause the insight. He cannot allow that and still retain his definition of the a priori as ~~total~~ independence of what is given.

7. Summary

I have illustrated insight in instances, from the problem of the Meno, from Euclid on the intersection of circles and the external angle. I have shown in terms of insight why there is symbolic logic in modern mathematics, the pure rigorous deduction that a machine could do. The reason is the distrust of casual insights. If you have

casual insights you are kidding yourself if you continue to think that you are deducing your geometry from the axioms. It does not really flow from the axioms. It is inaccurate to use casual insights and, sometimes, as in the case of the parallel postulate, these insights can be wrong. There results a movement off into symbolic logic. Further, I have illustrated the role of insight in Aristotle with regard to the problem of breaking the 'what' question into the 'why' question. The matter/form distinction arises out of that problem. The matter is the 'this', what you point to, while the form is what you know by insight into the sensible data. And I have pointed to Kant's discussion of the possibility of synthetic a priori principles in his Transcendental Doctrine of Method to illustrate his own advertence to insight. Finally, these exercises and examples have been for the purpose of getting hold of the notion of an insight. Besides the examples there is your own advertence to what happened in you when the insights occured, when you saw the must in the image.

Notes to Lecture One

1. This lecture supplements the Preface and Introduction of Lonergan's Insight: A Study of Human Understanding, New York: Philosophical Library Inc., and London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1957. See especially xxiii, xxvi - xxvii. On pedagogical method see pp. 397 - 398.

P.7, LINE 17

* What is a conic section? Consider a fixed point and a circle. Draw a straight line through the fixed point and any point on the circumference of the circle. Move the line around the circumference and so obtain two cones joined at their apices. Now when the cones are cut across by a plane surface there results a conic section, i.e. a cut across a cone. When the plane is at right angles to the axis of the cone the section is a circle. A cut parallel to the edge gives a parabola. A cut between these two yields an ellipse, and one beyond them yields a hyperbola, while one through the apices gives two straight lines. The geometry of such conic sections was worked out by the Greeks. What Newton proved was that a body in a field of central force will move in a conic section.

2. On common sense as intellectual see Insight, pp. 173 - 181.

3. For Sir Arthur Eddington's own discussion see his The Nature of the Physical World, Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1928, Introduction, xi - xix; also his New Pathways in Science, Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1947, p. 1.

4. This distinction is worked out gradually in Martin Heidegger's Being and Time, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1962. See p. 31, note 3, and p. 69.

5. On the aim of the book, see Insight, xxviii.

6. P. Hoenen, "De Origine Primorum Principiorum Scientiae," Gregorianum, XIV, 1933, pp. 153 - 184.

7. Insight, Chapter I, Sections 1 and 2.

8. Edith Hamilton's and Huntington Cairns' The Collected Dialogues of Plato, Princeton: The Princeton University Press, 1961, p. 353.

P.30, LINE 9

* The Greek word for a boy also means a slave, but here the idea is of a young person, totally uneducated, having no knowledge whatever of geometry.

P.31, LINE 19

* We are considering Euclid's construction and not some modern variation of it in which all the problems and theorems are changed.

9. Aristotle, Posterior Analytics, II, 2, $87^{b}36$ - $90^{a}34$. Lonergan treats this topic more fully in his Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas, edited by David Burrell, C.S.C., Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967, p. 12 ff.

10. Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, translated by Norman Kemp Smith, New York: St. Martin's Press, and Toronto: Macmillan, 1965, p. 576 ff.