

## **600BCDTE070**

### **BC70-5B<sup>1</sup>**

The second phase selects in the light of conversion – religious, moral, and intellectual – it selects one of the horizons revealed by the dialectic, one of the conflicting horizons revealed by the dialectic, and that horizon provides foundations, the outlook within which the doctrines, the systematics, and the communications will have meaning, be significant, reveal values. In the light of the foundations one can select from the history of doctrines the doctrines that one considers true. The doctrines raise questions: what precisely do they mean? One moves on to systematics, and finally to communications.

The process is a process not of deduction but of moving into ever more concrete contexts and fuller contexts. The horizon, the foundation, is a selective principle, a horizon in which doctrines, religious doctrines will have meaning and reveal values, to determining the doctrines, to understanding the doctrines determined, and, finally, to communicating them no matter what the cultural differences that may arise.

Obviously, the dependence is not just in that descending direction. Communications can give rise to problems for systematics. If people find it so difficult to understand, perhaps you had better get a better system underlying it. Systematics can provide the terminology for doctrinal determinations, for the determination of dogmas. The conversion that selects the horizon has not only personal dimensions, it also has social and historical and doctrinal dimensions. So the interdependence runs in both directions.

It is obvious that the second, mediated phase depends upon the first. The question arises whether the first can depend upon the second, and the answer is that it can, but one must beware of undue influence. The results in the first phase have to be obtained by the methods proper to the first phase. The ordinary criterion of research is not some special

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<sup>1</sup> 18 June 1970, part 2; audio may be found at 60000A0E070.

type of Christian research. The ordinary principles of interpretation, understanding what was meant, is a precise task, and there isn't a Christian set of rules for hermeneutics, as has been thought. Similarly, with regard to history, you may know from your doctrines what ought or must have been so, but the thing is to provide the historical evidence for it if you can and to keep on at it; don't give up too easily and try to settle the issue dogmatically. You have to run the first phase on its own proper motors. You can have what they call the extrinsic guiding light, if you like, from the second phase, but you have to do the proper job of the first phase in the first phase. Otherwise, you will be giving people a stone instead of bread and a serpent instead of an egg.

So undue influence has to be avoided and, again, if you have this undue influence you will tend to eliminate the first phase and have only the second. You will have what happened to theology in the Middle Ages, or one of the things that happened to it. Peter Lombard was one of the men who collected sentences from the scriptures and the Fathers under orderly headings, and people proceeded to write commentaries on Peter Lombard until the beginning of the 17th century; I think the last commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard was done by Estius, and he died in 1608 or 1607. Of course, these commentaries had less and less to say about the sources that were found in Peter Lombard. What they were dealing with was the contemporary state of the question; they weren't really bothering much about the sources. Compare a question in St Thomas's commentary on Peter Lombard with the sort of thing that Peter is talking about, and you very easily discover that a hundred years' development has taken place in between. They got further and further away from the sources, namely, the scriptural and Patristic passages contained in Peter Lombard. But that was not enough. Capreolus wrote a commentary on Thomas's commentary on Peter Lombard. Then they shifted. Cajetan and the Spanish theologians shifted to writing commentaries on Thomas's systematic work, the *Summa theologiae*, so the contact with sources had practically vanished by that time. If there were any scripture or patristic stuff in the *Summa theologiae*, what there was,

well, that disappeared in the commentaries. Now there were theologians who did go back to the scriptures, and so on, and study them independently in their so-called commentaries on the *Summa theologiae*, but there was a tendency for theology to paint itself into a corner. So this business of undue influence from the second phase on the first is a real danger.

However, with that proviso made, there is obviously an interdependence of doctrines and doctrinal history. You can't write a good history of mathematics or physics or chemistry unless you know your mathematics inside out, your physics inside out, your chemistry inside out. Otherwise, you will be introducing into history an out-of-date viewpoint; you will think things to be enormous discoveries which are not very important, and thinking things of no importance to be really important, passing them by, and so on. Your perspective will be poor. You will be more likely to mislead your readers than not. What is true of any other subject also is true of doctrines. You have to understand the doctrines to understand their history. Just as today no one attempts to teach the doctrine any other way except expounding the history, seeing how we got to that doctrine, it is in teaching the doctrine that you need the history, so in writing the history you have to understand the doctrine; there is that interdependence there.

Similarly, there is the interdependence of Dialectic and Foundations. Foundations objectify conversion, and while there may be more than one account of authentic conversion, still they may tend to a certain similarity. They should tend to reduce the multiplicity laid bare by dialectic and to weaken its merely polemical tendencies. So Foundations will make this Dialectic. If there can be more than one account of authentic conversion, and there very well may be, still, if it is conversion people can fairly well tell what is not conversion, and so on. The differences that are brought to light by the dialectic are far greater than the differences that you can have in an account of authentic conversion. Consequently, there can be an influence from the foundations to remove, to

mitigate the differences in the dialectic. Inversely, of course, Foundations is the selection, through conversion, of one of the alternative horizons presented by the dialectic.

From the interdependence of phases: history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines, there follows a general interdependence by implication, because the four on either side are interdependent, and so you have a mediated interdependence of all eight.

Finally, there is an interdependence of each of the four in either column; there is interdependence of all the eight through the interdependence of the top four; there is the interdependence of theology and religion. That is the dynamic unity of theology. In what sense is theology a unity? It is not a unity in the Medieval sense that you have a *Summa theologiae* and you understand the right book, but it is the unity of eight ongoing processes that are interdependent and together give you a rounded whole.

### Questions

**Question 30:** Everything you say about avoiding the undue influence of the second phase on the first, and the fact that you have Foundations in the fifth place, gives me the impression that this first phase is a systematic precision from conversion or the Christian horizon, and that tends to make me think that interpretation and history would be what Bultmann would call a presuppositionless interpretation in history. Would you comment on that?

**Lonergan:** The first phase is conducted in accord with general rules on what is a good interpretation, and all interpreters can come to agree on that. They will disagree insofar as there are philosophic differences. The point to having a chapter on interpretation is precisely those philosophic differences. Now, the people that do this work may be atheists; we don't exclude them; they may be agnostics, they may be liberals, they may be existentialists, but they also may be Christians and Catholics and Lutherans, and so on. Let them all work at it; let each use the influence of his religious position on his

interpretation, on his history; it will be something he can't avoid. Each one works with his own presuppositions. To suppose that people drop their presuppositions is to suppose that they revert to infancy. Infants aren't good interpreters, and they aren't good historians. It's an Enlightenment illusion to suppose, as Gadamer puts it, that a person's assumptions are judgments he makes; they are the historicity of his cultural being.

Now you have the different people doing this work, each in his own way, but the differences come to a head in the Dialectic and are clarified in the Dialectic. In the Dialectic we will ask the different people to present what they consider the positions and the counterpositions with regard to the histories and the interpretations, and so on. We will ask them to develop the positions and reverse the counterpositions; and you will have different people with different ideas on what are positions and what are counterpositions and magnifying, putting under a magnifying glass, so to speak, just what their position is.

With regard to Bultmann, in interpretation he explicitly states that the interpreter is not to put off his intelligence, his liveliness, and all this sort of thing, he is to retain it. Otherwise he can't do the job of interpretation. We will go into that more on Monday and Tuesday when we deal with interpretation and history.

**Question 31:** Is it possible that undue influence can only really come from a narrowed or distorted doctrine, that if one has a sufficiently comprehensive doctrine that in turn will permit one – a doctrine on God or something – to be open to all of the possible history. If one has a narrow and distorted doctrine one wants to eliminate.

**Lonergan:** Yes, or there is a mistaken notion with regard to history as such. What we are moving out of is a classicist culture that has standardized man. Owen Chadwick in his *From Bossuet to Newman: The Idea of Doctrinal Development* says that Bossuet, with regard to the homoousion, said St Paul didn't use the word but he knew the thing. It is like an American in London when he wants a pair of suspenders and he goes in and asks for suspenders and the clerk would understand him if he said braces, but he hasn't

got the right word but he knows the thing. That is denying the development. That has been the problem in the past, and it has been a distorted view. But 'undue influence' not only means that; it means skipping the work of this first phase; getting your results of the first phase, not by doing the work of the first phase, but by calling on the ?

**Question 32:** Experience, understanding, and judging are related to potency, form, and act, I can see that. But this distinction between the third and the fourth level I am not very clear on.

**Lonergan:** Take it this way. There are statements of fact and of possibility: what is and what can be. And there are statements of what ought to be, what should be, what would be a good thing, what would be a better thing. You can have an infinity of statements of fact and possibility, and from them you can never deduce statements about what ought to be, what should be, what is better, what is good. It is a different class altogether. You have to have an ought in your premises to have an ought in your conclusion. So you have the difference, then, between judgments of fact on the third level and judgments of value on the fourth. You have a difference in their criteria: the judgment of fact rests upon, its criterion is, the virtually unconditioned. The criterion on the fourth level is the good conscience of the virtuous man. In general, both are objective, where objectivity is what is the fruit of authentic subjectivity.

**Question 33:** So you're more constitutive on the fourth level?

**Lonergan:** What is constitutive is deliberation, evaluation, decision on the fourth level. It is existential, the fourth level, existential and practical.

**Question 34:** Can you say something about the analogy of faith and how it fits in?

**Lonergan:** What do you mean by analogy of faith?

**Question 35:** Take, for example, we know from Nicea that the Son is consubstantial with the Father. The example you give yourself in *De Deo Trino* about St John. We are told

that the Spirit will only speak what is given to him, and what is the reality underlying or what makes it possible for St. John to say that?

**Lonergan:** Is your question methodological or theological?

**Question 36:** Theological.

**Lonergan:** Don't ask me theological questions. There is no theologian that knows all of theology; that's a specialized subject, and I'm not ready to answer all questions. Analogy of faith, as far as I know, is a Barthian term, isn't it? It is in St Paul too. Don't expect me to exegesis on documents I haven't got.

**Question 37:** How do you explain that the analogy of faith is not 'undue influence'?

**Lonergan:** Faith. Because it is part of being authentic, and objectivity is authentic subjectivity, the fruit of authentic subjectivity. If you think faith is not part of authentic subjectivity then okay.

**Question 38:** Is the religious conversion you talk about in Foundations a Christian conversion?

**Lonergan:** De facto, yes. I think all religious conversion is fundamentally the same, God's gift of his grace. But that gift of grace in the Christian community has an interpretation and a context and so on that is lacking, say, in non-Christian religions. But when we hold that God gives sufficient grace to all men for salvation I think it is the same grace that is being talked about.

**Question 39:** I am wondering if you could apply all this if there was a Jewish theology?

**Lonergan:** Rahner remarked in his Florida paper that you could apply it to any human studies. For example, any type of human study that confronts the past and in the light of its conversation with the past acts upon the future, acts towards the future. You have the two phases, and you get the four divisions from the divisions of the four levels of consciousness. So you could use it for any theology a fortiori. The difference between theology and religious studies that are empirical is that religious studies just do the first

three: Research, Interpretation, History. But religious studies are moving beyond that insofar as, well, Wilfred Smith wants an interpretation of Islam that is something that the Muslim will recognize himself in. He wants a sympathetic presentation.

**Question 40:** Would this conversion be better spoken of as an opening rather than a shifting? You talked about a choice between various horizons. It seems to me that it would be a choice of a number of horizons brought together in some kind of unity.

**Lonergan:** Well, insofar as the horizons are dialectically opposed (and that is what Dialectic brings to light, the opposition), it is a choice.

**Question 41:** But in a more existential type of philosophy you have the theme of the union of opposites that can also be brought about. Granted that some oppositions can't be reconciled, but it seems to me that this type of conversion would be more opening than shifting.

**Lonergan:** Well, the religious conversion is God plucking out the heart of stone and putting in the heart of flesh. But having that shift is also a shift of horizon, a very radical shift in horizon. It is insofar as there is a shift in horizon that I speak of conversion. Now how do you determine a horizon, how do you describe it? You get those terms from these oppositions; they are not exhaustive, they are not describing conversion itself. You are presented with these oppositions, you have these oppositions defined from that whole work of the first phase; they come out fairly clearly: philosophic oppositions, doctrinal oppositions, and so on. Foundations is a matter of decision, a judgment of value; and as judgments of value generally are objective insofar as they are the good conscience of the virtuous man, so it is insofar as it is the good conscience of the converted man that selects one horizon which is opposed to others. Now it can be synthetic and ecumenical and all the rest, I'm not denying that sort of thing. In fact, I have set up a method that is relevant to any theology in the full sense.

**Question 42:** Is the conversion operative grace?



**Loneragan:** The conversion is operative grace, and the foundations is co-operative grace.

**Question 43:** Does this suggest anything for the pedagogy of theology?

**Loneragan:** With regard to teaching theology, it is a matter of teaching people the method, exercising them in each of the different functional specialties, and letting them choose courses that fit in with what their future work is going to be. Now the pedagogy of theology, there are eight different things to be done there. But, in general, this is not, How do you teach theology but how do you contribute to theology, not how do you teach the textbook but how do you do the work that underlies textbooks?

**Question 44:** In *Insight* you specify that natural science is using general heuristic notions. It seems to me that theology is based on specific heuristic notions. Is there some determinate number or are they always emerging?

**Loneragan:** As the sciences advance you get more and more heuristic notions, heuristic structures. This is a heuristic structure also, but it is a compound one; it is a compound of eight heuristic structures.