

## 640B0DTE070

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We set forth a general notion of method, namely, a normative pattern of related and recurrent operations with cumulative and progressive results. We proceeded to find in ourselves, in the dynamism of our cognitional and deliberative process, such a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations. And now, we have to try and outline to you what you have to find in yourselves. All I can present is a model, a set of related terms and relations, but whether that set of terms and relations names the operations you experience and understand and affirm and find good, find normative, is something each one has to do for himself. Otherwise this series of talks will be a book on painting for a blind man or on music for someone who is deaf. The fundamental task is a personal task. Insofar as you perform that task – we had this meeting in Florida over a year ago, and I think the compliment I liked best was from Patrick Heelan, who said to me, ‘We are not your disciples; you have thought us to think for ourselves and we are on our own’ – and it is insofar as you understand the working of your own mind, find it in your own mind, that you will be on your own.

Now what we have to do: we are already conscious of all these operations, but that consciousness is not objectified; it is *vécu* but not *thématique*, it is *existenziell* but not *existenzial*, it is implicit but not explicit. We all understand, and if you understand you understand consciously; we all make judgments, and if you make judgments you make them not merely consciously but reasonably. We all make decisions, and insofar as they are good, you are conscientious, not merely conscious but conscientious. But just as people with their feelings may experience the feeling and yet have no name for it, no way of objectifying it and consequently be lost with it,

disturbed by it – Carl Rogers’ client-centered therapy is making oneself available to the client so that he will be able to advert to his own feelings and name them, and by naming them heighten his consciousness of them, and increase his ability to control them – similarly, by heightening your own cognitional activities, each one of them in itself and in its relations to the others, you move in, you move from a mere model of cognitional activity to something you know for yourself, you have found in yourself.

Now what does this process of objectification consist in? Well, we will simplify the list of operations; we will say there are four: experiencing, understanding, judging, deciding. Then what have we got to do? You have to experience your experiencing, your understanding, your judging, and your deciding. That is the heightening of consciousness. Next, you have to understand in their relations your experienced experiencing, your experienced understanding, your experienced judging, your experienced deciding. Thirdly, you have to ask how correct, how much subject to revision, is your understanding of your experienced experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. Finally, you have to ask what is normative about your affirmed and understood experienced experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. You apply the operations as intentional to the operations as conscious. Your operations as conscious are your experienced experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding, and applying them as intentional to them as conscious is deciding what is normative and affirming and understanding your experienced experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding.

First, then, to experience one’s experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding; that experience is just consciousness. All of these operations intrinsically are conscious, they don’t occur outside of consciousness, and they occur only within consciousness; they are always conscious. But one

can perform them and attend merely to their objects, not to them, so that the conscious subject and the conscious operations are peripheral; the whole attention is on the object. You have to enlarge your field of attention, not merely see what is visible, the faces before me, but be aware of yourself as seeing, as in this encounter. You broaden out attention so that one attends not only to the intended object but also to the intending subject, and that on all four levels of sensing, understanding, judging, deciding.

Secondly, one has to understand one's experienced experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. That is, these operations are related to one another. Without experience you have nothing to understand. To have something to understand, you first of all have to have something given, and that is provided by sense in the first instance. And in the present instance it is provided by consciousness, namely, your conscious operations as something to be understood. Without experiencing and understanding, you have no questions for reflection: Is that so? It is because your understanding very easily is wrong or incomplete or inadequate that you always go on to the further question, Is that so? – the level of rationality. And it is only insofar as you know reality and possibility and probable results that you can go on and ask the question, Well now, what is the good thing to do? and so deliberate. There is the interrelation of all of these. Each successive level presupposes the others and goes beyond them and completes them and gives them a far broader significance. That matter of going beyond and adding to, setting up a new goal, and extending the range and significance of what has gone before is sublation. In this context it is what in the Hegelian context is the *Aufhebung*.

The operations, then, occur in a context that is formally dynamic, materially and formally dynamic. The operations are materially dynamic; they are operations, and the context is formally dynamic; it assembles itself.

When you experience, you want to understand. You don't just gape. And when you experience and understand, you want to know whether it is true, so that you are not like the patients who have lots of insights but they're wrong. And when you understand you want to do something about it, and so you move on to deliberation.

Thirdly, one has to pass a judgment. Do those operations exist? And do they occur in the pattern that we have found there?

Now, only insofar as someone has something wrong with his sense organs will he say that he never saw anything in his life or never heard anything or never felt anything or never touched anything or never smelt anything, or if he seemed to do any of these things it was mere appearance; all his life long he has been a somnambulist, both awake and asleep. So the sensitive operations most people will admit; they won't claim to be a somnambulist.

Secondly, no one prefaces his lectures with the statement that never in his life has he had the slightest intellectual curiosity, he never in his whole lifetime made any effort to understand anything, and much less did he ever understand something; and, finally, that his seeming to be intelligent is mere appearance.

Then no one prefaces his books with the statement that never has he had any doubt about anything, never wondered whether any of his statements were true or false, and least of all in this present book.

And finally, no one issues the warning that he has no notion of what is meant by responsibility, that he has never been concerned whether anything was right or wrong, and least of all in offering the present book to the public.

In other words, people are not going to deny the occurrence of the operations. If they did, they would be simply stating that they were irresponsible, irrational, unintelligent somnambulists all their livelong days.

However, there is a further question, namely, Do the operations occur in the pattern we have been offering, the pattern of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding? Is not that pattern just like any other insight, a mere hypothesis that may seem to be true enough here and now but in a year or ten years or in a hundred years surely will be revised? After all, man always progresses. Method itself is a matter of something with cumulative and progressive results.

Now we have to distinguish two things. There is the account of the pattern, and there is the dynamic pattern itself, something in which our consciousness is formally dynamic. It follows up experience with questions for intelligence, and answers to questions for intelligence with questions for reflection, and answers to questions for reflection with questions for deliberation. That structure, that dynamic structure that is man as experiencing, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible, that will be better known: no doubt about that. The more one investigates human cognitional operations it will be better and more fully known. But there is a sense in which there is not a possible radical revision; namely, the possibility of any revision presupposes data, because you can have a revision insofar as you can produce data that the present theory does not account for. And you will have the structure of a revision, something new to say, insofar as you have understanding, understand the data better than has been in the past. And the understanding will be better if you pronounce it a fuller understanding, you make a judgment. And you go about all the trouble of this work of revising if you think it is worthwhile. And that involves a judgment of value.

Consequently, the possibility of revision has its conditions. And the conditions of the possibility of a revision are precisely the structure we have been talking about.

#### **[4 The Functions of Transcendental Method]**

Finally, we have to note the functions of transcendental method. First of all, it is normative. Its basis is not just authority, nor just success: it works; its basis is the transcendental precepts: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible. Those are the conditions of the possibility of being a human person.

Secondly, it is critical. There is a scandal that, while scientists agree, philosophers and theologians disagree on almost everything. One gets to the root of that disagreement when one discovers what one is doing when one is knowing: cognitional theory; and why doing that is knowing: epistemology; and what one knows when one does it: metaphysics. When one answers those three questions one has the transcendental method.

Thirdly, it is dialectical. That knowledge enables one to take any mistaken account of knowledge or epistemology and reveal its divergence from the actual structure one finds in one's own mind. According to Hume, very crudely, human knowledge is a matter of data related to one another by habit, by custom. Consequently, Hume's account of the human mind doesn't explain how Hume could be such an original person. He wasn't uniting data according to custom; he was saying something quite novel. Consequently, his account of the mind is not an account of his own mind. That is the technique of a critical philosophy, revealing the divergence between what someone says about knowledge and what he actually is doing.

It is normative; it is critical; it is dialectical. It is possible to apply that critical technique to every cognitional theory, to distinguish between positions and counterpositions, positions that agree with what actually one does when one knows and, on the other hand, counterpositions, something that says that knowing is something quite different from that.

It is systematic. A system is a set of terms and relations in which the relations define the terms and the terms define the relations; it is a closed something [?]. When you list cognitional operations and reveal their relations to one another, you have something systematic. And when one arrives at something systematic one eliminates problems of interpretation. There is hardly any hermeneutical literature on Euclid's *Elements*; people have to study to understand them, but their meaning is unambiguous; there is no dispute about what the thing means. On the other hand, there is an endless hermeneutical, exegetical literature on the simple gospels, because they are not systematic. Euclid needs no hermeneutical literature because he is systematic. The point, then, to being systematic is precisely that. The system offers continuity without rigidity: continuity insofar as the human mind remains the human mind, but without rigidity, because one can know that human mind ever better.

It is heuristic. Eureka: Archimedes' *Eureka* is the first person singular of the perfect tense of the verb *heurisko*, to find. Something is heuristic – *eureka*, I have discovered. The ending *tikos* in Greek is causative: *kinetikos* is what moves, and heuristic is the principle of discovery. The principle of discovery is – as in algebra, at what time after three o'clock does the minute hand exactly cover the hour hand? Well, let us say it is at  $x$  minutes after three. From that naming your unknown, you go on to putting down all you know about that  $x$ , and sooner or later you find an equation and are able to tell how many minutes after three the minute hand covers the hour hand. With the physicist: what is the law governing this or that phenomenon? Well, let it be  $y = f(x)$ ,  $y$  is some function of  $x$ , or some function of  $x, y, z, t = 0$ . Then he proceeds to determine what that function is. You name your unknowns, you state everything you can about your unknowns, and finally, you make the discovery and pull in on it. Something is heuristic, and the

basis of this heuristic business is precisely our transcendental notions. They are the most fundamental heuristic devices.

It is foundational. Special methods are discovered, developed, from the accumulated experience of investigators in their fields. But besides the special norms of particular fields there are common norms. Besides problems peculiar to special fields, there are interdisciplinary problems, ecological problems. Inasmuch as special methods are grounded in transcendental method, the sciences can be mobilized within the higher unity of vocabulary, thought, orientation, criticism. They become able to attack interdisciplinary problems coherently, to complement one another effectively, to attack more fundamental problems that hitherto have been neglected. Transcendental method provides, sets forth, the common element in all methods, and thereby it is foundational for interdisciplinary studies.

In particular transcendental method is relevant to theology. Theology has its methods derived from experience in the past, but its methods, however peculiar to theology, nonetheless are the work of human minds performing the same basic operations, in the same basic patterns of relations, as common sense and the natural sciences and the human sciences. It is true that theologians attend, inquire, reflect, decide differently from the attention, inquiry, reflection, decision of the natural sciences and the human sciences. Still, there is no transition from attention to inattention, from intelligence to stupidity, from reasonableness to unreasonableness, from responsibility to irresponsibility. There is something in common between theology and the others, and transcendental method pins that down.

The objects of theology are not beyond the range of transcendental method, because the basis of transcendental method is our power to ask questions, and the questions can be and are asked not only in other subjects but also in theology. The intelligible is any intelligibility. The range of the



transcendental notions is not what man can know; it is what man can ask about. It is insofar as you ask questions that you don't know the answer to that you know about the limitations of the human mind.

Again, transcendental method is not a new resource in theology. Theologians have always had minds, and they have always used them. What transcendental method can do is help us to make better use of the resources theologians have always had.

Again, transcendental method is a key to unified science. Aristotle wanted the fundamental science to be about objects: a metaphysics. He wanted to unify all the sciences by using metaphysical terms in his physics and his psychology, and so on, to make these general metaphysical terms more precise. Modern science has reestablished its independence of that metaphysics. It has its own terms in physics, in chemistry, in biology, and so on: its own basic terms. The unification of the sciences today, since they are always advancing, is not going to be in terms of the objects. The objects are changing. Unification comes through the method and the guidance of the method.

Finally, when one relates theology to transcendental method, one abrogates the old metaphor, 'philosophy is the handmaid of theology.' It is not philosophy in general that the theologian wants, it is the precise answers to the questions, What am I doing when I am knowing? Why is doing that knowing? What do I know when I do it? If the theologian knows that, he knows all he needs for his method. It is not philosophy in general; it is those precise questions. It is not those questions qua philosophic, but qua methodical. The questions are raised, not because the theologian has to know philosophy, not to import something into theology that is alien to theology, but because the theologian has a mind and he uses it, and he had best know what is the right way to use it, what happens when he does use it.

So much for our first chapter on method.

## [5 The Structure of the Human Good]

We will go on now to some account of the human good. The point to this is to provide a model, a notion, a concrete notion of what the good is. You may repeat the Aristotelian position, *bonum est id quod omnia appetunt*, and just have something rather vague. We want to get something that will convey an apprehension of what the good is. We distinguish individual, group, and end. (Puts on board structure of human good)

Individual: potentiality, actuation. The potentiality is capacity and need. Again, the potentiality is plasticity and perfectibility. Thirdly, the potentiality is liberty.

Actuation of capacity, need, is operation. Operations in a group are cooperations, and cooperations have as an end instances of the particular good.

Plasticity, perfectibility give rise to development and skills in the broadest sense. Skills enable one to fulfill roles and perform tasks in an institution, and the proper performance of roles and tasks brings about the good of order.

Liberty, one's orientation in life, one's fundamental option, and consequently conversion determining one's orientation, personal relations, and terminal values.

Now I will have to say something on each of these.

It is a systematic account of the human good. The meaning of those terms comes to light insofar as they occur in the same sentence.

First, then, let us take four terms in the top row: capacity, need, operation, particular good. Individuals have capacities for operating.

Operating procures instances of the particular good. By a particular good is meant any action or thing that meets a need: one's dinner, a class, anything that meets a need. A need is understood not as necessity but as anything that is wanted, in the broadest sense. So much for those four terms.

Now let us add on, from the third column: cooperation, institution, role, task. Individuals live in groups; and consequently, operating usually also is cooperating. The cooperation occurs in an institution; and by an institution is meant an already understood and accepted mode of cooperating; you don't have to explain what is to be done; everyone will do the right thing, and the proper results will come out of it. So institution means an already understood and accepted way in cooperating. Such institutions are: family and manners, mores; society and education, the state and the law, economy and technology, church and sect.

In the institution there are people with roles performing tasks. The fulfillment of the roles and the performance of the tasks within the institutions may or may not give rise to a good of order. By the good of order is meant particular goods as recurrent; it is not just dinner, but dinner every day for anyone that earns it; it is not just a class but an ongoing process of education, a university.

The same institution may or may not give rise to a good of order, and when it doesn't, you have a breakdown, or you have a malfunction of the institution. So the good of order is something quite beyond the institution. The same institution of the family can give rise to bliss in one case and misery in another; it depends on the people in it. So that notion of the good of order goes beyond anything like the institution. It is the actual effective cooperation of individuals that gives rise to the good of order.

Plasticity and perfectibility make possible the development of skills, and precisely of those skills demanded by the roles and tasks in institutions.

Finally, one's liberty is the possibility of one's orienting oneself in life, in making fundamental options. To make the right fundamental option is a matter of conversion. The relations between persons fulfilling roles and performing tasks will depend both on the roles and tasks but also – father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister – the roles determine the personal relations, but also that orientation in life. Insofar as one's orientation is authentic, insofar as one is converted, one brings about values; one is an originating value giving rise to terminal values.

In particular, the good of order is not some design for utopia, not some theoretic ideal, not some set of ethical precepts, not a code of laws, not some super-institution. It is quite concrete. It is the actually functioning or malfunctioning set of 'if-then' relationships that guides people operating and coordinates them cooperating. The good of order is the ground whence recur or fail to recur whatever instances are recurring or failing to recur. It has its basis in institutions but it is also the product of much more, of all the skill, knowhow, industry, resourcefulness, ambition, and fellow-feeling of a whole people adapting to each change of circumstance, meeting each new emergency, struggling against every tendency to disorder.

The personal relations are something alive with feeling. There are common or opposed feelings about qualitative values or scales of preference; mutual feelings – one responds to another as an ontic value, as a source of satisfaction, and so on. Beyond feelings there is the substance of community; people are joined by common experience, by common or complementary insights, by similar judgments of fact and of value, by parallel orientations in life; they are separated, estranged, rendered hostile when they get out of touch, when they misunderstand one another, when they judge in opposed fashions, when they opt for contrary social goals. So personal relations vary from intimacy to ignorance, from love to

exploitation, from respect to contempt, from friendliness to enmity. Personal relations bind a community together or divide it into factions or tear it apart.

Terminal values are values that are chosen: true instances of the particular good, a true good of order, a true scale of preferences regarding values and satisfactions. Correlative to the terminal values are the originating values that do the choosing: authentic persons achieving self-transcendence by their good choices. The originating and the terminal values can coincide insofar as people aim at perfection in themselves and promote it in others.

I think that will do for the human good for today.