

(52000DTE060) Regis69 3B¹**4 Progress and Decline**

We now have to consider the movement in the group over time: progress and decline.

Progress proceeds from originating values, from the subject insofar as he is observing the transcendental precepts: Be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible. In his attention to human affairs, he will grasp hitherto unnoticed or unrealized possibilities; he will reject what will not work; he will recognize what might or will work. And he will want to put it into operation on the basis of an unbiased evaluation of short-term and long-term causes and effects. Progress consists in a continuous flow of improvements, the realization of possibilities that favor development of the human good. You have elements of a continuous flow because the transcendental precepts are permanent; they apply, not only to the present situation, but also to the next situation that will result from changing the present situation. Again, you're attentive: you know what isn't working out too well; you figure out how that can be corrected: the continuous flow of what Toynbee calls challenge and response: situation, insight, policy, action, new situation, further insights: that's the wheel which keeps things moving in the direction of the better.

1 The second part of the third lecture, treating what then was chapter 3, The Human Good. The lecture begins with the fourth element in the chapter at that time, progress and decline. Audio recording 52000A0E060 contains the lecture and part of the discussion held the same evening. Most of the discussion is recorded at 537R0A0E060, with the conclusion at 541R0A0E060.

However, the transcendental precepts are not necessarily observed. People can be inattentive, obtuse, unreasonable, irresponsible. They can do so from unconscious motivation, by their egoism, individual egoism and group egoism; they can be concerned with short-term benefits and disregard long-term costs. And this sort of thing is not easily corrected. The egoist doesn't become an altruist overnight; hostile groups do not forget the resentments, grudges, and the injustices of the past very easily; and there is the general bias of common sense that considers itself omniscient in all fields, and wants to run everything; as a matter of fact, it is simply a specialization with regard to the concrete and the particular. And, consequently, you can have a general bias in which the whole community is disregarding long-term effects. The extent of this aberration is a variable. The greater the aberration, the more rapid the distortion of cumulative change; the more rapidly there amass social and cultural problems. Egoism is against the good of order; it is the sharp individual figuring out how he can make the most out of the institutional framework, despite the intentions of the institution. It can be countered by law, but only up to a point. There is only a small proportion of the population that can be prosecuted and put in prison; and when you pass that limit, well then the law has to start winking at violations of the good of order. And the question arises, Whose violations are going to be winked at? And you very easily get law as the instrument of a favored class, a class law that regards the benefit, the well-being of one class, and the opposite of another class.

Again, when you have individual egoism, at least it is something that everyone else is against: he is a person who is not socially approved of, accepted. But group egoism is just the opposite: everyone in the group thinks it is just the right thing, is just fine. The group egoism sets up a market for doctrines and theories that will justify it and all it does, and it will

reveal that the misfortunes of others are due to their depravity. It sets up an ideology, and because it really doesn't understand what's being going on, it brings about an opposition between the haves and the have-nots, not merely of material goods, but also a favored class which represents the flowered culture of the times, the unfavored class which represents the miseries of earlier eras, the backwardness of earlier eras; and it calls forth a contrary ideology. It will make these other people aware of their destiny and the depravity of the people who are having a good time. There are set up, then, these conflicts. In other words, the lack of attention, intelligence, reasonableness, responsibility, the failure of self-transcendence, produces in the objective situation surds; the lack of intelligibility in one's actions creates situations that are unintelligible. Unintelligible situations, absurd situations, do not admit of improvement. They do not fit into any intelligible scheme of improvement. they are the absurd, and these absurdities pile up until the social situation becomes desperate, and then there is the opportunity for the *Führer*, *Duce* or someone to go along and even things off one way or the other. On this idea of progress and decline, as a result of self-transcendence or failure in self-transcendence, that dialectic, see chapter 7 of *Insight* and chapter 18. On the role of self-sacrificing love in overcoming decline, see chapter 20.

5 The Notion of Value and Judgments of Value

Value is a transcendental notion. Just as the intelligible is what we are seeking when we ask, Why, What, How, What for? and just as the truth is what we seek when we ask, Is that so? so value is what we are concerned with when we ask, Is that worthwhile? Is all this talk we're doing here worthwhile? Is it apparently good, or truly good? Consequently, it pertains

to the dynamism of our conscious intentionality. The transcendental notions promote us up several levels of conscious intentionality: they move us from the level of experience to the level of understanding, understanding to judgment, judgment to evaluation, choice. These transcendental notions are in between ignorance and knowledge. When I ask, Why? I don't yet know why, but I intend to reach the why; I'm intending what I don't yet know. When I ask, Is that so? I'm intending truth, but I don't know what the truth is, whether it's yes or no. You intend something you don't yet know, and that is why our consciousness is something dynamic, on the move.

Similarly, the question for deliberation, Is that worthwhile? is intending something I don't yet know. I don't yet know whether it is worthwhile or not. And it is only in the next section when we talk of judgments of value that we will be able to state in what the knowledge of value consists, and how one's judgment on it develops.

The transcendental notions provide criteria not only put the question, direct you to something you don't know; they also provide the criteria by which you will know whether or not the goal is reached. You ask why, and when you understand, you have things clicking into order, you think; when you want to ask, Is that so? you marshal and weigh the evidence, metaphorically. Technically, you verify the conditions, the fulfillment of the conditions, and the link between the conditions and the conditioned that has its conditions fulfilled. On the fourth level (questions for deliberation) you have the good or the bad or the uneasy conscience: what Gilbert and Sullivan called 'the satisfying feeling that one's duty has been done.' Or, on the other hand, the bad conscience. The self-transcendence that is attained when you judge correctly what is worthwhile and do it is a real self-transcendence, it isn't just a notional or a cognitional self-transcendence; it is you becoming a principle of benevolence and beneficence; you becoming

capable of genuine collaboration, working with others for something that is worthwhile, capable of true love.

The transcendental notions are utterly concrete. They are broader than any categories, as we have already mentioned, but they are not abstract. When you ask, Is it worthwhile? you are talking about a concrete goodness, excellence: and no abstraction is a good you can pursue. What you intend when you ask, Why? is the concrete cause or reason for something being so; similarly, being is not abstract but comprehensive: it includes everything about everything. Similarly, the good also is concrete, and it heads for a goodness that is beyond criticism; it raises questions for deliberation; it provokes the disenchantment that asks whether what we are doing is really worthwhile, the disenchantment that brings to light the limitations of every finite achievement, every flaw in perfection; it can plunge us into love, and keep us aware that our loving falls far short of its aim.

In brief, the transcendental notion of the good so invites, presses, harries us that it can rest only in an encounter with the good that is completely beyond its powers of criticism.

So much for the notion of value. It is concrete, comprehensive, dynamic; it intends what as yet is not known.

Next, judgments of value. Judgments of value are simple or comparative. *X* is truly good, or only apparently good; it is worthwhile or it is not. Or, *X* is better than *Y*, more important than *Y*, more urgent than *Y*: the comparative judgment of value. Judgments of value are objective or subjective according as they proceed from the self-transcending subject or the subject that is not transcending itself in making that judgment. The criterion of the objectivity of judgments of value is human authenticity, real self-transcendence. On the other hand, the meaning of the judgment of value is that this *X* is truly good, or that it is better than *Y*, preferred to *Y*.

Consequently, judgments of value and judgments of fact differ in content, but not in structure. They differ in content: you can say something is worthwhile that doesn't exist; and inversely you can say that something does exist, but is not worthwhile, not truly good. But they don't differ in structure. In both cases there is a criterion, and in both cases there is a meaning, and the criterion and the meaning differ. The criterion of the true judgment of fact is the reaching, grasping the virtually unconditioned; but its meaning is that what you know is what is, what you affirm is what really exists. Similarly, in a judgment of value, the criterion is real self-transcendence, being an authentic person; but the meaning is, This is something good, something worthwhile.

Judgments of value go beyond merely cognitional self-transcendence without reaching fullness of real self-transcendence. Fullness is not merely making the judgment of value, but living up to it, carrying it out. But, on the other hand, it is not just like empirical knowledge, knowledge of matters of fact. When you make the judgment of value, you already are achieving an initial self-transcendence, the self-transcendence that recognizes what is truly good. And once you have made this judgment of value, then either you have to carry it out, or recognize yourself as a sinner, or rationalize, make out that your judgment of value was mistaken: you're already involved in the moral order when you make the judgment of value. These judgments of value, then, constitute the subject as proximately capable of real, full self-transcendence.

We will now try to assemble the elements in a judgment of value. First of all, there are apprehensions of value, and these occur in the intentional responses that we have already spoken of. In other words, not merely emotional feelings, states and trends, that are not of themselves related to objects; not merely intentional responses to the agreeable or

disagreeable, to the pleasurable or painful; but intentional responses to the vital, social, cultural, personal, religious values, the ontic value of the person and the qualitative value of beauty, understanding, truth, noble deeds, virtuous actions and achievements. And while self-transcendence is, in a sense, going against the self, it is also something that has a terrific draw, power, what the self is for.

The components in the judgment of value are first of all, then, knowledge of reality, and especially of human reality. Without that knowledge of what the effects of any given action would be, what the probable results would be, how would they effect people, how will it work out, you will have moral idealism, people with beautiful ideals that just don't work out and cause more harm than good when you try them. There has to be a factual knowledge of the human situation, its interconnections, etc. That has to be presupposed, a knowledge of human reality. Secondly, we have intentional responses to value. Thirdly, the initial thrust to real self-transcendence that is the judgment of value itself.

Now, the first thing is the knowledge of human possibilities: proximate, remote, also consequence of the action; without this knowledge, fine feelings result, or ideals. This knowledge, however, is not enough, nor are the moral feelings; they have to be criticized. There is honor among thieves, but that is not enough. People have to develop morally; one doesn't start out with a highly refined moral standard; it is something that one has to develop in oneself. And, again, in Aristotle's ethics, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, there is an empirical basis insofar as there are virtuous men. Aristotle's definitions always come back to what the virtuous man would do, and the way he would do it. Where Aristotle talked in terms of virtues, we're speaking in terms of values. But the Greek *aretê* has the drawing power, that's the man who acts, and we're talking ethics on the supposition

that there are self-transcending people. But people develop in, their self-transcendence, and it is the developed person that will make the fully objective judgment of value. Until you are fully developed morally, you have still to learn about values. The key moment in this personal development is the existence of knowledge of personal intentional discovery – the discovery of oneself as a moral being; that one doesn't merely choose objects and thereby affect them, but in my choices I make myself. And the fundamental issue in this existential discovery is that one has to find out for oneself, he is going to have to decide for oneself, what one is to make of oneself.

Now, judgments of value occur in different contexts. There is the context of the person who is growing. His knowledge is increasing, he is mastering an ever greater diversity of operations, his responses are advancing; there is an openness to further achievement. And, insofar as he has the grace of God's love, he reaches a summit that can be still further developed; one can always grow and grow in grace; but the summit is not transcended. And consequently you have Augustine's words: 'If you are in love with God, then do what you please.' The love of God will select your values for you, and what you do is what is right.

One can be moving in that context. But one can be moving also in the context of decadence. Neurotic needs, refusal to risk, distortion of the scale of preference, feelings soured, the acceptance of bias, rationalization, ideology. This all tends toward an ingrown hatred of what is really good, or an incapacity. Joseph de Finance, *Essai sur l'agir humain*, Rome: Presses de l'Université Gregorienne, 1962, pp. 287 ff., distinguishes between vertical and horizontal liberty. Horizontal liberty is the exercise of liberty from a given stance within a given horizon. Vertical liberty is the exercise of liberty in which your stance is changing and your horizons change; you are

accepting a change of horizon. That exercise of vertical liberty, which is the key business in personal development, may be implicit or explicit. One may actually be doing it without knowing what is going on very clearly. Or, it may be explicit and willed, an openness to realizing in oneself that discernment of values and response to values that realizes personal self-transcendence. And judgments of value are objective insofar as they are the judgments of really self-transcending people who have acquired self-transcendence and developed in it.

6 Belief

Finally, beliefs result from judgments of value, fundamentally. The appropriation of one's social, cultural, religious heritage is largely a matter of belief. What we find out for ourselves is a small fraction of what we know. Our experiences are supplemented in greater measure by reports of the experiences of others. Our understanding: there are things, bright lights, we get on our own; but really, the vast proportion of even what a genius understands is something he has learnt by understanding what others have said. His judgments are in a symbiotic fusion with a larger context of beliefs. For example, we know the relative positions of cities in the United States. We have seen maps with little circles saying where these cities are. However, does anyone know the relative positions from immanently generated knowledge of cities in the United States? The mapmaker probably does not, for all that he does is put together maps made by surveyors who survey different portions of the terrain. The surveyors don't know; each one knows the part he has surveyed, but he believes the other surveyors. Now, of course, you may say: yes, but trains travel, cars, airplanes go on the basis of maps; property is bought and sold on the basis of maps; cities are laid out

on the basis of maps. It all works, and there is a cloud of witnesses making it absolutely certain that these maps can't be wrong. But this cloud of witnesses are all believers; they all believe one another; it isn't immanently generated knowledge in any one.

People will say that science is much different from that matter of believing. But as a matter of fact, science is not so different; it is a little more careful in its controls and so on, but fundamentally, a large part of what any scientist knows is a matter of belief about his own science. The things he himself has discovered, his own original contributions to the science, are due to immanently generated knowledge. Again, when he goes to work and checks someone else's work, performs the experiments, works out the theorems underlying the hypothesis, checks them out, and so on, he again has immanently generated knowledge of the other fellow's work. But scientists are not spending their lives checking out other peoples' work; they are engaged in advancing scientific knowledge. The results are checked by a few people, they become accepted, they are presupposed in other work, and as long as the results justify accepting the earlier results, things go along smoothly, and you have indirect verification. Galileo's law of falling bodies is indirectly verified every time that law was presupposed, in any experiment or in any industrial effort – at countless times in four centuries. Now, there is this enormous mass of indirect verification, and that is really what science relies on. But that mass of indirect verification is not anyone's immanently generated knowledge; you get the mass through belief. The indirect verifications that occur by experiment don't give you a mass of indirect verification.

In other words, human knowledge has a social character whether it is commonsense knowledge or scientific knowledge. And belief is the way in which individuals draw upon the common fund. By their discoveries they

make additions to the common fund, and belief is their way of drawing on the common fund. And it makes possible a division of labor, not only at any given time, but down the centuries. Modern civilization differs from primitive living because successive generations began where the previous one left off. And you can begin where the previous one left off if you believe what the previous one tells one. If you have to find out for yourself, well you may catch up with where they left off in the course of your lifetime. But to have a continuous progress, you have to have belief.

This commonly generated common sense, common knowledge, common science, common values, common clarification is open to oversights, biases, errors. Belief is not infallible. But the remedy for it is not to throw out all beliefs indiscriminately; all that would do is restore primitivism. What you have to do is profit by your discoveries. When you discover some truth that you hadn't known before, you are probably not only eliminating ignorance, but correcting an error. That error needs to be scrutinized; how did you happen to accept it? Are there other thoughts and beliefs connected with it that might also be erroneous? In other words, when you find out something you didn't know before, you can set up an investigation of mistaken beliefs and eliminate them. Moreover, it is not only the mistaken belief you eliminate, it is also the mistaken believer. You thought, perhaps, there was something wrong with him, why did I believe him? And in that way, one can purify the common fund, eliminate the mistakes and beliefs, and do so in an efficacious fashion. And, in general, it is better to be acquiring more truth than simply criticizing beliefs. If you merely criticize, well, you can become cultural wrecks, be left with nothing at all. If it is from what you have learnt that you correct mistaken beliefs, then you will have an ongoing development that won't leave scars, empty holes.

The process of believing: what are the steps involved? The process is possible, because what is true is not private, but public. And public doesn't mean something out there you can put your hands on. Public means that you've reached the unconditioned; you've got beyond the conditioning subject to what is so. I cannot give another my eyes, but I can truly report what I have seen; I can't give him my understanding, but I can explain why it works; I can't give him my judgment, but I can tell him why it is true; etc. So the first step is the making public of what oneself knows.

The second step is a general judgment of value. It approves the division of labor by which the development of human knowledge is a communal undertaking, to which each one makes his contribution, and from which each one draws by believing: he approves that in general. He criticizes particular beliefs, but accepts belief in principle. And he does so, because he knows that we would all be worse off if we would return to primitivism, which is very easily done if you don't want to believe, because what most people know is belief.

The third step is a particular judgment of value. The witness is trustworthy, the expert competent, the teacher knows his stuff, the leader has authority, is a sound authority: 'This man can be trusted,' and so on. The point at issue is whether one's source is critical of his sources. Is there intentional self-transcendence in his judgments of fact, real self-transcendence in his judgments of value? How do you decide? Our means are indirect. There can be a concurrence of experts, a coherence of the several statements they make; when they talk about the things that you do know, you find them right on the ball; they are saying things exactly. They are found by others to be trustworthy, etc. There is a whole series of indices that people can go by to pronounce a given person as worthy of belief.

When you have both the general acceptance of belief in principle and the particular judgment of value on the trustworthiness of this or that expert or whatever it is, there follows the decision to believe. Believing is a good thing; this can be believed; therefore, this ought to be believed: the decision to believe.

And finally, there is the act of believing: I personally assent to the truth of the statement, though that truth is not something that I can immanently generate from my own experience, understanding, and judgment. And that is the act of believing.

That account of the process of believing may make one very suspicious. One thinks it is a very foolish business to want to look into this business of belief. So what I'll do is a concrete instance. And we will think of the engineer, pulling a slide rule out of his pocket, and performing quite a calculation and then returns it to his pocket. Partly the engineer will be able to tell you what or why the slide rule works, just what he did, why the answer is correct. However, there is an awful lot of believing that is going on in that use of the slide rule. The slide rule presupposes logarithmic and trigonometric tables, and the engineer never worked those out for himself. He believes them to be correct, and knows how to work from the tables. He presupposes that the markings on his rule correspond to logarithmic and trigonometric tables: he has never checked, taken a set of tables and checked each mark, calibrated it to see it was in the right place. He believes that is correct too.

Now, shall we say that the engineer is unreasonable in doing that? That before engineers are going to use slide rules, they ought first to work out the whole arrangement of logarithmic and trigonometric tables, personally get generated knowledge, and then calibrate their rules against the

markings? If you say that everything is all right, you are admitting belief in principle.

Finally, you may find this account of belief quite novel: the extent of belief in human knowledge, and the value we attribute to it. And this gives rise to the possibility of a critique of beliefs; because if you find this account correct, then it not only suggests that you had a different account previously, that it is due to mistaken beliefs which may be connected with other mistaken beliefs which it may be well to investigate; and such investigation, I again repeat, is not a sweeping rejection of all beliefs, as the Enlightenment really wanted, but a critique of particular beliefs in the neighborhood of beliefs that have been found mistaken.

[The opening part of the Q&A session for the third day]

When you say the criterion of a judgment of value is the self-transcending subject, is that judgment virtually unconditioned?

Well, it is a different type of judgment. The empirical judgment, what de facto is so, what de facto can be, is one thing; the judgment of value is a different type of judgment. It is of what is good, what is worthwhile. It is a further question. You can't get 'ought' in the conclusion when the 'ought' is not in the premises. The fourth level is distinct from the first three.

In general, objectivity is a matter of authentic subjectivity. But the authentic subjectivity that is the objectivity of judgments of fact, possibility, is merely a cognitional self-transcendence through grasping a virtually unconditioned. In this case, you have to know the reality and the probabilities and so on. Besides that, you have to have the apprehension of values, and you have to have a developed person to have the proper apprehension of values. The judgment itself is a matter of eliminating bias from your motivation and so on; it is a matter of being able to spot that and decide just how much of

the thing is values. For example, Max Weber introduced the idea that social science was value-free. He wanted it to be an empirical science; he wanted to have social science distinct from social policy. Judgments of social policy are judgments about the good, the worthwhile in the concrete situations, involving concrete individuals where you are not going to have the purity you can have when one is just considering things theoretically. In other words, everything human in the concrete situation, any concrete organization, and so on, is compromised in one way or another. Men are not angels. Our authenticity is withdrawal from unauthenticity. Consequently, social science, insofar as it is empirical science, is ascertaining the facts. But judgments of value do not settle the facts, and so social science insofar as it is empirical – he wanted it to be kept free of value judgments.

That notion we will return to later, especially when we talk about history and dialectic. But the judgment of value itself is the judgment that this course of action is a good course of action because of the values involved in it. It is not just a matter of whim, or of satisfaction, or of advantage, and so on. It is a complex judgment. It is revealed to be correct insofar as it is the judgment of the good man, of the self-transcending person and he makes it with a good conscience. A good conscience and a bad conscience are events on the fourth level, whether this question of value, Is it worthwhile? is being met, just as you know if your question why is being met insofar as you understand. That reveals whether the question is being met. And if it's not being met, further questions arise. The unhappy conscience that puts further questions: is it really worth while? what about this? etc. You know about judgments of value by making them and reflecting on them just as one knows about insights by producing them in oneself and objectifying them.

What is the evidence of the self-transcending person?

The self-transcending person is one who is realizing values. It is a vicious circle, if you wish. As in Aristotle's *Ethics*, an act of virtue is what the virtuous man does, and he does

it that way. To make the ought something empirical, you have to suppose or have such things as virtuous men. If you don't know any virtuous men we can't help you!

Please elaborate how you can verify.

Well you can tell, and if not, other people can. St Ignatius once said, and people generally remark, that people are usually not good judges of their own cause. You can ask someone else. That is the purpose of a spiritual director, a spiritual counselor, etc. Fr de Guibert, who was teaching ascetical theology when I was a student in Rome, said the function of a spiritual director is to take the major premises that the spiritual child acknowledges and put in the minor premise: now, this means *you*. This the person finds very difficult to do for himself, to acknowledge that this applies even to me.

Is it not by a judgment of fact that I recognize the virtuous man?

No. You are introducing value terms somewhere when one says that he is a virtuous man. It is by your judgments of value that you recognize a virtuous man. And you are impressed and inspired by the virtuous man.

Is this objective or subjective?

What do you mean by subjective and objective? Objective simply means authentic subjectivity; it does not mean what you put your paws on.

I don't see the difference between bias with regard to judgments of fact and bias with regard to judgments of value.

Bias can distort judgments of fact, but when bias distorts judgments of value, judgments of fact can remain intact. For example, the egoist is not blind; he is far sharper than the average man; he knows how to make the most of every opportunity. He thinks things out very carefully. If you have group egoism, then things become much more complicated because the whole language can become distorted, all your praise and blame, and so on. Being virtuous becomes a matter of belonging to a certain race or a certain cultural tradition.

What is the role of the unhappy conscience in this transcendental notion of value?

The unhappy conscience is like an unsatisfied intelligence. Just as the unsatisfied intelligence leads to further questions, so the unhappy conscience, the unsatisfied dynamism of the transcendental notion of value, lets you know that you are not doing one's job.

How does one grasp this?

Just push the analysis a little further. Am I really so detached? Am I not really aiming at personal advantage? In this way one starts to scrutinize one's motives. There is a conflict between oneself as objectified, fully known, and oneself as just conscious. There are many things that one is conscious of but that one doesn't drag out into the open.

What about faculty psychology, the role of the will?

Well, we are out of faculty psychology; we don't talk about intellect and will or speculative intellect or practical intellect. We talk about intentional consciousness, its acts, its acquired habits, its levels; the relationships between the levels, and so on. We don't deal with metaphysical entities that are built-in. Will as active is the transcendental notion of value. And the passive potencies for it are the previous levels of intentional consciousness.

What about the apprehended value [unclear]?

It is part of it, but it isn't just that. It is how it fits in with what you are choosing to do. Otherwise, you get the doctrinaire with a slogan. All reality has to conform to his slogan. The louder he shouts it, the greater the obligation.

What about the virtually unconditioned: what is the meaning of 'virtually'?

The unconditioned is either strictly unconditioned, i.e., it has no conditions whatever; there is one instance of that, God; or an unconditioned has conditions but they are fulfilled, and then it is virtually unconditioned; it is a contingent being, something that pertains to this world.

How does this relate to the certitude we would have regarding value. Does 'virtually' mean the subject is aware that the virtuality is less than perfect?

One is aware of the conditions being fulfilled insofar as one verifies something, finds it in experience. He is aware of the nexus between those fulfilled conditions and what he is asserting.

Are the conditions necessary?

The conditions merely happen to be fulfilled; they are not fulfilled necessarily. Chapter 10 of *Insight*.

What is the relationship between the decision to believe and the act of belief? Both seem to be on the fourth level. What is the difference between them?

What is believed may be either a judgment of fact or a judgment of value. If it is a judgment of value it is on the fourth level; if it is a judgment of fact it is on the third. The difference is you decide to believe because it is a good thing to believe; but in the believing you are saying that something is true or probably true. There is a distinction.

Is there a difference in the quality of belief knowledge and of immanently generated knowledge? Is belief merely notional?

Knowledge by belief can be superficial. If a man has found something out for himself then he really knows it. There is that difference between them. On the other hand, belief is something inevitable in human life. Human knowledge is a social and cultural acquisition. Incidentally, in this connection, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, puts sociology of knowledge in the center of sociology. Insofar as it's believed, it's an entirely different type of responsibility and all that sort of thing. It needn't be merely notional. It can be quite full. What do you mean by 'notional'?

Just an acceptance of a statement somebody might make without knowing why it is so.

It is possible to supplement the why to some extent. People who are interested in the thing will get at least some general understanding of what is involved.

The relationship between the structure of the human good and the rest is unclear [the sound here is unclear because of someone's constant fiddling with microphone]

The first five chapters are a hermeneutic circle. Everything is interdependent. You start from what has least presuppositions and move on to what has more presuppositions gradually building up your presuppositions as you go. We started from method because it is the most fundamental and elementary. And we went on to functional specialties because it made the material on method more complex and was the same thing again in a more complicated form. Now, in *Insight* I treated the first three levels quite fully. I had to do something more on the fourth level. Further, when we treat religion, we are going to put the human good in a bigger context in which God is the originating value and the world, including the human good, is the terminal value. In other words, we have to insert the human good within our thought on religion, and it will be easier to do our thinking on religion if we have done some work on the human good and on development and judgments of value and belief – clear up those notions, and we'll have a lot of material ready to handle this notion of religion, which is fundamental to the thought of theology. Similarly, meaning. Meaning is a very complex thing, all sorts of angles to it. And if you're going to say anything about different types of religion, different stages of religion, different ways in which religious people speak, you'll have to have a fairly good analysis of meaning. So we're doing values today, meaning tomorrow – it's a little long, 62 pages, so we may not cover it all tomorrow. Then perhaps on Friday we'll get started on religion. And that will be more or less the theologian as agent, the self-transcending subject, and the different aspects of it, from the viewpoint of knowledge, ongoing development of the science or discipline, the viewpoint of values, meaning, and finally religion itself. Then we have the tasks of theology, the second part.

Another thing about what we were doing today: the notion of the construct or what Max Weber calls the ideal type. An ideal type or a construct is not a hypothesis or a description. It's a model, something useful that ties things together in an explanatory fashion that helps you conduct an investigation, formulate a hypothesis with regard to it,

and ultimately make descriptions. I'll give you an example. Henri-Irénée Marrou takes Foustel de Coulanges, *La cité antique*, and considers it as an ideal type, a construct, in terms of the patriarchal tribes coming together, the tribal religious observances, the unification of them, and the formation of the ancient Greek city. Now, he says, this system least of all applies to a place like Sparta. But even so, taking that setup that you have in Foustel de Coulanges and studying it, investigating it, you'll have all sorts of questions coming to you from this construct that will enable you to discover in Sparta things that you would otherwise not have noticed. So the construct has to be explanatory and put things together and provide a preliminary diving line for conducting investigations, terminology for forming hypotheses – you may have to add to the terminology, refine it, develop it and so on, but that's the function of this sort of thing.

My fundamental concepts come out of the consideration of the subject and having several subjects in a community. That's more or less a priori, something you can rely on very strongly. On the other hand, there are further elements, and most of them are fairly obvious and simple, but to put them together – each one of the eighteen points in the structure of the human good gets light from the others and its relationship to the others, and just as the eight functional specialties yesterday tie together and illuminate one another, so this type of approach reveals what is meant by an explanatory construct. Similarly, our account of meaning tomorrow is the kind of thing that can be complemented and added to indefinitely by linguistic studies, literary studies, and so on, but at least it provides a construct of fundamental questions and relationships for the study of developments in thought and meaning and so on.

In relation to freedom, does the free human mind restore the truth of value? What is the source of truth and value?

These transcendental notions – you can say they're self-justifying, but you can't get behind them. And they're not knowledge. They are the transition from ignorance to knowledge. And you're really not free to drop your intelligence. If you're going to play

the fool, you want to do it intelligently so people will know you're not really a fool. We're not too free about that. And similarly with regard to our rationality and our real self-transcendence. They are not something you put on or off. They are that by which you can perform free acts. They are the basic setup for the performance of free acts. The free act, though, is the product of the subject. The subject is free, and he manifests his freedom when he performs the free act. The free act is effect, not cause.

In relation to feeling, how fundamental or central to the structure is what you said about feeling in relation to meaning?

Its weight, power, momentum. Without it the structure is paper thin. If you just perceived sensible data and understood it and made judgments and made decisions, you'd be almost a zombie. A human being is an awful lot more than that, and that 'more' is feeling. Feeling is not merely sensitive. There are feelings that are gut reactions but there are others that are responses to cultural and religious values. They are on a quite different level.

In the light of modern anthropology, is not myth as significant a source of meaning as rationality in the world mediated by meaning?

It depends on how you take myth. You can take myth in the sense that myth is a way of thinking about things that at one time was quite wholesome and successful but now is out of date. What is myth? Well, early myth is a failure to distinguish between different functions of meaning. Meaning is cognitive. Meaning is communicative. Meaning is effective – it guides our building of cities and machines and all the rest. And meaning is constitutive: of language, of science, of literature, of institutions. Now, the primitive has to live in a world. He constitutes his universe by telling his tales. And some of it can be really revealing. I was just reading the other day about North American Indians. A certain kind of mouse would collect some food. The Indians would take part of that food and give the mouse some other food. But they would carry a terrific conversation with the mouse as they were taking his stuff away: how wise he was and revealed a real reverence

toward the universe and nature, and so on – perhaps a certain amount of self-justification. But it really was impressive. But it was constituting the universe. Myth in that sense is something that has to be respected. But on the other hand, there is the function of the symbol in internal communication between mind and heart and psyche. It is the symbol that carries on that internal communication. That isn't to be confused with myth. It is something that is very important even today. Again, what do you mean by rationality? People think of rationality in terms of syllogism, verbalized arguments. Well, I don't think that's important. The terms can be shoved around an awful lot. But if you're taking the position that myth is more important than reasonableness, it would be a problem. Reasonableness is what we're talking about on that third level.

If self-transcendence is the criterion of objectivity, then how does one determine who is the self-transcending subject? The example of birth control – how does one choose?

[Again, fiddling with microphone makes the question hard to decipher.]

Well, that's the sort of question that demands a very detailed answer. On birth control, you have people that say it's against the natural law. What do they mean by the natural law? What arguments do they have for saying it is against the natural law? Again, you can have a morality based upon values. Or you can conceive the natural law as having primary precepts that are always the same and secondary precepts that develop. Your primary precepts that are always the same would be: Be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible. Your secondary precepts result from the actuation of that. I don't think I can go into all the complexity that is involved there.

We just want an example of the problem.

The fundamental issue is this thing from Aristotle. Unless you have virtuous men, unless you are able to recognize a truly virtuous man, a man more virtuous than yourself, you have no de facto criteria.

But he did write the Ethics.

Oh yes, he wrote it, but his definition always came back to that. Where is the mean? It's where the virtuous man puts it.

But there are real principles there. We can't deduce the action from them, but they certainly throw light and help us in our judgments.

Do you mean verbal propositions?

Yes.

Well, for me principles are realities. And the fundamental principles are the transcendental notions. And what is invariant is the structure of the self-transcending subject. That's the first principle.

When I've regarded the virtuous man I want to gauge the way he acts –

And lay down the law?

Not a law necessarily, but some indication that when I perform an action that may be different from the specific action, I have some way of deciding whether I'm being ethical.

Well, are you harming anyone? Things like that. I think they're fairly simple.² Is the thing good, will it have a permanent effect that is significant? All these questions are relevant, and they're fairly natural. You need principles from which you can make deductions if you're going to be a legislator, and natural law de facto has been the law promulgated by professors of moral theology and of ethics, as far as I've been able to make out.

Do people involved in group bias tend to recognize each other as virtuous – e.g., a black-power or white-power man. Do they have to break out of group bias before they can really recognize a virtuous person?

Yes. Group bias is harder to break out of than individual bias. Individual bias is condemned by the group. But if you don't listen to anything outside the group, you have to place where your group bias is being exposed.

² The end of the discussion is to be found at 541R0A0E060.

Would they be deluded by seeing another member participating in group bias insofar as they fulfil the conditions for that bias, and say, 'He is virtuous?'

Well, there is group corruption. There's no doubt about it. Unless they're completely innocent, I don't think so. It's much harder for them to reject the bias. The analysis of bias – I have about 30 pages in chapter 7 of *Insight* on it.

Isn't the Incarnation the answer to this particular question? Isn't John providing an existential virtuous man so that you can see what one's supposed to be?

That's the religious answer. And consecrating your soul too.

The distinction between the third and fourth level – you said you envisaged a man with a hard-nosed evil about him, a man who is clear-eyed and at the same time perfectly willing to be utterly selfish and go against the mores of the group. I was presupposing that the easiest way out of authenticity is through self-deception, simply to go along with group bias. This seems run through all the levels, so that you overlook data or already configure data in a certain way.

You bring up irrelevant criteria. At the present time people want an ethics that is an empirical science, and at the same time they will argue that you can't get 'ought' in a conclusion if it isn't in the premises. And people who say the only way you can set up an ethics is statistics.

What we're all trying to say is that, yes to be reasonable and responsible is to be authentic, but who is to know what he is?

Yes, but it's in the process of development that you discover it, and the key moment is that existential discovery, when you find out for yourself – not someone telling you – that you have to decide for yourself – it's going to your decision, your commitment – what you are going to make of yourself. What's your state in life? What are you going to do? What are you going to achieve? How are you going to achieve it? You make out your salvation in fear and trembling. There are no pat answers. I'm setting out the structure in

which development occurs. That existential discovery is the sort of thing where you can have frequent exercises of vertical liberty. St Thomas's definition of operative grace is that by which we now will the good which formerly we did not will. And an increase in sanctifying grace was for St Thomas precisely that increase in the good that you're willing to do. And cooperative grace is not only your willing, but when you do it. St Peter at the Last Supper was willing: 'Lord, even if all should deny thee, I will not deny thee.' But – this is Augustine's distinction – cooperative grace is when Peter became a martyr.

What is the basis for your distinction of the three levels in your schema of the human good?

The three levels of the good: values, the good of order, and particular goods.

Is that based on experience, understanding, and judgment?

It came out of originally, but the good of order is both understanding and judgment, isn't it?

Does the model of the authentic person have to be a contemporary?

In a new situation the authentic person has to be creative. In a new situation being authentic is not being as you were before.

A convent of nuns today might have older nuns who are extremely authentic people but whose pattern of action can't be that of younger people who are in a different cultural situation.

That's very true. In other words, we have moved out of the classicist culture that thinks of the good as something eternally fixed. That's the fundamental change. It's the change that Vatican II was trying to meet. It's the change that Catholic thinkers have been trying to bring about for the last hundred years.

If you want to be an authentic person, then, you have to really work at it and really start looking and be responsible for what you find and do.

Yes. Now, we're only human beings ... but the saints – that's what the saints do.

You mentioned people with certain viewpoints that exclude their acceptance of dogma.

[a break in the recording] They want to drop the dogmas and make them symbols, giving them only a symbolic meaning to foster piety. And behind it was a philosophic position. They identified certain philosophies with the necessities of modern thought.

Mediation and immediacy in prayer – would you elaborate on that?

If you read any of these books on the spiritual life – if you ever have to direct a soul that goes that way, you have to read these books – like the affective prayer; there's no thinking going on. For example, ejaculatory prayer is rather disconnected. And they thin out [?] They're intensely absorbed in prayer, but they're not talking and they're not imagining. The world mediated by meaning has been bypassed.

What would this be?

Well, I'd say it's the experience of sanctifying grace. We'll have more to say about that in discussing religion.