

## **53100DTE060 Regis 69 9<sup>1</sup>**

While dialectic and foundations differ in phase, they have enough in common to be treated in the same chapter. They differ in phase: dialectic is the culmination of a first phase in which theology is an encounter with the religious past; foundations is the basis of a second phase in which theology, in response to the past, takes a stand in the present with respect to the future. On the other hand, both are specialties on the proper end of the fourth level of intentional consciousness, the level of deliberation, evaluation, decision. Again, both regard conflicts: dialectic clarifies them; foundations resolves them. Finally, while the clarification and the resolution are separated by a set of basic decisions, still these decisions pertain, not to the professional activity of the theologian, but to the religious life on which he reflects.

### **1 Dialectic**

Dialectic deals with conflicts. The conflicts may be overt or latent. They may lie in religious sources, in the religious tradition, or in the writings of theologians. They may regard contrary orientations of research, contrary

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<sup>1</sup> This document covers two lectures. Unfortunately, the recording of the first lecture (sections 1-5) seems to have been lost, at least temporarily, so only the remaining portion of this document, has been checked against the recording (53100A0E060). It seems, though, that a recording lies behind the transcript of the first five sections. There is a document in the Archives (58400DTE060) that seems to correspond to a good portion of this lecture, and that document is used here to supply the content. The recording 53100A0E060 also contains the first part of the discussion period. The entire discussion period is recorded at 540R0A0E060 and the very end of 542R0A0E060, which was used to complete the transcript.

interpretations, contrary histories, contrary value systems, contrary horizons, contrary doctrines, contrary systems, or contrary policies.

Dialectic makes such conflicts explicit, assembles and orders them, reveals their roots and interconnections. In doing so, however, it is moving them and their original context into a new, higher context. For earlier thinkers and writers do not know anything about subsequent ones. Later ones may have vague or even incorrect notions of their predecessors. Contemporaries may know one another only occasionally or incidentally. But dialectic assembles them all, compares them, notes where they agree and where they differ, and reduces differences to their roots.

The possibility of this procedure is transcendental method. There exists a normative pattern that relates and directs the recurrent operations of human intentional consciousness. As it exists and functions in the methodical theologian, so it has existed and functioned well or ill in all men down the ages. Its proper functioning generates positions: they result from observing the transcendental precepts, Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible. Its malfunctioning generates counterpositions: they result from failing to observe one or more of the transcendental precepts.

The first condition the dialectical theologian must fulfil is self-appropriation. He must attend to his own intentional consciousness on all its levels. He must grasp the interconnections of the several levels and of the operations proper to each. He must understand why and in what measure the understanding of the dynamic structure of his conscious being is not subject to revision. He must accept the values implicit in the transcendental notions and explicit in the transcendental precepts.

It is to be noted that positions and counterpositions are to be understood concretely as opposed moments in ongoing process. They are

not to be taken as just contradictory abstractions. They are to be apprehended in their proper dialectical character. Human authenticity is not some pure quality, some serene freedom from all oversights, all misunderstanding, all mistakes, all sins. Rather it consists in a withdrawal from unauthenticity, and the withdrawal is never a permanent achievement. It is ever precarious, ever to be achieved afresh, ever in great part a matter of uncovering still more oversights, acknowledging still further failures to understand, correcting still more mistakes, repenting of more and deeper sins. In brief, human development is largely through the ever fuller resolution of conflicts and, within the realm of intentional consciousness, the basic conflicts are defined by the opposition of positions and counterpositions.

Because dialectical theology is based on the theologian's self-appropriation, it cannot be philosophically or morally neutral. Self-appropriation is not only familiarity with one's own conscious and intentional operations but also familiarity with all the oversights and overemphases that result in mistaken cognitional theories, inadequate epistemologies, faulty or nonexistent ontologies. Self-appropriation cannot stop short with cognitional self-transcendence; it has to go on to the real self-transcendence that pursues values and thereby moves towards the elimination of the biases that spring from unconscious motivation, individual or group egoism, and the rashly assumed omniscience of common sense.

Only through the movement towards cognitional and real self-transcendence, by which he overcomes his own conflicts, can the theologian hope to discern the ambivalence at work in others and the measure in which they have resolved their problems. Only through such discernment can he hope to appreciate all that has been intelligent, true, and

good in the past even in the lives and thought of opponents. Only through such discernment can he come to acknowledge all that was misinformed, misunderstood, mistaken, evil even in those with whom he is allied.

This action is reciprocal. Just as it is one's own self-transcendence that enables one to know others accurately and to appreciate them fairly, so inversely it is through knowledge and appreciation of others that we come to know ourselves and to fill out and refine our apprehension of values. So Friedrich Meinecke could claim that history, as concerned with values, '... gives us the content, wisdom, and signposts of our lives.' So Carl Becker could write: 'The value of history is ... not scientific but moral: by liberating the mind, by deepening the sympathies, by fortifying the will, it enables us to control, not society, but ourselves – a much more important thing; it prepares us to live more humanely in the present and to meet rather than to foretell the future.'

So it is on the fourth level of dialectic that we really encounter the past. Research yields data, interpretation meanings, history movements. But in dialectic we meet persons that originate values and disvalues and, through that meeting,<sup>2</sup> we are invited to an existential illumination and to a modification, perhaps a reorientation, of our lives.

So our accounts of interpretation and history were open-ended. Interpretation was a matter not only of coming to understand a text and its author but also of coming to understand ourselves; but it is on this level of dialectic that the understanding is prepared and invited. Again, critical history was said to reach univocal results, not unconditionally, but only insofar as historians proceeded from the same world view, the same

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2 The document at 58200DTE060 lacks one page at this point, down to the beginning of section 2.

background, the same state of the question. When those conditions are not fulfilled, then differences may be merely perspectival; they may be such as will be removed by the discovery of further relevant data; but they may also proceed from deeper causes, from the philosophic or moral stand of the historians. In that case the proportionate remedy is only dialectic. Dialectic will make these radical differences explicit; it will relate them to their historical precedents; it will work out their presuppositions and implications; it will distinguish and separate positions and counterpositions; it will issue an invitation to self-understanding and to self-criticism and thereby do what can be done, if not to remove disagreement, at least to liberate it from the pride and disdain that ill accord with human limitations.

## **2 Dialectic as Methodical Strategy**

The strategy of dialectic is to bring out into the open all relevant philosophic presuppositions and value judgments. It is to use their oppositions both to clarify the past and to challenge contemporary theologians to self-understanding and self-criticism. It invites the critical exegete and historian to advance from the critique of others to the critique of himself. It is, however, just one strategy among many, and a review of the others will add clarity to our account.

Before considering methodical strategies, a word must be said on the pre-methodical, on everyday traditionalism. Its assumption is that there is nothing new under the sun. If one has anything intelligent or true or wise to say, then one had best say it by quoting the intelligent, truthful, and wise men of the past. If one cannot find one's contribution in the works of the ancients, then one has to choose between the following alternatives. The first is to increase the world's store of pseudepigrapha: one imitates as best

one can the style of an earlier period and attributes one's composition to some person known to have lived at that time. The second is to take some recognized authority, say Aristotle or Augustine or Aquinas, and to interpret him in one's own sense.

An escape from traditionalism is offered by rationalism. The rationalist demonstrates necessary conclusions from self-evident premises. He does so, not as a creature of flesh and blood, but as an abstraction named right reason. What cannot be demonstrated he considers mere belief; he accounts believers very evidently to be creatures of flesh and blood. The difficulty with the rationalist position is that by and large it is empty. While there may exist necessary conclusions that follow from self-evident premises, they are not to be found either in mathematics or in natural science. Nor do philosophy, theology, and the human sciences seem to be as simple as rationalist assumptions suppose.

A third strategy consists in the rejection of presuppositions. Usually it is just the other fellow's presuppositions that are rejected, and then, of course, one is confronted not with a strategy but with mere foul play. But the rejection of presuppositions can be understood in two further senses, and one of them is mistaken and the other correct.

If absolutely all presuppositions are rejected, then every act of understanding except the first is rejected. For every further act of understanding presupposes one's previous acts, complements, qualifies, or corrects them, and is functionally related to them. In brief, it presupposes them and, without them, it would be different from what, in fact, it is. Hence, to reject absolutely all presuppositions is to limit each human being to a single act of understanding, his first. It is an act that occurs before children learn to speak.

But the rejection of presuppositions may be not absolute but only relative. In that case one claims that the sciences have no presuppositions within their own order. Each has its own proper method, and each takes its stand on that method alone. In a sense each presupposes common sense, for there are many operations in a science that cannot be performed by persons lacking common sense. It remains that mere common sense is not a premise on which the science takes its stand, and it follows that the science limits the competence of common sense and corrects it when it steps beyond those limits.

Again, the natural sciences presuppose logic and mathematics. But logic and mathematics pertain to a different order. They are not natural sciences, for they are not subject to an ongoing process of verification and revision. They are pure constructs, neither hypotheses nor descriptions, yet extremely useful when it comes to writing descriptions or framing hypotheses.

Again, the natural sciences presuppose gnoseology, epistemology, metaphysics. But once more there is a difference of order. The natural sciences regard a world of theory. Gnoseology and its consequents regard a world of interiority. The physicist, for example, presupposes gnoseology, not when he speaks about specific objects of physics, but when he sneaks about his own interiority, his knowledge of physics.

The relation of the human sciences to gnoseology is more complex. The human scientist presupposes gnoseology when he speaks of his knowledge of human science. But he may do so as well in quite another fashion. For gnoseology, epistemology, metaphysics are part of man's knowledge of man. They provide a set of constructs that may regularly be employed both in describing human activities and in framing hypotheses

about man's nature. In brief, they can stand to human science in a fashion analogous to the relation between mathematics and natural science.

Finally, the nearest approach to presuppositionless knowledge is transcendental method. In enunciating that method, the mind is simply objectifying itself as given in consciousness. The method, then, presupposes the mind. But it presupposes it, not as some hypothetical or postulated entity, but as a present, conscious, active reality.

Another methodological strategy is to claim that an empirical science must be value-free. This claim is correct in three manners. First, inasmuch as the science is empirical, it sets forth factual interconnections; value judgments do not settle matters of fact; and so value judgments are not internal to empirical science. Secondly, scientific investigation is one thing, and practical policy is another; as soon as specialization begins, the two must be kept apart. It follows that an empirical science will be value-free in the sense that it remains aloof from practical issues in which values and individual or group interests are apt to be mixed in a rather inextricable fashion. Thirdly, an empirical scientist is not a specialist on questions of value; his specialty is to arrive at the intelligibilities that can be verified empirically; consequently, he has no specific mandate to express his sentiments or judgments on values or disvalues; and the more technical and rigorous his science is, the easier it will be for him to abstain from such expression.

It remains that every non-methodical investigation, if successful, will have obeyed the norms contained in the transcendental notions, and that every methodical investigation not only will have followed these norms but also their detailed application in the relevant area. The pursuit of science is the pursuit of a value.



Nor is this all. Just as every human action is in part constituted by meaning, so too is it constituted in part as the realization or as the failure to realize value. Further, a scientist is not an abstraction; he is a man operating on the four levels of conscious intentionality. The better a man he is, the more refined his sensibility, the more delicate his feelings, the more fully will he respond to the values and disvalues exhibited by the persons or groups he is studying. This response need not appear if his subject has all the technical rigor of theoretical economics. But the more it approaches concrete description or narration, the less will it be possible for him not to communicate his own attitudes. Even though no overt value judgments are expressed, they are read between the lines and, as Friedrich Meinecke has observed, to show but not to state one's preferences can be the most effective way to win a reader's agreement. Hence, rather than trick their readers, there are scientists that believe the proper procedure to be an explicit statement of one's value judgments. In that fashion the reader is forewarned and, if he disagrees, he will be in a position to discount estimates that otherwise he might inadvertently come to accept.

While there is, then, not a little truth in the view that a science is presuppositionless and value-free, still that truth is far from the whole truth. Instead of being blandly assured that science is presuppositionless, the scientist needs to be warned of the existence of his extra-scientific presuppositions and of the danger that any errors they contain will interfere with scientific work. Instead of being blandly assured that science is value-free, he should be urged to review his values critically and to be ever on his guard lest he inculcate values and even propagate biases while disclaiming the possibility of doing either.

Nor are warning and urging enough. Fully critical science is not content with good intentions. It sees to their systematic implementation

through method. At least in some field or fields of inquiry there is needed the strategy we have named dialectic, the strategy that makes contrary positions explicit, clarifies their opposition, seeks out their roots, and thereby makes the errors and biases of the past a present remedy against their perpetuation.

Finally, I need not argue that, if dialectic is needed in any field of inquiry, it is needed in theology.

### **3 A Note on the Will**

There will be, perhaps, among my readers those that find our notion of dialectic rather disconcerting. They may find quite plausible the case that has been made for it, yet withhold assent because it seems to allot the human will far too large a role in what should be a purely intellectual pursuit.

Now this contrast between intellect and will presupposes a faculty psychology. A faculty psychology is a psychology that presupposes a metaphysics and so distinguishes the soul and its several powers or potencies. The distinction of the potencies gives rise to questions of priority and preeminence. Finally, differing answers give rise to different schools of a sensist, intellectualist, or voluntarist persuasion.

Now if the reader will revert to the first chapter, he will note that this book on method does not presuppose a faculty psychology. It takes its stand on an analysis of intentional consciousness. It does not distinguish intellect and will, speculative and practical intellect, or any similar faculties or potencies. It does distinguish four levels of activity: a level of experiencing; a level of inquiring, direct and inverse understanding, and conceiving, defining, formulating; a level of reflection, reflective understanding, and judging; a level of deliberating, evaluating, deciding. The relations between

the levels may be described as subsuming. Each higher level subsumes its predecessors, not indeed in the sense that they are involved in contradiction, but in the sense that the higher goes beyond the lower, sets up a new basis of operations, adds new operations, superposes itself on the previous levels, whose operations it preserves in their proper distinctiveness and extends enormously in their significance and efficacy.

Hence, as intelligence subsumes sense, as critical reflection subsumes intelligence and sense, so deliberation subsumes critical reflection, intelligence, and sense. Each in turn opens up a new realm within which it operates with respect to the results and the operations on the previous levels, preserving them, completing them, extending them. Sense without intelligence lives not in a universe but in a habitat. Intelligence without critical reflection is powerless against myth and magic. Critical reflection without deliberation is solemn about trivialities and lightheaded on serious issues.

Each level has its own immanent norms that guide its own operations and the direction and enrichment they bring to previous levels. As each higher level comes into operation, a fuller self-transcendence is achieved. By sense we are responding to our environment. By intelligence we serialize and extrapolate and generalize to a universe. By judgment we attain cognitive self-transcendence, for there we come to know not just our feelings or imaginings or thoughts or opinions but what is so and what is not so. By deliberation, evaluation, decision, action, we can achieve a real self-transcendence by becoming principles of benevolence and beneficence, by realizing values. In the measure each of us succeeds in doing so, he exists authentically. In the measure he fails, he exists unauthentically.

On this analysis, then, the function of dialectic is manifest. It is concerned to clarify concrete instances in which authentic and unauthentic

existence have given rise to oppositions within religion or within theology. Anyone opposed to such clarification seems to be in favor of radical confusion.

Let us now revert to the objection that dialectic allots to the human will far too large a role in what should be a purely intellectual pursuit.

First, what is meant by will? It is the faculty by which decisions or choices are made in response to the deliberations and evaluations of another faculty called practical intellect. Now to will in that sense and to practical intellect in that sense dialectic allots just nothing at all. For, when will is taken in that sense, the deliberations, evaluations, and decisions could all be the activity of a calculating egoist concerned with nothing but superficial satisfactions. By deliberation I mean the question concerned with value, with the truly good, with what is worth while. It is the first step in real self-transcendence. By a true value judgment I mean a judgment that, if followed in the decision, will yield the experience of a good conscience, of real self-transcendence taking place. Finally, such activity is practical inasmuch as decisions bring about still further activity; but in itself it is existential, for in itself it determines whether or not the subject is withdrawing from unauthenticity and advancing in authenticity. Dialectic is concerned to promote such authenticity – an important topic which talk about a faculty, will, ignores.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This paragraph does not appear in the manuscript at 58200A0E060, and seems to have been added later. The remaining paragraphs in this section also different from what appears in that manuscript, which reads as follows:

‘First, what is meant by a purely intellectual pursuit? It is a specialized pattern of experience in which deliberation and evaluation lead to the decision to pursue for their own sakes the experiences that lead to ever fuller understanding and the ever fuller

Secondly, what is meant by a purely intellectual pursuit? A purely intellectual pursuit is one carried on by a faculty called intellect, without any influence from a faculty called will. Such a pursuit does not exist. What the objector has in mind is a specialized pattern of experience in which deliberation and evaluation have led to the decision to pursue for their own sakes and apart from any ulterior motive the experiences that lead to ever fuller understanding and the ever fuller understanding that leads to an ever better grasp of or approximation to truth of the factual order. In this case the goal is purely intellectual, but the principle that grounds the pursuit is a deliberation, evaluation, and decision concerning the pursuit of that goal.

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understanding that leads to a better grasp of or approximation to truth. To suppose that there are purely intellectual pursuits that occur without deliberation, evaluation, decision, is to suppose that scientists are abstractions. They are not.

‘Secondly, what is meant by urging that dialectic allots will far too large a role? It means that one may cover with the single word ‘will’ both good will and bad will. It means that one does not wish to admit a distinction between values, which good will pursues, and disvalues, which bad will pursues. It means that human apprehension of values does not have to be developed and refined, that human value judgments are not open to progress, that human good will does not have to be encouraged and strengthened and that human bad will does not have to be discouraged and weakened. Dialectic does all of these, but a superficial appeal to faculty psychology blurs the issue.

‘Finally, if it is said that values are subjective, again one must distinguish between authentic and unauthentic subjectivity. Authentic subjectivity is the possibility of truth, but th truth of fact and truth about values. Unauthentic subjectivity is the source of inattention, misunderstanding, mistakes, and sins.’

Besides truth of the factual order, there is truth of the existential order. It is the truth of value judgments. It is the truth that, insofar as it is reached and lived, withdraws us from unauthenticity and advances us in authenticity. By truth of the factual order we attain a merely cognitional self-transcendence, but by truth of the existential order we are on our way to a real self-transcendence. Now truth about values, existential authenticity, real self-transcendence are not minor matters compared to purely intellectual pursuits. On the contrary, without them there vanishes all that is truly good and noble in man, including purely intellectual pursuits. The concern, then, of dialectic is with a matter of the highest importance.

Finally, let us recall that science, insofar as it is methodical and insofar as it is collaborative, is a matter of pursuing values. Moreover, it is involved in a great deal of believing, and believing depends upon value judgments and decisions in favor of believing. So in conclusion we can say that the notion of the purely intellectual pursuit gives rise to quite mistaken perspectives because it takes its stand on far too *simpliste* an analysis.

#### **4 Dialectic and Religion**

Above it was argued that dialectic was not philosophically neutral, for it rested on the theologian's self-appropriation, and that implies a determinate gnoseology, epistemology, and metaphysics. Similarly, it was argued that dialectic was not morally neutral: it has to break with bias of every kind, and that break results only from the earnest pursuit of values and the complete rejection of disvalues. But we did not say whether or not dialectic was religiously neutral, for the excellent reason that the question is rather complex and demands separate treatment.

First, then, dialectic does not exclude religious people. Not only are most theologians religiously committed, but also very many theologians must pursue the attainment of holiness if theology is to discern, appreciate, judge religious values and communicate such discernment, appreciation, judgment to others. Accordingly, just as holiness is not a bar to doing research, to interpreting, to writing history, so it is not a bar to doing dialectic.

Secondly, religions are many, and they differ from one another. Dialectic occurs principally, not within some one religion, but between many religions. It is the seat, not of authority, but of dialogue. It is not institutional but ecumenist. It is where the many meet, clarify their differences, eliminate misapprehensions, remove incoherence. It is where they endeavor to understand why the other fellow disagrees, and if he errs, to find behind his error the truth to which he is so devoted.<sup>4</sup>

Thirdly, dialectic need not be confined to Christian religions. For modern culture is the culture interested in all cultures. Anthropology, dynamic psychology, comparative religion, philosophy of culture have all made notable contributions to our understanding of non-Christian religions. Followers of 'high' religions read Western accounts, and Western writers now are advised to aim at the accuracy and insight that will win the approval of those that practice the religion. Theologians, finally, know that God's grace is given to all men and, when they recognize the fruits of authentic holiness outside Christianity, they can acknowledge a genuine similarity and a common affiliation.

Fourthly, dialectic has to take into account non-religious and anti-religious viewpoints. For if people cling to error, they do not do so

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<sup>4</sup> The manuscript 58200DTE060 ends at this point.

because it is error. There is some truth or value that claims their allegiance. The task of dialectic is to make that truth or value explicit, to examine its connection with a non-religious or anti-religious viewpoint, to ask whether the opposition really is against religion and not against the defects of religious people or religious organizations.

In brief, the aim of dialectic is not to eliminate religious differences but to meet them as accurately and as fully as one can, to estimate their importance and their seriousness, and to do all this on the basis of a method grounded in self-appropriation and the determination to avoid bias.

It may be urged, of course, that dissenting groups will propose different methods and different bases. But such proposals, in the measure they can command respect, are very difficult to frame; and in the measure they do command respect, they make a major contribution to dialectic itself; for they bring to light differences on the most basic level of all, the level of method.

## **5 Foundations: Religion and Conversion**

The first phase of theology, the phase of research, interpretation, history, and dialectic, is an encounter with the religious past. The encounter rises from the data gathered by research, through the meanings revealed by interpretation and through the facts of history, to a meeting with the originating values that are persons and to an appreciation of the values they effected.

Because the first phase would exclude no one's contribution, it is content to take its stand on the native eros of the human spirit, on what we have called the transcendental notions and precepts, on the openness they imply to ever wider information, ever fuller understanding, an ever better



grasp of the truth, an ever firmer commitment to values and to the elimination of bias in all its forms.

But beyond such openness there is the intellectual, moral, and religious conversion of which we spoke in chapter 6. For openness is the possibility of self-transcendence, but conversion is the key step to actual achievement. It is entry into a new horizon, the setting up of a principle that will lead to many more changes and developments that, however, come out of the principle and are coherent with it.

A series of distinctions are now in order. Conversion itself is an event in the life of a person. It may be occasioned by theological study, but more commonly it is not. It is not part of theological method, though it is extremely relevant to good theological practice.

Besides conversion itself, there is the objectification of conversion. Such objectification may be spontaneous or reflective. It is spontaneous in a changed way of thinking and speaking, judging and acting. But the objectification is reflective when one endeavors to state just what is the source, what are the conditions, what are the full implications of conversion. Such reflective objectification may be total, and then it sets forth not only foundations but also doctrines, systematics, and communications. But the objectification may be content to state the key element that conditions the remainder, and such partial reflective objectification presents only foundations.

Foundations, then, is the horizon fixed by intellectual, moral and religious conversion. It is the horizon in which religious beliefs have meaning and religious values are embraced with joy. Its main features have already been described. Most basically, it is the dynamic state of being in love with God, a state that expresses itself in love of one's neighbor. Again, by identity, it is faith as the eye of love, discerning values where only love

can discern them, and building up the reasons of the heart which reason itself does not know. Again, by identity, it is hope as the security of one who is loved. It is not acts of loving, of discerning values, or of hoping, but the dynamic ground of such acts. It is as fundamental to the activities of one's intentional consciousness as are the transcendental notions themselves, but its mode is different. They are the eros native to the human spirit and the possibility of its self-transcendence. But the dynamic state of being in love with God is not a structural element in man, but a fulfilment of human potentiality, the fulfilment that completes self-transcendence in an unrestricted fashion. Because it is such fulfilment, it gives peace, the peace the world cannot give. Because it is fulfilment, it gives joy, a joy that can endure despite the sorrows of failure, humiliation, privation, pain, betrayal, desertion. Because it fulfils man in his humanity, its real absence – not merely apparent absence that is the lack of religious articulateness or the incomprehension of current religious language – is revealed, now in the trivialization of human life in debauchery, now in the fanaticism with which limited goals are pursued violently and recklessly, now in the despair that condemns man and his world as absurd.

While I have insisted that being in love with God is human fulfilment, I have only repeated Augustine's claim that our hearts are restless till they rest in God. Repeating that claim in no way denies the equally Augustinian doctrine that religious conversion is a grace, a free gift of God's. God loved us first. He loved us freely. Our falling in love and being in love with him is not something we achieve but something we receive, accept, ratify.

Ordinarily it is a hidden component or vector in the unfolding and development of human consciousness and in the struggle for authentic existence. But in great religious figures it becomes dominant. So Paul could exclaim that through the Holy Spirit given to us the love of God has flooded

our hearts (Romans 5.5). He could ask what can separate us from the love of Christ. Can affliction or hardship? Can persecution, hunger, nakedness, peril, or the sword? He could answer: 'I am convinced that there is nothing in death or life, in the realm of spirits or superhuman powers, in the world as it is or the world as it should be, in the forces of the universe, in heights or depths, nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 8.35, 38, 39.)

Experiencing such being in love is religious experience. Being in love is being in love with someone. Being in love in an unrestricted fashion is being in love with someone transcendent. Being in love with someone transcendent makes him intimate, close, within. Because that being in love is the fulfilment of human potentiality, the beloved will be conceived as the highest good, the highest truth, righteousness, goodness, beauty. Because being in love is a response to being loved, God himself must be agape. Because that being-in love is self-transcendence, it involves renunciation, regret for one's sins, self-discipline. Because it is love, it is loving attention; because it is love of God, that loving attention is prayer, meditation, contemplation. Finally, because love is active and fruitful, because it overflows, being in love with God overflows into love of all God's creatures and most immediately into a love of those that share one's humanity and can share one's love of God. Finally, because the love of God is fulfilment, religious people conceive bliss as knowledge of God, union with him, or dissolving into him.

Now it happens that the foregoing paragraph is not just an unfolding of the idea of love, or a deduction of its implications. In fact, what came first was a description by Friedrich Heiler of common features found in all the world religions, in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrian Mazdaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism. His account runs over twelve pages and

contains much illustrative material. I can offer here only a bald summary, namely, that God is transcendent, that he is immanent, that he is the highest beauty, truth, righteousness, goodness, that he is love, that the path to God is one of prayer and self-denial, that it flowers in the love of one's neighbor, even of one's enemies, that the religious idea of bliss is knowledge of God, union with him, or dissolving into him.

I have been making explicit what is meant by the gift of God's love. But the explication is an objectification of the gift. It is not the gift itself. For the gift is a dynamic state constituted by being in love in an unrestricted manner. Because the state, though experienced, is not at once understood, let alone understood correctly, originally it is orientated to mystery. Because it is living, the mystery is attractive, fascinating, captivating. Because it is living in an unrestricted manner, the mystery evokes awe. Rudolf Otto conceived religious concern with the holy, with the *mysterium fascinans et tremendum*, as irrational. It would be more accurate, I believe, to conceive it as non-rational and existential. It is non-rational, for it does not pertain to the third level of intentional consciousness. It is existential, for it pertains to the fourth level.

Operations on the fourth level are of two kinds. They may lead to an exercise of horizontal freedom, and then our decisions and choices occur within an already established horizon. But they may also lead to an exercise of vertical freedom, and then a former horizon is falling away, a new one is taking over, and we are consenting to the change. When God's gift of his love is not only received but also accepted and ratified, vertical freedom is exercised, and henceforth one's living occurs within a religious horizon. That religious horizon, not as constituted, not as spontaneously objectified, but as reflectively objectified, is the principal element in our fifth functional specialty, foundations.

## 6 The Threefold Conversion<sup>5</sup>

Intellectual, moral, and religious conversion share a common orientation, for each is directed to self-transcendence. Intellectual conversion is from the world of sense to the universe of being; it is through the cognitional self-transcendence of truth. Moral conversion is from satisfactions and interests to values; it is to the real self-transcendence of benevolence and beneficence. Religious conversion is from concern with the proximate to concern with the ultimate; it is the unqualified self-transcendence that is being in love with God and loving one's neighbor as oneself. Because it is being in love, religious experience, however intimate and personal, also is the bond that unites the religious community. That community, if it is to know itself, if it is to make the decisions and perform the actions that are fitting, must develop its symbols, ritual, language, institution. It has to become an ongoing tradition that accumulates the wisdom of its best minds and cherishes the memory of its holiest members.

All human development is dialectical. To achieve authenticity is to withdraw from unauthenticity. So man moves towards truth by correcting his errors; he discovers morality and advances in it by repenting of his sins; he clarifies the nature and purifies the practice of religion by renouncing religious aberrations.

In that dialectical process there becomes evident the interdependence of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. Without intellectual conversion, religious development is distorted by errors; without moral conversion it is disfigured by evil; without genuine religious conversion the development is a sham. Inversely, because the development is dialectical,

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<sup>5</sup> Here there begins the second lecture, recorded at 53100A0E060.

intellectual conversion is through the correction of errors, moral conversion is through repentance for sins, religious conversion is through abandoning false gods, rejecting a limited concern for what is not ultimate.

While this threefold dialectical structure is invariant, still the errors to be corrected, the sins to be repented, the false gods to be abandoned are historical variables. The appearance that deceives, the bias that corrupts, the idol that seduces, all are protean. They vary from one person to another, from place to place, from class to class, from generation to generation, from age to age. To eliminate any given false appearance, any given bias, any given idol, for the most part results in the emergence of another; for the problem resides, not in the particular shape or form of the error or sin or idol, but in the horizon that will keep on generating error, sin, idols, until it undergoes the radical reconstruction of conversion.

Even conversion itself is precarious; it is not an automatically permanent achievement. Rather it is a thrust ever under assault and ever to be renewed. It is a thesis that exists or subsists, not by eliminating the very categories of error, sin, religious aberration, but by overcoming successively ever further instances of error, sin, aberration. So the history of religions is not a history of unmitigated truth, goodness, holiness; rather, it is the history of a dialectical process in which experience of error heightens devotion to truth. Experience of evil makes man hunger for goodness; experience of the inhuman turns man humbly to God; if it recounts conversions, it also recounts breakdowns; if it glories in progress, it also acknowledges decline and prays for redemptive recovery.

So religious and moral conversion support one another. The eye of love discerns values unappreciated by those who do not love. The power of love transforms human frailty, so that good intentions are matched by good performance. On the other hand, where religious conversion is unsupported

by moral conversion, it easily is entangled with alien resources. The love at the root of religious experience can merge with the erotic, the sexual, the orgiastic. The formation of community dedication to righteousness, the institution of power, can merge with the demonic that exults in destructiveness. If these very aberrations are revolting, because they are abominated religion learns that it must join hands with moral conversion.

Again, religious and intellectual conversion support one another. For the mystery to which religious experience is orientated stimulates human inquiry and directs it to the otherworldly. Without intellectual conversion, religious experience is not understood, or, if understood, then not correctly. The transcendence of the mystery may be so emphasized as to render the divine remote and irrelevant; the immanence of the mystery may be so emphasized as to reduce the divine to cosmic vital process of which man is a part. In the former case, religious symbols, rituals, institutions lose their point; in the latter case, the symbols lose their transcendent reference to become the idols of superstitious veneration; the rituals take on the practicality of magic; the institutions promote, not values, but group interests. Still, these very failures can be seen to be failures, and once so seen the conjunction of religious, moral, and intellectual conversion can once more begin the renewal of the religious living.

## **7 What is Founded by Foundations?**

The functional specialty foundations has been conceived as the reflective, technical formulation of such highly personal events as religious, moral, and intellectual conversion. It remains to be said what is founded by the foundations. An answer will look both backward to the first phase of

theological investigation, and then forward to the remaining specialties of the second phase.

The results of the first phase were not definitive. The method of critical history yields uniform conclusions insofar as the critical historians proceed from the same standpoint, state of the question, worldview; but standpoints differ, the state of the question changes, worldviews are opposed; so conclusions differ. The differences may disappear when further evidence is discovered; they may be merely perspectival and so vanish with the passage of time into ever new perspectives. But they may also stand firm against any amount of new evidence, despite any change in perspectives, for they rest, not on historical data nor on historical perspectives but on the philosophical, ethical, and religious convictions of the historians. So beyond critical history, we acknowledge another functional specialty, dialectic. Among its tasks was to make explicit the opposed views of historians, to classify them, relate them, order them, and if possible reduce them to their roots, and in particular to their philosophical, ethical, and religious roots. This means, of course, that we do not consider critical history to be absolutely presuppositionless. It is relatively autonomous; it is in full control of its own procedures; but it can raise issues that are not to be solved by its methods, for they have presuppositions outside the field of historical fact. Such issues may be brought to light by disagreements of historians; they may be clarified by dialectic; their solution is what foundations found.

As critical history, so too interpretation was not thought to be definitive. Its techniques brought about an understanding of the text and an understanding of the author of the text, but these two needed to be complemented by an understanding of oneself. For exegetes have different apprehensions of man's existence; their exegesis can differ radically. Once



more, then, the issue is transposed from the functional specialty, interpretation, to the functional specialty, dialectic. There it is clarified, while the triple conversion – foundations – provides the criterion on which the clarified issue is to be judged.

Research is of two kinds. There is the general research that edits texts, compiles dictionaries and grammars, constructs maps and chronologies, makes archaeological discoveries and stocks museums, composes manuals and encyclopedias. There is also special research, undertaken for a specific end, for the solution of some problem of interpretation, for the clarification of some historical data. Now the conflicting influences that give rise to opposed interpretations and divergent histories can also effect the orientation of special research. Readily enough one perceives what fits into one's horizon; one searches for the evidence one expects to find; one is less zealous in looking for what would confute one's views; and one has the greatest difficulty in attending to objects that lie beyond one's horizon. It is important, then, that special research be conducted, not only by the members of some one group, but by the members of as many different groups as possible. Only in this fashion will all the evidence be in; only in this fashion will true progress be made. Without such variety the true believers almost inevitably make things far too easy for themselves, only in the long run to leave true belief in a defenseless position.

So much for our backward look at the four specialties of the first phase. The forward look is simply the program. Foundations provides the criteria that resolve the conflicts brought to light by dialectic. It distinguishes positions and counterpositions. On the basis of that distinction, it issues the twofold precept: (1) develop positions; (2) reverse counterpositions. Develop positions: what's in accord with the threefold conversion is to be pushed forward, developed; what's opposed to it has to

be turned over. In that way, you get the good out of error. Remove the error from what is true, save the truth behind what is false. Such is the program; its implementation pertains to the specialties doctrines, systematics, and communications.

## **8 Conversions and Breakdowns**

This part of my work is in a somewhat unfinished state; I have a section here on ‘Conversions and Breakdowns,’ that has not been properly integrated with this stuff, but I think I’ll venture to read it nonetheless.

Conversions may be intellectual, moral, and religious. Intellectual conversion is a radical clarification and, consequently, the elimination of an excessively stubborn and misleading set of myths about reality, objectivity, and human knowledge. It distinguishes the world of immediacy and the world mediated by meaning, and the distinction is made, it may be noted, by an act of meaning. It acknowledges that reality has a priority in the world of immediacy, the world of what you can see, hear, smell, touch. But the acknowledgment is, of course, affected by meaning. It grants that without the world of immediacy we would never arrive at the world mediated by meaning. And granting this is an act of meaning. It does on to point out that any questions one asks about the world of immediacy or any answers one gives only serve to make the world of immediacy one of the objects meant within the world mediated by meaning. Finally, it adds that any account of human knowing, of its criteria of objectivity, and of the universe thereby known, must be an account not simply of the world of immediacy, but of that world and of the intricate process from it to the world mediated by meaning.

The cognitional myth, at least for Western man, is that the real is out there now and that objectivity is a matter of taking a good look. But from what has been said, it follows that among the criteria of objectivity there must be some criteria immanent in the very process from the world of immediacy to the world mediated by meaning. When those criteria are ignored or rejected as merely subjective, there arises an empiricism. When it is discovered that in fact human knowing is anything but taking a good look, there arises an idealism. Only when one uncovers the intentional self-transcendence of the process of coming to know does a critical realism become possible. This matter is not a mere technical point in philosophy. Empiricisms, idealisms, and critical realisms name three totally different horizons with no common identical objects. An idealist never means what an empiricist means, and a realist never means what either of them means. So an empiricist will argue that quantum theory cannot be about physical reality because it deals not with objects as such but only with the relations between phenomena. The idealist will concur, and add that of course the same is true of all theories and of the whole of human knowing. The critical realist will disagree with both: any verified hypothesis probably is true; and what probably is true refers to what in reality probably is so. To change the illustration, What are historical facts? For the empiricist they are what was out there capable of being looked at. For the idealist they are mental constructions carefully based on data recorded in documents. For the critical realist they are events in the world mediated by acts of meaning. To take a third illustration, What is a myth? There are psychological, anthropological, philosophic answers to the question. But besides these there are also reductionist answers: myth is a narrative about entities not to be found within an empiricist, a historicist, an existentialist horizon. What lies outside my horizon – that's what myth is.

Enough of illustrations. They can be multiplied indefinitely, for philosophic issues are universal in scope, and some form of naive realism seems to appear utterly unquestionable to visual Western man. As soon as they begin to speak of knowing, of objectivity, of reality, there crops up the assumption that all knowing must be something like looking. To be liberated from that blunder, to discover the self-transcendence proper to the human process of coming to know, is to break often long-ingrained habits of thought and speech and to acquire the mastery in one's own house that is to be had only when one knows what one is doing when one is knowing. It is a conversion, a new beginning, a fresh start.

Moral conversion changes the criterion of one's decisions and choices from satisfactions to values. As children or minors we are persuaded, cajoled, ordered, compelled to do what is right. As our knowledge of human reality increases, as our responses to human values are strengthened and refined, more and more our mentors leave us to ourselves so that our freedom may exercise its ever advancing thrust toward authenticity. So we move to the existential moment when we discover for ourselves that our choosing affects ourselves more than the chosen objects, and that is up to each of us to decide for himself what he is to make of himself. Then is the time for the exercise of vertical liberty, and then moral conversion consists in opting for the truly good, for value against satisfaction when value and satisfaction conflict. Such conversion, of course, falls far short of moral perfection. Not only is willing less than doing. One has to overcome one's individual, group, and general bias. One has to keep developing one's knowledge of human reality and potentiality in the existing situation. One has to keep distinct its elements of progress and decline. One has to keep scrutinizing one's intentional responses to values and their implicit scales of preferences. One has to listen to criticism and to protest. One must remain

ready to learn from others. For moral knowledge is the proper possession only of morally good men and, until one has merited that title, one has still to advance and to learn.

Religious conversion is being grasped by ultimate concern. It is other-worldly falling in love. It is total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, reserves. It is such a surrender, not as an act, but as a dynamic state distinct from, prior to, and principle of subsequent acts. It is revealed in retrospect as an under-tow of existential consciousness, as a fated acceptance of a vocation to holiness, as an increasing passivity in prayer. It is interpreted differently in the context of different religions. For Christians it is the love of God poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us. It is the gift of grace, and a distinction is drawn between operative and cooperative grace. Operative grace is the replacement of the heart of stone by a heart of flesh, a replacement beyond the horizon of the heart of stone. Cooperative grace is the heart of flesh becoming effective in good works through human liberty. Operative grace is religious conversion. Cooperative grace is the effectiveness of conversion. Its goal is the full and complete transformation of the whole of one's living and feeling, one's thoughts, words, deeds.

As intellectual and moral conversion, so also religious conversion is a modality of self-transcendence. Intellectual conversion is to truth attained by intentional self-transcendence. Moral conversion is to values apprehended, affirmed, and realized by a real self-transcendence. Religious conversion is to a total being-in-love as the efficacious ground of all self-transcendence, whether in the pursuit of truth, or in the apprehension, affirmation, and realization of human values, or in the orientation man adopts to the universe, its ground, and its goal.

Because intellectual, moral, and religious conversions all have to do with self-transcendence, it is possible, when all three occur within a single consciousness, to conceive their relationships in terms of sublation. This means that if one takes moral conversion as higher than intellectual, and religious conversion higher than moral, then the higher goes beyond the lower, introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, yet so far from interfering with the lower or destroying it, needs it, includes it, preserves all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context.

So moral conversion goes beyond the value, truth, to values generally. It promotes the subject to a new, existential level of consciousness and establishes him as an originating value. But this in no way interferes with or weakens his devotion to truth. He still needs truth, for he must apprehend reality and real potentiality before he can respond to value. The truth he needs is still the truth attained in accord with the exigences of rational consciousness. But now his pursuit of it is all the more meaningful and significant because it occurs within, and plays an essential role in, the far richer context of the pursuit of all values.

Similarly, religious conversion goes beyond moral. Questions for intelligence, for reflection, for deliberation reveal the eros of the human spirit, its capacity and its desire for self-transcendence. But that capacity meets fulfilment, that desire turns to joy, when religious conversion transforms the existential subject into a subject in love, a subject held, grasped, possessed, owned through a total and so other-worldly love. There is then a new basis for all valuing and all doing good. In no way are the fruits of intellectual or moral conversion negated or diminished. On the contrary, all human pursuit of the true and the good is included within and furthered by a cosmic context and purpose and, as well, there now accrues to

man the power of love to enable him to accept the suffering involved in undoing the effects of decline.

It is not to be thought, however, that religious conversion means no more than a new and more efficacious ground for the pursuit of intellectual and moral ends. Religious loving is without qualifications, reserves, conditions. This lack of limitation, though it corresponds to the unrestricted character of human questioning, does not pertain to this world. Holiness abounds in moral goodness, but it has a distinct dimension of its own. It is otherworldly fulfilment, joy, peace, bliss. In Christian experience these are the epiphenomena of a being in love that is the gift of a loving, if mysterious and uncomprehended God. Sinfulness similarly is distinct from moral evil; it is the privation of total loving, a radical lovelessness. It can be hidden by sustained superficiality, by evading ultimate questions, by absorption in all that the world offers to challenge our resourcefulness, to relax our bodies, to distract our minds. But escape may not be permanent, and then instead of fulfilment there is unrest, instead of joy there is fun, instead of peace there is disgust – a depressive disgust with oneself or a manic, hostile, even violent disgust with mankind. Religious conversion is from sinfulness to holiness, from radical lovelessness to otherworldly being in love, from captivity to the powers of darkness to redemption and liberation in union with God. It is the new beginning that looks back on sin with the eyes of contrition. Sin is not just moral fault but an attested offense against the goodness of God. The fact that I have sinned calls forth both regret and sorrow for the past and a purpose not to sin in the future. But can such contrition, such sorrow, such purpose change anything? The Christian answer is the mediating death and resurrection of Christ, for in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself.

Besides conversions there are breakdowns. What has been built up so slowly and so laboriously by the individual, the society, the culture, can collapse. Intentional self-transcendence is neither an easy notion to grasp nor a readily accessible datum of consciousness to be verified. That the real is what you feel may be ?, but for most men it is convincing. Values have a certain esoteric imperiousness, but can they outweigh carnal pleasure, wealth, power? Religion undoubtedly had its day, but is not that day over? Is it not an illusory comfort for weaker souls, an opium distributed by the rich to quieten the poor, a mythical projection of man's own excellence into the sky? Initially not all but some religion is pronounced illusory, not all but some moral precept is rejected as ineffective and useless, not all truth but some type of metaphysics is condemned as mere talk. The negations may be true, an effort to offset decline. But also they may be false, the beginning of decline. In the latter case some part of cultural achievement is being destroyed. It will cease being a familiar component in cultural experience. It will recede into a forgotten past for historians, perhaps, to rediscover and reconstruct. Moreover, this elimination of a genuine part of the culture means that a previous whole has been mutilated, that some balance has been upset, that the remainder will become distorted in an effort to fill a vacuum, to take over the functions once performed by the part that has been dropped. Finally, such elimination, mutilation, distortion will have to be ardently admired as the forward march of progress, and while they may give grounds for objective criticism, that can be met not by still more progress by way of still more elimination, mutilation, distortion. Once a process of dissolution has begun, it tends to perpetuate itself. Nor is it confined to some single uniform course. Different nations, different classes of society, different age groups can select different parts of past achievement for elimination, different mutilations to be effected, different distortions to be provoked.



Increasing dissolution will then be matched by increasing division, incomprehension, suspicion, distrust, hostility, hatred, violence. The body social is torn apart in many ways, and its cultural soul has been rendered incapable of reasonable convictions and responsible commitments.

For convictions and commitments rest on judgments of fact and judgments of value. Such judgments, in turn, rest largely on beliefs. For few, indeed, are the people that, pressed on almost any point, must not shortly have recourse to what they have believed. Now such recourse can be efficacious only when believers present a solid front, only when intellectual, moral, and religious skeptics are a small and, as yet, uninfluential minority. But their numbers can increase, their influence can mount, their voices can take over the book market, the educational system, the mass media. Then believing begins to work not for but against intellectual, moral, and religious self-transcendence. What has been an uphill but universally respected course collapses into the peculiarity of an outdated minority.

[There follows the first part of a Q&A session.]

*Perhaps you could make more concrete what you say about religious, moral, and intellectual conversion. Schleiermacher seems to make religious experience his starting point. What about Schleiermacher and religious experience?*

With regard to Schleiermacher, he did put religion on a subjective basis, a basis of subjective experience. His surrounding situation was critical and absolute idealism: Kant, Hegel, and so on – less Hegel, because they died about the same time. Schleiermacher built on that, and his resultant position is roughly that of Modernism; that is as far as I can see; I don't know too much about him in detail.

His description of religious experience is not exactly the same as mine; it is in terms of absolute dependence, and so on. However, it was describing psychological phenomena. He didn't have the importance of the word that is in my position. In other words, this religious experience is a response to a personal advance made by God; faith as a foundation of religious belief is missing, as far as I know. What I call faith is the foundation of religious belief. If, for example, your standpoint is that God loves mankind, then you have no fundamental difficulty about the occurrence of miracles; they aren't something meaningless; it is, at least, a possibility. It is a religious approach as distinct from an ecclesiastical approach, in which the whole basis is, 'The church teaches this,' in terms of the objective system.

Tomorrow we will show how you set up categories, and the categories won't be merely subjective; they will have their subjective correlates, but it will move out of subjectivity. God is what you are related to by this ultimate concern; and you are related to God through the Holy Spirit given to you, through the Son sent to teach us. It is a position that is fully compatible with traditional Catholicism. At the same time, it is able to face fundamental issues occurring at the present time: demythologization, for example. At the end of the second century the Alexandrians demythologized the biblical notion of God: God the Father has not got a right hand, even though it is written in scripture. We can have historical, psychological, sociological problems of demythologization at the present time; and I say, problems; I don't mean that the issues are settled, they have to be studied very carefully. It isn't a matter of saying this is old hat, it's out.

*What is the distinction between sufficient and efficacious grace in the methodical theology?*

I treated that in my articles on operative grace. I was writing an account of St Thomas's thought and used the categories of faculty psychology. The fundamental difference is that now the active potencies are the transcendental notions, i.e., the capacity to ask questions on the successive levels. The passive potencies are the lower levels with respect to the higher, and on each level there are acts that develop into habits. That is transposing; it is going from conscious intentionality to objects; it is objectifying what is subjectively given.

Operative and cooperative grace is not Aristotelian; it is St Augustine dealing with the Pelagians, specifically with the monks at Hadremetum. They wanted to know why, if everything depended on God, their superiors were allowed to correct them, give them penances. However, this went into a transposition of Aristotle in the Middle Ages.

*You mention the dialectical theologian. Would you comment on a foundations person? The foundations person seems to be a new being, a holy man.*

There isn't so much a foundations person as foundations as a specialty, the set of operations that you perform. The set of operations that you perform are tricky. The fundamental issue is horizon. The horizon, if it is going to be expressed, requires propositions expressing it. But what counts is the overall view, the approach. De facto, what is done in Foundations is to select from the alternatives presented by Dialectic. The selection is done on the basis of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion; and the dialectic reduces the differences between various groups – exegetes, historians, and so on. It reduces those differences to differences with regard to intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. Insofar as the dialectic can do that, then the conversion itself will select. But the conversion doesn't occur after you

finish Dialectic; the conversion is a non-theological event; it is an event in personal development. All Christians have to be good persons and pious Christians, even the theologians; that's all I'm saying.

*Is it correct to say that Foundations thematizes the subject's basic horizons and categories but that the content of the Dialectic shifts more to the Doctrines and Systematics areas?*

Yes. The content of the Dialectic does. But it can manifest itself in all sorts of ways; it can be movements that are opposed. Anything that comes up in church history could be material for Dialectic. Theology can be opened out; it needn't be merely a study of books; it can be a study of religious movements in the present time and in the past; and in the way things happen. One thing people learn in studying history is what happens to bright ideas: you plan to do this but what happens is not exactly what you planned; all that sort of thing can be relevant in your processes of investigation, interpretation, history. The function of Dialectic is to make conflicts explicit and clearly conceived; to know what the question is.

*Would you say something about the relation of denominational conversion and Foundations?*

That is more a matter of theology; you discuss that in a far more concrete way, determinate way. You can't set up denominations on some a priori basis of subjectivity. The fact that we have distinguished faith and religious beliefs means that we can have an ecumenism that enables us to investigate one another's religious beliefs openly.

*What is the nature and content of religious experience? It seems to be contentless.*

Rahner says that it has no object but it has a content; that is his way of expressing it. It has a content, namely, being-in-love, that manifests itself in joy, peace, all of Paul's harvest of the spirit in Galatians 5.22. To understand this you can discuss the tag: you can't love what you do not know; and, in a certain general sense, that is true. But insofar as God's love floods your heart (Rom. 5:5), you don't love God because you know him. You have that love because of the gift of his grace, and it is through that gift that you come to know him.

*Is there some intimation of personality?*

That experience lies behind any type of religious experience. One has the gods of the moment because it has not been picked out yet: a living polytheism as in Japan, Shintoism, where there are 800,000 deities; they are all gods, and they keep multiplying because they are different religious experiences. These experiences can be tied to a place, the god of the place: the god of Bethel. Or they can be unified as the experiences of this person: the god of Jacob and the god of Laban. And it can be described by Rudolf Otto as *mysterium fascinans et tremendum*. And when religious experience is cultivated, you get these high religions as described by Heiler. The traditional way of thinking of it, since the Middle Ages, is in terms of sanctifying grace. That is the objective theory: where you have theory and common sense as distinct, but interiority just noticed, now and then, on the side.

*How would you pass from this level to the level of dogmatics, if the content is so experiential?*

Your religion is not just something personal. To understand it, you have to be in a religious tradition. You have to understand yourself, not only on the subjective side but on the objective side too. The subjective side enables

you to respond fruitfully, to be the good ground that brings forth fruit thirty, sixty, or a hundred fold. But there is also needed the sower, the word, to which this of its nature is a response – God loved us first. Insofar as the gospel is preached to us and we respond to it. Just as a man and a woman may be loving one another but unless they declare it they are not really in love. The word is constitutive of the state; it is a constitutive element.

On that point Vergote in a volume of discussions, a volume regarding religious liberty, is very good on how the word is constitutive; it is probably in his psychology of religion too. Speaking to a person, the personal confrontation, the encounter, is a transforming element of this gift of grace; it adds a further dimension and gives to it meaning that otherwise is lacking. Being-in-love is being in love with someone. The Buddhist interpretation so insists on the transcendence that is nothing of this world and the mystery that it comes out with nothing. But it really isn't nothing; it can also be the supreme being that they are talking about but as completely transcendent. The negative interpretation is not accepted by good people; they interpret it in terms of people like Eckhart, and so on; and religious mystics often speak in a way that seems to be pantheistic or identifying with the god, and so on; these non-dualistic types of mysticism.

Perhaps, this is the fundamental difference from Schleiermacher, who based it on subjectivity but who has not got this social milieu, this tradition, this ongoing tradition as something that is just as important. I start entirely from the inside; and my concepts, as we will see tomorrow, the categories are all going to come out of interiority, so that they will always be meaningful to people. But they won't be simply about interiority; they will be what interiority is related to. You have an indication of what it is when Rahner says that anthropocentrism and theocentrism are identical from a certain viewpoint, namely, insofar as man is oriented to God.

*When you say that the word is constitutive of the state, is the word there the external word of specific revelation or does it also mean the word of tradition?*

Yes. It is the word coming to you.

*And it is independent of the prior word?*

Yes. But you need the prior internal word for it to be meaningful to you. In other words, preaching is one essential part of it; the kerygma is essential, but your ability to respond to it is also essential; and that is God speaking in your heart. You have God speaking in the heart in Augustine, *De magistro*, and in St Thomas; and in the Christian revelation you have God's gift of himself in his love.

*I have a problem relating Foundations to work on the structure of the Church as a historical problem in the first three centuries. I can see the need of interpretation and history and dialectic. If you read different people from different backgrounds, you find different things about the structure depending on where people are coming from: episcopal or not, and so on. I don't see how Foundations solves the problem that Dialectic clarifies. It seemed too generic.*

Well, I'm not an ecclesiologist; I never taught *De ecclesia*. I think the way I would go about it would be to study the emergence, first of all, of what the subsequent people are writing about, namely, the New Testament business, and then the development of these opinions, these different views; in the development itself one finds its legitimation or its illegitimation. It isn't an easy step, but I will give you an example from trinitarian theology. Here the big contrasts are Tertullian, Origen, and Athanasius. They all believed that Christ was God. But Tertullian didn't feel that he had to be equal to the Father; he didn't have to be eternal like the Father. As long as he was made

of the right stuff Christ would be God; and that comes right out of Stoic philosophy: nothing is real that isn't a body. And even in Western thought you have that type of thinking, (see a book Spanneut on Stoicism From Clement of Rome to Clement of Alexandria). They were not really thinkers; and when they wanted to talk about reality they got their categories from the Stoics. With Origen you have a purely spiritual conception of God. The influence is Middle Platonism. In his commentary on St John, the Son to be distinct from the Father has to be a different Platonic Idea or a different set of Platonic Ideas. The Father is divinity itself, and goodness itself; and the Son is not divinity itself and not goodness itself; he is divine by participation and good by participation. But the Son is truth itself and logos itself, and so on. And then Origen raises the question, Are there two Gods? It is a serious question for him. In Athanasius we have a third position. The Father and the Son have the same attributes; the difference is that one is the Father and one is the Son; and one is not the Father and one is not the Son.

In the first case, the philosophy is empiricist. In the second case, the philosophy is idealist: it is on the level of understanding, of ideas. In the third case, it's on the level of judgment; the real is what you know by truth. That approach is one that fits in with the preaching of the word. For the preaching of the word to be something fundamental in Christianity, as it was in the New Testament with its terrific emphasis on Logos, meaning the Gospel, and that tradition of teaching in the Church, you can see how making the right statements is a really significant thing. That is where truth and reality has to be, and not on the empiricist level of experience or the idealist level of thinking.

That is an example of how Dialectic and Foundations can be applied. How is this going to be applicable to ecclesiology? You have to get down



and study the movements; whether it will work out I can't predict; all I can do is offer clues.

*I was thinking specifically of the difficulty of comparing different positions of contemporary historians of the period hold. The positions seem determined by their own confession.*

This dialectical analysis is a big job, and how it is carried out requires an awful lot of work before you stumble on something.

*The questions of Foundations comes up again. What do you do in Foundations?*

We'll have something more for Foundations to do tomorrow: Horizons and Categories. It will not be working out the categories, but the conception of the categories and how they are worked out in general, the kind of categories that you want to have. It is not a foundations person but a specialty. It sets up a principle of selection with regard to the ambiguities from the encounter with the past, a principle, a remote principle perhaps. Secondly, it sets up precepts with regard to further things, namely, that what one has to do is to remove the error from the truth and save the truth hidden by the error; develop positions and reverse counterpositions. It is something general, something to do with general attitudes, with the things that make the remaining part of theology something that is meaningful. Husserl would say that even a single perception would not be adequately described if it were not placed within the horizon of a world view, because a perception is what it is by virtue of its being in a horizon. There is a sense in which horizon comes first. In general terms, all I'm saying is that all we are getting from the conversions is a cognitional, epistemological, and metaphysical base; secondly, a moral base, elimination of biases; and thirdly, a religious base, love of God above all. In that way, we have something very general that will

be very widely accepted. With that, we can through the contrast in the earlier part discern developments as legitimate or illegitimate, changes as legitimate or illegitimate. In other words, you don't deduce the dogmas from the scriptures, but you understand the historical process that starts from the scriptures and arrives – the Church arrives – at the identity crises that give birth to the dogmas.

*Would what Rahner calls Mystagogie be true of what you're saying about Foundations?*

Insofar as religious conversion is something fundamental and the *Mystagogie* takes advantage of that, uses it, considers it as something essential in the process, yes, I'd say that's true, because you're not interested in religious matters – the story of the tertian who was out during Lent and came back, and they asked him, How did you do? Well, it was wonderful. I was at this girls' school and this and this and this happened, and at this other girls' school and this and this and this happened; this went on for about four or five different schools and they were all girls' schools; and I asked him, Were there any boys' schools? And he said, Yes, and I said, How did it go? And he said, Well, I quoted this text, 'I will your father, and you will be my son,' and someone in the back shouted, 'Big deal!'

*On the process of becoming authentic, you mentioned that the way of doing it is to deal with what is unauthentic in ourselves; we wondered if you might amplify on that and perhaps tie it to some of Maslow's ideas on psychology, that we become healthy by accentuating the healthy elements in our personality; in the same way, can you say we become authentic not only by giving attention to the unauthentic elements but also by somehow promoting the authentic?*

Yes, I certainly agree. As for amplifying on it, Maslow's hard to amplify on. His account of needs and drives – the person who can develop is a person whose basic needs are met. And insofar as basic needs are not met, you have so much pressure that you're incapable of doing anything else. An acquaintance of mine met a Frenchman who was in a concentration camp, where his hair stopped growing and his nails stopped growing. He was so undernourished that anything like a cut would never heal. The concern with food just eliminated concern with anything else; one could still see that God was good, but that was it. It's insofar as basic needs are met that people can be what they call unmotivated, namely, not selfish. And to be not selfish seems to be beyond the horizon of a certain type of psychologist. The self-actuating personality is what Maslow aims at, praises, and centers on. The self-actuating personality is the person that keeps on growing. He doesn't peak too soon.

*With respect to authenticity, could you say something about prayer?*

The spiritual life, everything concerned with the spiritual life, and particularly personal things – prayer, self-denial, and the two augment each other, give feedback. That regards the religious life, and one's personal religious life is the fundamental mover. It's through that that your apprehension of values is enriched, that your moral refinement keeps advancing, and it is insofar as you are secure in those fundamental ways that you can be free to think, and say with Newman that 10,000 difficulties do not make a doubt.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> A question begins and is cut off, but the material at the end of 542R0A0E060 contains Lonergan's answer and the remainder of the discussion. The transcript of that recording constitutes the remainder of this document.

There's the relationship of that religious experience to the Trinity: Father, Son, and Spirit, the relationship to the community and the ongoing history of the community and the work that the community is doing and its place in the world. I firmly believe it has to be organized. Your center is your subject, and that's where meaningfulness is at a maximum. Other things are set up in relation to that, not because the subject is all-important, or is the beginning and end of all things. Not at all. But you start from what we have and you bring in everything else in relation to it and conceived in relation to it. So that the other also will be meaningful. That would be my fundamental rule.

*So then transcendental method ... [unclear].*

It's transcendental method as transformed by divine grace.

*Is transcendental method determinative of the way you would talk about the content of revelation?*

Yes, insofar as you're talking about man. Insofar as you're talking about religion, it's grace and religious experience that becomes the starting point. Just as you have Aristotle and the transpositions of Aristotle to deal with another order called the supernatural order.

*So Rahner's point that it is necessary that only the Word could become incarnate –*

That necessity is something that's out. It's Aristotelian.

*What are the implications of the method for those of us who are teaching in seminaries?*

First of all, the method is not pedagogical. It's not answering pedagogical questions. It's answering questions for people who are developing theology, who are dealing with theological problems. That's the first point.

The second point is that the situation has changed totally. In the old setup of the manuals the flaw was not the thesis method, not the manuals, but that you presupposed *semper idem*, that if you understood the faith of today you were perfectly competent to understand Isaiah and Jeremiah, the Law and the Wisdom literature, the New Testament in all its diversity, the Greek and Latin Fathers in all the stages of their existence, all the Scholastics, the Reformation and Renaissance theology, and right up to the present time. Omnicompetent theologians cannot exist in an era of specialization.

Now, this method can be helpful insofar as you want to have teamwork among professors. There are people in a seminary in scripture, patristics, the medieval period, and so on. Or you have areas of inquiry: the Church, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the sending of the Spirit. You can have people handle these areas in the successive periods. You can make some use of the distinctions we've been drawing here. Just how it's going to work out I haven't figured out in relation to a pedagogy. But it can be of some help because it's essentially a team concept of doing theology. Theology resides not as a habit in the mind of a theologian. It's something in the theological community with all its resources. So at least if get across that team concept somehow and people have tried it in various places; communications about what worked and what didn't work would be highly helpful.

*Would it be realistic to say that as we become more aware of historical consciousness and the great past, subject specialization or subject theology, a man concerned with any one subject of theology, is no longer really possible?*

Well, I don't know. Even under the old dispensation – I did my teaching under the old dispensation – one found that one got to know a treatise fairly

well after having taught it three times. What I did was, the first time I taught it I'd take some one fundamental issue and spend most of my time on it and get through the rest in a suitable manner. Then the next time take another area and get control of that. And the third time get control of another. By the time you had control of three fundamental areas, your handling of the treatise was beginning to take shape. Now, there do exist these major areas, and people can be working in that area, but field specialization is what really forces team work. You can't be an expert – if you're specializing on Paul, you might tend to drop the Pastorals and concentrate on the four great epistles. And concentrating on the four great epistles can be something that will take all your time to read the current literature. And a man who's working on the Council of Nicea is not going to be able to step in there. There is where team work is necessary – field specialization – because one cannot be expert over enormous areas. There are people who – they said of Albright that he was the best man in the world on four areas, and among the top three or four on fifteen areas. There are these top people, but still in general it needs interaction at least, if not full teamwork. I think teaching is going to be more and more a matter of training people in method, in seminars, on particular areas, and then putting together general courses.

*Would you say the problem then is not trying to set up anything a priori but getting men trained in theological method?*

Yes, your seminary is the professors it has.