Conversions and Breakdowns

Conversion may be religious, moral, or intellectual.

Religious conversion is being grasped by ultimate concern.
It is other-worldly being-in-love, a giving oneself back to the
Giver in total and permanent self-surrender without conditions,
reserves, qualifications. It has two stages. The first is
~~affective volitional, a matter of choice and decision~~
~~produces judgements of value, choices, decisions. It is~~
affective and volitional. Its strength and weakness ~~it~~
are
~~is~~ illustrated by Peter's protestation at the Last Supper
that he would sooner die than deny his Lord. The second
stage is effective: total dedication is revealed not only by
one's basic orientation but also by the whole of one's living.
It is symbolized by Peter's death as a ~~war~~ witness to Christ.

~~Moral conce conversion is a transformation from a~~
~~self-centered~~

Moral conversion changes the criterion of one's decisions
and choices from satisfactions to values. It is the recognition
that the pleasant, agreeable, satisfying may not be what
truly is good, and that the painful, disagreeable, self-
sacrificing may be what truly is good. It is not only
recognition but also decision to be guided by ~~value~~ value,
by what is not apparently but truly good. As religious
conversion, so also moral conversion has ~~the~~ two stages, ~~of~~
~~its~~ a first affective stage and a later effective stage.

~~Intellectual conversion discovers that there are distinct~~
~~criteria of reality and it sets about systematically elimination~~
~~eliminating the confusions and the myths that arise when~~
~~the different criteria of reality are ignored. In the world~~

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self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, reserves.
Interpreted differently in different religions now is the time
It is interpreted differently in different religious traditions
but, for the Christian, it is the love of God poured forth in
our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us. Ik In
such conversion two stages are to be distinguished. There is
the initial, affective, volitional stage. Its strength and
its weakness are illustrated by Peter's protestation at the
Last Supper that, while others might deny Christ, he at least
would not. The second stage is effective. Total dedication
is revealed not only by one's basic orientation, by what one
                                                      whole
wants to be, but more and more by the fabric of one's living.

Moral conversion changes the criterion of one's decisions
and choices from satisfactions to values and, thereby, it
breaks one loose from individual, group, and general bias
to ~~give~~ direct one's energies away from the apparent good and
to the truly good.

On the threefold bias, see Insight, pp. 218-242.

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self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, reserves.
It can be, as already remarked, just the under-tow of one's
existential consciousness somewhat unconsciously shaping one's
life, and it can develop and intensify to the extent that it
pulls one out of the world mediated by meaning into a mediated
immediacy reaching for the ultimate. Its interpretation
varies with religious knowledge. For Christians it is the
love of God poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit
who is given to us. Commonly a distinction is drawn
between conversion itself and its fruits. Conversion is
an inner change of the subject, a change, so to speak, of
base and center manifested for the most part in volitional
and affective activity. It can be followed by lapses and
prompt repentance. Its full fruit is attained only when
total dedication takes over not only one's intentions but
the whole fabric of one's living.

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and choices from satisfactions to values and, thereby, it
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to direct one's energies away from the apparent good and
to the truly good. This change in orientation is the
key feature of more conce conversion, but

Intellectual conversion is a radical clarification and, consequently, a thorough-going elimination of the confusions that arise when the clarification is lacking. The

tot the truly good. While this change in orientation is the
key feature of the conversion, still its significance will
depend on the quality and extent of one's have moral knowel-
knowledge. As has been seen, that presupposes an accurate
knowledge of human reality, a fineness of perception of human
values, and the ever advancing thrust of one's liberty
towards a fuller authenticity. Moral knowledge is the know-
ledge of morals had by the morally good man.

The moral and religious are distinct and, I believe,
solidary.

will argue that quantum theory cannot be about physical
reality; it deals not with objects as such but only with
relations between phenomena. The idealist will say that
that is true of all theories. The critical realist will
disagree with both: any verified hypothesis is probably true,
and what is probably true probably states what is so.

Again, what are historical facts? For the empiricist they
must have been out there and capable of having been looked at.
For the idealist they are
human constructions based on data recorded in documents.
For the critical realist they are
                                   true acts of meaning.
events in the world mediated by
Again, what is a myth? Over and above the psychological
and anthropological view of the matter, there is also the
reductionist: a myth is concerned with entities that lie

beyond an empiricist horizon, an historicist horizon, an
                       Similarly in other matters for philosophic issues
idealist or existentialist horizon.
are universal in scope and so
can be transposed into any other field.

They constantly are transposed into other fields:
                                        was
just as the flatness of the earth absolutely
evident to the flat-earthers, so a naive realism appears
                    It keeps cropping up to soon or he begins to
utterly unquestionable to visual Western man. To be   speak
liberated from that blunder in its roots and in its long
trail of implications is a conversion, the beginning of
a quite new manner of orientating one's mental
operations in the universe.

Intellectual, moral, and religious conversions are not
inseparable. But they are related as complementary modalities
of self-transcendence, so that any one is a dynamic disposition
to another, and to exclude any is to deprive the others of
a normal complement

When intellectual, moral, and religious conversions
all occur in the same subject, then moral conversion sublates
intellectual, and religious conversion sublates moral. Here,
by sublation I mean that the higher goes beyond the lower,
it introduces something new and distinct, puts everything
on a new basis yet, so far from interfering with the lower
or destroying it, includes it, preserves all its proper
features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller
realization. The possibility of such happy relationships

For * sublation (Aufhebung) in this sense, see Karl
Rahner, Hörer des Wortes, München, Kösel, 1963, p. 40.

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lies of course in the fact that the three conversions are
interconnected modalities of self-transcendence. Intellectual
conversion is to truth revealed to intentional self-transcendence.
Moral conversion is to value revealed to real self-transcendence.
~~Religious conversion is to holiness to the total and so other-worldly being-in-love to the ground of self-transcendence~~
                                                to
Religious conversion is the efficacious ground of real
self-transcendence, to a total be and so other-worldly
being-in-love.

                                                        new
pertain to this world. Holiness adds a dimension to the morally

good: it is other-worldly fulfilment, joy, peace, a personal and
loving
surrender to a personal and loving, however mysterious and

uncomprehended, God.

pertain to things of this world.   It is an opening out of
the finite to absolute value, a res onse of the frail originating
value that is man to the mysterious, unrevealed uncomprehended originating
value that is God.   Moral good and moral evil are transcended
by the religious categories of holiness and sinfulness

the originating value that is man to the originating value
that is God. In awe before that value, that holiness, all
human values both shrink and are intensified; they shrink
because they now are compared with what transcends them;
they are intensified for they now become part of the glory
of God.

aside as just talk, just ideology, just propaganda. The
really real is what you feel. Not only are such challenges
possible. Not only can they take many forms. Not only
can they begin with minute doses of doubt and gradually
and imperceptibly keep increasing. But also there is a
critical moment and, when it is reached, breakdown follows.
For civilization rests on an enormous structure of beliefs.

will tend to perpaetuate itself. Moreover, its courcse
need not be single and uniform. Different classes of society
or different age-groups can select different parts to be
eliminated, different mutilations to be effected, different
distortions to be provoked. Increasing dissolution is mar
matched by increasing divisions, incomprehension, suspicion,
distrust, hor hostility, violence, riotting now is the time
distrust, hostility. No longer is there just one form of
decline to be praised and defended as progress but many
opposed forms.