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10 Foundations

We come to our fifth functional specialty, foundations. We distinguish between a mediating and a mediated phase in theology. Mediating theology confronts us with the past. Mediated theology uses the past to act in the present for the future. In mediating theology we are concerned to understand the minds and hearts of other people. What was it that Jeremiah or Isaiah really had in mind, or Paul or John, or Augustine or Aquinas, and so on? It is theology in indirect discourse. But in mediated theology there is a more personal stance; it is what I think is true, what I bear witness to, the way I understand it. The foundations are foundations not of the whole of theology. Obviously theology is going to depend on your method, and the second phase is going to depend upon the first, but the foundations that are now required are foundations of that more personal stance that is adopted in mediated theology, where you are not just saying what Isaiah said or thought, but you are committing yourself.

Consequently, the present foundations are foundations of the three last functional specialties: foundations of doctrines, of systematics, and of communications. It is not the whole foundation of these three; they depend, also, on research, on interpretation, on history, on dialectic. But our concern is the foundation insofar as these three go beyond the first four by adding a personal commitment.

1 Foundational Reality

We distinguish between the foundational reality and its expression. The foundational reality as distinct from its expression is conversion: religious, moral, and intellectual:

¹ 25 June 1970, part 1; audio may be found at 60800A0E070.

religious as ordinarily the source of moral conversion, and religious and moral conversion as ordinarily the source of intellectual conversion.

Conversion may be operative in the first four specialties, in mediating theology. We are not excluding converted people from research, or interpretation, or history, or dialectic. But it is not a prerequisite. Conversion is not an established, explicit, universally recognized criterion of proper procedure in the first four. The first four end up with dialectic, with a set of opposed positions; they are opposed in various ways because conversion is not required prior to it. But we want not only unconverted people but also converted people in the first four because their results will be different from the results of the unconverted. Interpretation is not only a matter of understanding the thing, and understanding the words, and understanding the author, but also of understanding oneself. And a converted person has a different self to understand. History is a technique; there are the techniques of critical history. But any history is making the past intelligible within a horizon, one's own horizon. And the horizon of a person who is converted is different from the horizon of a person who is not.

The functional specialty 'foundations' occurs on the fourth level. It is a use, of course, of experience, understanding, and judgments of fact. But it uses them for the purpose of deliberating, evaluating, deciding. Foundations is a matter of a personal decision. When you say a personal decision, one might think it is something arbitrary. But conversion is just the opposite of arbitrariness. Being arbitrary is being unauthentic; it is inattentive, or non-intelligent, or non-reasonable, or non-responsible. Arbitrariness means one of those four, perhaps all four. Conversion is from arbitrariness, from unauthenticity, to authenticity. Consequently, when you place foundations on the fourth level you are talking about a real self-transcendence, an effective self-transcendence. It is to be thought of not as an act of will, as a function of what faculty psychology called will. It is an act of conscience; on the fourth level consciousness is conscience.

Such a deliberate decision on the fourth level is a high achievement. Most people drift into some horizon; they inherit it. It may never occur to them that there is any other

possible horizon to have than the one they inherited. Or if they change, they are changing to the horizon of everyone else around them; and everyone else around them has that horizon because everyone else has it too; there is nothing very personal about it. A deliberate decision on the fourth level is just the opposite of drifting.

While such a decision is personal, it is not solitary. Conversion occurs in the individual, but it occurs in many individuals. Because it occurs in many they can recognize it in one another, they can form a community; the community can be the beginnings of a tradition. The tradition can retain its identity though it spreads from one culture to another, and so on. Consequently, conversion is not simply a change of horizon in the individual; it is also, it can also be a change of the group to which one belongs. Or if it is not a change of the group to which one belongs, a change in the manner in which one belongs to it, so that one belongs authentically as opposed to unauthentically, understanding it properly as opposed to a mixture of understanding and misunderstanding.²

Belonging to a group, what group one belongs to, whether it had a founder, who was its founder – all these are theological questions, they are not methodological questions.

So much for the foundational reality in conversion.

2 The Sufficiency of the Foundational Reality

Secondly, the sufficiency of that foundational reality. That foundational reality is not foundations in the sense in which the premises for deductions are foundations. If one wants premises for deductions to be the foundations of one's theology, one needs doctrines, such as the doctrines in fundamental theology: fundamental theology on the

² Parenthetically, Lonergan added, 'With regard to a mixture of understanding and misunderstanding, it has been said that I defend premarital promiscuity; I said nothing of the sort or nothing that implied it. Don't interpret what you don't understand.'

true religion, the Divine Legate, the Church, the inspiration of scripture, the sources of theological argument. That type of foundations is something of the sort: the true religion is what is expounded in the Bible, or what is expounded by the Church; one must accept the true religion; the true religion is that, therefore ...; and your whole theology comes right out of it. That type, that conception, that deductivist type of theology is incompatible with ongoing, developing religion, developing dogma, developing theology. Whatever is deductive also is static. Implications follow immediately, and you have as many different foundations as you have different religions and even as you have different theologies in the same religion.

The foundational reality we want in this fifth functional specialty is something that is a real change in the theologian, not some premises which he accepts, but a change in him. So that what he has in interpreting, understanding himself, is something different from the unconverted self; so that in doing history he has a horizon within which he makes the past intelligible that is different from the horizon of a non-converted self. That real change in the theologian means that through that real change one is exercising a control of a developing process. If your religion is developing and your theology is developing, the control is not some static control, it has to be a control of the movements. The control of the movements is had only insofar as your theologian is a person who has undergone religious, moral, and intellectual conversion.

You want intellectual conversion to escape the myriad of false philosophies, moral conversion to overcome individual, group, and general bias, and religious conversion so that one's commitment to God is without reservations.

So much then for the foundational reality. Now we turn to its expression and, first of all, to pluralism in expression.

3 Pluralism in Expression

The manifestation of conversion in deeds and in words will vary with the manner in which consciousness is undifferentiated or differentiated. There results from this presence

or absence in degree of differentiated consciousness a pluralism in expression of conversion, and consequently a multiplicity of theologies.

We distinguished – a week ago Wednesday – four realms of meaning. The realm of commonsense meanings, of theoretical meanings, the realm of interiority, and the realm of transcendence.

A person always has available – unless he suffers from some defect – the commonsense realm. But his consciousness may be differentiated with respect to an other – and there are three others. It may be with respect to two out of the three others, or all three others. Undifferentiated consciousness operates only in the realm of common sense. Religiously differentiated consciousness operates in the realm of common sense and in the realm of transcendence. It is the mysterious East but it is also the Christian tradition of the pious person, the holy person. Theoretically differentiated consciousness operates in the realm of common sense and the realm of theory. In the Aristotelian and the modern scientist, consciousness is differentiated between common sense and theory. Interiorly differentiated consciousness operates in the realm of common sense and of interiority. You have that in an Augustine, a Pascal, a Newman: people with very rich expressions of their personal living.

Besides single differentiations of consciousness, you can have double differentiations of consciousness. Religiously and theoretically differentiated consciousness operates in the three realms of common sense, transcendence, and theory: Thomas Aquinas. All his life long, at least from his earliest writings, he was a theoretical person as well as a man of common sense. And towards the end of his life, he was very far advanced in mysticism. You can have consciousness differentiated religiously and interiorly, and there I spoke of Augustine, Pascal, and Newman; they are differentiated religiously as well as interiorly.

Consciousness can be differentiated theoretically and interiorly, operating in the three realms of common sense, theory, and interiority.

Finally, you can have fully differentiated consciousness operating in all four realms. Any of these differentiations may be incipient. A Wisdom literature is a beginning of a theoretical differentiation; it is not very far towards it, but it is the beginning of it. A life of prayer, of devotion to prayer, can be the beginning of a life of intense religious experience; it is moving towards it. Some awareness of one's acts, an ability to say, in the light of one's experience, 'I do not understand,' having the experience of not understanding and knowing you have it. It is not the long process described yesterday by Fr MacKinnon; it is immediate experience: I'm not understanding, I'm just not getting the point, or I've caught on at long last. It is something that's given immediately that you are announcing. To set up the whole works requires this process through common sense and theory to arrive at interiority, to set it up as a system. But there is the immediate experience: I think so, I don't think so. The differentiation may be incipient, it may be mature, but it also can vanish. Humanism is a cultural phenomenon profoundly influenced by the theoretic work of a Plato and Aristotle, but it gave up any serious theory, and philosophy was, as we might say, something that anyone can understand in commonsense terms; theory has vanished. So there is a pluralism of expression.

4 Pluralism in Theology

There is a radical pluralism in theology that arises from the presence or absence of religious, moral, and intellectual conversion. But besides this radical pluralism, which foundations is concerned to eliminate, there is a benign pluralism that results simply from the differentiation of consciousness. People with undifferentiated consciousness, simply in the realm of common sense, can express the religious component in their lives by metaphor, by suggestion, by allusion. They are extending commonsense language to further ends, and the result is a symbolic theology, such as the theology of Judaic Christianity. Daniélou's book – I believe it has been translated into English, but it is certainly available in French, *La Théologie de la Judéo-Christianisme*, in which he

expounds the categories in which Palestinian Christians thought. They thought of the Son and the Spirit as angels, and they did not mean by that creatures, they meant distinct persons, and so on: always symbolism. It was using Old Testament symbolism to express Christian thought. The two Seraphim that perpetually cry, 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' in the vision of Isaiah, were interpreted as the Son and the Spirit, and so on, one thing right after another. This Judaic Christianity is found in the Ascension of Isaiah, and various apocalypses, the epistle of Barnabas, the Elders referred to by Papias and Irenaeus, in the Clementines, and so on. It is a whole mode of Christian thinking, genuine Christian thinking, but expressing itself quite differently from the ordinary New Testament expression. You have it in the epistle of Jude and in the Apocalypse.

Besides symbolic theology, there is mystical theology, which is of two kinds. There is the study of mystical experience or, on the other hand, it is the case that the theologian is a contemplative and uses his contemplation as a fountain for his theological interest and thought – and that is in religiously differentiated consciousness.

In the third place, if you have theoretically differentiated consciousness, you get a theology such as that of St Thomas. The fundamental concepts are metaphysical, and it is in the realm of theory, and theory includes not only science but also philosophy. Science is a further determination of metaphysical knowledge.

In the history of theology from the Medieval period on – I said something about it yesterday in answering questions – there was this really scientific type of theology that you find in Aquinas, a theology that is both commentary on sources, on Scripture and other writers, but also the *Summa*, the answering and resolving of questions in a systematic fashion. The fourteenth century, after the upheaval of the Augustinian-Aristotelian controversies, tried to conceive theology in terms of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* and promptly headed towards skepticism, and, after skepticism, decadence. There was a cutting off from the sources insofar as theologians were not simply writing commentaries on Peter Lombard, who was a depository of Scripture and Patristic statements, but Capreolus wrote a commentary on Thomas's commentary on Peter

Lombard, and you get people getting still further away from the sources when they wrote commentaries on Thomas's *Summa*, which is a strictly systematic work. You have a whole series of people from Cajetan on, all these Spanish theologians writing commentaries on Aquinas's *Summa*, instead of working on the sources of religion, directly. And it brought in the sources too.

There was a change in the conception of theology with Melchior Cano, who was influenced by humanism to reconceive theology in terms of going back to the sources. His theology consisted in Scholastic theses, but he was concerned to prove these theses from his 'theological places,' topics: from Scripture, from the Fathers, from the consensus of the theologians, and so on. About a hundred years after his death, this approach crystallized, and we have the beginnings of the manualist tradition in theology. The present century has been the erosion of that approach through the development of historical study. Historical study very easily won the day in Patristic studies and in Medieval studies, but it was a longer fight to get it into scriptural studies.

That theoretical theology and its subsequent history shows that besides symbolic, mystical, and theoretical theology, there also is the fourth possibility: methodical theology, which is an ongoing process, reflecting on an ongoing process of a historical religion. The basic terms and relations in such a theology refer to the conscious operations and conscious dynamic relations within the subject.

5 Categories

The transcendental notions make questions and answers possible. It is because you can ask why, and how, and what for, and is it so, and is it worthwhile, that you can ask and answer questions. But to make the questions determinate there are needed categories.

Theological categories are either general or special. General categories the theologian shares with people working in other fields. All people in all fields have minds and use them. That fact provides general categories. Special categories are based upon religion, religious experience. Now a religion such as Christianity, which began in a

Palestinian milieu, that spread to the Greco-Roman and the Syriac worlds, that went through the Dark Ages and a renewal in the Middle Ages and that now is living in the modern world and has a mission to preach to all nations, its theology has to have a transcultural basis. Now insofar as its method is based on a transcendental method, it has one foot in a transcultural realm, namely, while an account of conscious operations and the relations between our conscious operations is something that is historically conditioned, that will improve as the sciences develop and advance, and so on, still, the reality itself, to which those basic terms and relations refer is something that is transcultural; it is common to all instances of *homo sapiens*, because that is what you mean by *homo sapiens*. So, insofar as your theological categories are connected with a transcendental method in one way or another, they have at least one foot in a transcultural realm.

Further, while people's manifestation, realization, in their lives, of the effects of God's grace is something that is historically conditioned and varies from one place to another, from one culture to another, and so on, still, God's gift of his love, what St. Paul was speaking of in Romans 5.5: 'God's love floods our heart through the Holy Spirit given to us,' that gift of God's love is not something that is historically conditioned. In that connection, Olivier Rabut's *L'expérience religieuse fondamentale*, Tournai: Castermann, 1969, is a very, very careful account of what religious experience is. The way he puts it is by using a metaphor: you are in a room and suddenly the air is filled with music, and you don't know if it is the gramophone record or a hidden orchestra, you don't know the source of it. But there is no doubt about the music. Similarly, there is the fact of love, you have to be a lover yourself to perceive it, but it is as though there was a charged field to be perceived. What is the root of this charged field is a further question, but it is there and everyone is invited into it, but you have to join because your own loving is your capacity to perceive it.

That is the source, the basis, the first point in the special categories of theology, and it is something that has a transcultural aspect.

What validity is to be required in one's categories? First, with regard to the general categories. The general categories, insofar as they are derived from transcendental method, state something that is not open to revision because it is the grounds of the possibility of revision. But one can go beyond what is strictly transcendental method, the possibility of being attentive, being intelligent, being reasonable, being responsible. We did that when we spoke about the human good; we expanded out from that basis. When we spoke about meaning, we went greatly into detail; when we spoke about religion and when we set up the functional specialties. We are proceeding on the basis of transcendental method, but filling out the picture in all of these cases. What, in general, is the validity to be required of these extensions? In general, the validity is the validity of a model; something that doesn't say it is a description of reality; it doesn't say it is a hypothesis about reality, but provides you with a heuristic structure for investigating, a language for formulating the hypothesis, the means of describing, at least the preliminary means for describing a reality.

Insofar as we are setting up a method, we use transcendental method and models. Whether our models are hypotheses, whether they describe reality, that's the job of the theologian to determine. The methodologist provides a transcendental method and models; the theologian advances from models to hypotheses and descriptions.

The categories form a set of interlocking terms and relations. The models are extensions of basic terms and relations provided by transcendental method, extensions of it, and to determine whether the models are anything more than that, whether they also provide us with hypotheses and descriptions, is a question for the theologian. So much for the categories in general.

Next we treat the general theological categories and, later, seventhly, special theological categories.

6 General Theological Categories

General theological categories: the base is the theologian as subject, his operations as

self-transcendent. Now the basic set of operations and relations briefly described as experiencing, understanding, judging, and deliberating can be extended in a variety of ways. There are different kinds of conscious operations. You can distinguish the different sensitive activities, the different intellectual activities, the different rational activities, the different deliberative activities. There are different kinds of conscious operations. There are different patterns of experience, *Insight*, Chapter Six: the biological pattern of experience, the aesthetic pattern of experience, the intellectual pattern of experience. Thales was so intent upon the stars that he fell into the well: the intellectual pattern of experience. He was out of the realm of common sense, and the milkmaid laughed at him; how could he know about the stars if he couldn't see the well in front of his feet? There is the mystical pattern of experience, the dramatic pattern of experience, the outgoing people, the practical pattern of experience. They are all different streams of consciousness. There are different qualities of consciousness: the quality of sentient consciousness; the quite different quality of consciousness qua intelligent, inquiry, coming to understand, thinking in the light of that understanding; the rational quality of consciousness, consciousness as orientated towards an absolute, an unconditioned, and consequently saying that the positive achievements of science are not true but only probable; the deliberative consciousness, existential, constitutive, self-constituting, productive. There are also different manners of proceeding towards goals: the manner of common sense, the manner of science, the manner based on interiority, the manner of worship, prayer. From these different manners of proceeding towards goals, there are different realms of meaning and different worlds mediated by meaning, the diverse heuristic structures in *Insight*: classical and statistical, chapters Two to Five; genetic and dialectical, later on. Then integral heuristic structure: metaphysics in *Insight* is conceived as an integral heuristic structure. Theology is conceived in terms of eight functional specialties. These are all ways in which questions are put, the types of questions put forward.

There is the contrast between differentiated and undifferentiated consciousness and the different ways in which consciousness can be differentiated and the degree in each case to which it is de facto differentiated: is it incipient, or mature, or vanishing? There is the absence and presence of conversion; and, consequently, positions and counterpositions. There is a whole series of ways in which that fundamental thing can be extended in various directions.

Through those extensions, one can go on to a developed account of the human good, values, beliefs; to carriers, elements, functions, realms, and stages of meaning; to the question of God and religious experience and its expressions, its dialectical development. Finally, since all of this is dynamic, since consciousness, intentional consciousness, is materially dynamic – it consists in operations – and formally dynamic – it assembles the relevant operations itself – you can set up models of change; a heuristic structure unifies things that are very, very diverse. In Aristotle, fire is one of the four elements. Among the chemists, prior to Lavoisier, it was attributed to phlogiston. Today it is considered a process of oxidization. The three accounts of fire are totally different, but the heuristic notion of fire, What will I know when I understand these flames? is the same in all three cases. The heuristic notion is, What will I know when I understand x ? That provides the unity. The heuristic notion is something very useful in theology. What did Augustine mean by a person when he said there were three persons in the Trinity? He said, What are there three of? There aren't three Gods and there are not three Fathers, and there are not three Sons, and there are not three Spirits. What are there three of? Well, if you want a word to say what there are three of you can use the word *persona* or *substantia*, *prosopon* or *hypostasis* – the Greeks had used both. Augustine was still using both. Later terminology changed that to one substance and three persons, but in Augustine it was still there. It was purely a heuristic notion. You start getting definitions of person in Boethius, *substantia individua intellectualis naturae*; you get another definition of person in Richard of St Victor, a third in St Thomas, *subsistens distinctum in natura intellectuali*, and all three are metaphysical. So you start asking about the

metaphysics of a person and you get Scotus's account, and Capreolus's and Suarez's and Tiphanius's – the metaphysics of a person. Then Descartes comes along with his Cogito, and you start thinking of the person as a subject. Then the phenomenologists come on the scene and you start talking about 'I' and 'Thou' and interpersonal relations. These are different accounts of the person, and theology moves along with them. Because it knows about the heuristic notion that is common to the whole lot – the heuristic notion is, What do I understand when I understand what there are three of? – you are able to move along the line and find continuity as well as difference, and what development is, concretely. You can set up these heuristic structures. In Chalcedon they spoke of two natures in Christ; they had no very precise notion of what they meant by nature. But seventy-five years later, some of the Byzantine Scholastics did discover that if there were two natures and only one person, then one of the natures was *anhypostatos*, without a person. You would have to have two persons, if both of the natures were also a person. But, in general, the Fathers were not metaphysicians. There is some approach towards it in some of the Fathers, but in general, no: far from it.

So you can set up dynamic structures as well, and so be able to deal with movements. So much for general theological categories, and I think we will have our break now. There remain two more sections: [special theological categories and the use of the categories.]