

Lonergan Workshop 1976 Q&A June 14-18

June 17 (TC 889 A and 889 B). The questions and some written responses by Lonergan can be found at www.bernardlonergan.com file 27910DTE070.

Question: Would you say something about changes of schemes of recurrence in relation to parochial and diocesan structures? What institutional implications regarding the good of order in the Church would you see arising from your chapter on communications in *Method*?

Lonergan: The first part of the question, using the words ‘schemes of recurrence,’ enlarges the issue enormously. I think it will be worth going into that, because if one does that, then the other questions can be answered much more simply.

Schemes of recurrence are first considered in *Insight* in chapter 4, as the notable elements in a universe in which order results from emergent probability, i.e., from the combination of both classical and statistical laws. Classical laws link events in successive interdependence. If A then B, if B then C, and so on up to X, if X then A, or any similar sort of thing in which you get a recurrence. Statistical laws yield schedules of probabilities, and such schedules have their conditions, which are fulfilled successively working forward from some initial state. If you have plasma, you will get hydrogen atoms, and so on, through all the atoms and compounds according to conditions and schedules of probabilities. If you have one, there is the probability of the next. And if you have long enough time and big enough numbers, eventually you will get the next, and so on: emergent probability. In chapter 4 there is only discussed process, but in chapter 8 this idea is expended to species, and particularly in living form.

Now, spontaneously evolving schemes of recurrence also characterize human living, but there a new element supervenes, namely, intelligence, which spots in a situation the potentiality for a scheme, implements this potentiality, modifies the situation by the implementation, and thereby may give rise to further insights, and so to the cyclic recurrent process named progress. In human living, not only are there schemes of recurrence that emerge spontaneously, but also the possibility of schemes of recurrence that do not emerge spontaneously can emerge by contrivance, by institutions of any and every description, where you understand an institution as a commonly understood and accepted way of cooperating.

So you have in the human situation just the possibility of the scheme; you may have to bring in new things and change things as they are a bit, to get that scheme running. And if you do, and if it is running, either it is a good idea or merely a bright idea. If it is a good idea, it will keep on running, and if it is just a bright idea, it will be a flop, and people won’t be all behind you in starting another scheme. You don’t have to have many flops for that to happen. If it succeeds, it will probably change the situation sufficiently to give rise to still further ideas and further schemes, and they if implemented will give rise to still further possibilities and further insights and further schemes, and so on indefinitely. That is what is called progress, in the general case.

The most easily accessible example for us in the twentieth century of such a process has been the development of modern industrial society in its technological and economic aspects. It has all gone forward without overall planning. It has gone forward in accord with what Adam Smith two centuries ago 1776 in his *Wealth of Nations* called ‘the invisible hand.’ Schemes lead to schemes lead to schemes, and so on, and they keep on being improved, and dropping out ones

that are not working and so on, and fitting together, and higher integrations emerge, and so on. But what Adam Smith was talking about fundamentally was this progress that is emergence of schemes of recurrence, through the intervention of human intelligence, human decision, human cooperation. Every machine is a scheme of recurrence. An automobile doesn't take you on just one trip. It takes you on as many trips as long as the motor car lasts and you have oil and gas and so on. Again, every firm is a scheme of recurrence. It keeps on turning out shoes or ice-cream cones or whatever you please. Firms are also schemes of recurrence. They combine people with machines. Every such scheme of recurrence can be improved by further insights, remodeled by further insights, superseded by more comprehensive schemes, and so on. Moreover, essential to such development is the absence of the overall plan. The possibility of the insights is the man on the spot. You can get an insight into improving a machine or a way of doing things, if you are doing the work, not if you are at the head office. Insight is into the concrete. It is understanding something about it that is wrong and something that could be done to improve it. It is intelligence and imagination working together, imagination in contact with the sensible data. The possibility of the insights lies with the man on the spot, the man doing or running the job, of his ideas being put into practice and improved by sets of trial and error. Planning can reproduce in a backward country the achievements of a more developed country. But the plan contains no more and no better ideas than the planners in the national head office for planning. And there is nobody there that can improve on those ideas because they are not in contact with the concrete situation. The ideas come from below upwards. When the plan does not work or works poorly, the planners are not on the spot to grasp the possibility of the need for better methods, procedures, and so on. And if the plan isn't working, the first thing they will say is not that they must have had a bum idea. No, it is probably that people aren't carrying out what I've said. There is considerable resistance to changing the plan on all the levels going up. Because on the way up people don't want to stick their heads out, the next level up mightn't get the idea, or think it a good one, and so on. You have to convince all the people all the way up; you can't let anyone come to the head office and put whatever ideas they have. They have to come up through the hierarchy and the people shoving them up have to be willing to take the risk of being thought of as trouble-makers and not appreciating the intelligence and wisdom of the planners. Because the planners are not on the spot, insight does not develop with respect to plans that fail or do poorly; it develops with respect to concrete situations and in minds operating in the situation and seeing what exactly is going on and what can be done about it.

So much for the illustration of emergent probability in human affairs, in the very homely matter of technology and economics. Now, there are seven topics for your consideration:

Free enterprise is good because it is decentralized. It is decentralized in the measure that all insights that arise on the spot can be put into effect, tried out, and if successful retained.

[Second,] higher integrations are also the fruit of insights, but they have to be the work of people familiar and ongoingly familiar with the lower schemes that are being integrated. You can't do a good job of integrating if you don't know what is to be integrated. You need that contact with the concrete.

[Third,] free enterprise, accordingly, is something distinct from the guidance of the profit motive. The significance of the profit motive is that it provides motivation for egoists, but that is not pure gain, for egoism is a source of bias, and bias is the source of decline. On the other hand, emergent probability is a quite general process that brings together in the single stream of the universe the emergence of atoms, compounds, vegetable and animal species, spontaneous human

developments, and the developments that suppose the conscious entry of human intelligence in recognizing the possibility of further schemes and bringing their existence into effect. That is three reflections on free enterprise, decentralization.

[Fourth,] now, the modernity of the modern world to a notable extent resides in its rapid accumulation of new schemes of recurrence in the fields of technology and economics, with consequent adaptations in the realms of the family and mores, the society and education, the state and the law, the church and the sects, and with further adaptations in the realm of culture that provides the legitimation and motivation of the social arrangements and procedures. In other words, this flow of new ideas being put into effect has been a big determinant in modernity.

[Fifth,] contrasting with this modern state of affairs was the prior state which goes back to the discovery of the ox and the plough, of large-scale agriculture, the plough instead of the hoe; of the temple states: the land had to belong to a god if people were to respect land that had been planted and sown and cultivated, and so on, and not to treat it the way hunters would treat any land they go over. Of the unification of the temple states and the empires of Egypt and Mesopotamia and Crete, of the later empires of Alexander and Rome and the emergence after the decline and fall of Rome of the feudal orders of medieval Europe. Then society was static; innovations added to the convenience of the normative life but did not transform society. And culture was classicist, with its preaching of a perennial philosophy, its appreciation of its immortal works of art, its commitment to the wisdom and prudence of mankind enshrined in its social arrangements and its laws.

Sixth, the tension in the church today is the conflict between feudal elements in its structures and classicist elements in its thought, on the one hand, and on the other the conditions of the possibility of fruitful change. These conditions are decentralization. The freedom of the man on the spot to be intelligent in a practical way, the emergence of higher integrations from below upwards, otherwise it will not integrate what is emerging below, which constitutes the promise of the future.

Seventhly, and finally, there is a grave danger in this decentralization, in this process of renewal from below, namely, the failure to distinguish between mere bright ideas – mere bright ideas are sufficient to launch bandwagons, that provide for a few months or years the opportunities for opportunists to be big shots, but that's all there is to them – and on the other hand genuine insights into the real possibilities of the situation, the signs of the times, and so on, and hence the importance of discernment. The discernment has to be spiritual and religious, religious conversion – not just the conversion but the ongoing development of the spiritual life – and moral conversion, the elimination of bias, in principle and more and more in practice. Above all it has to be intelligent, because it is through intelligence that you get the developing schemes of recurrence and understand what can be done. If you brush that aside, you can be just as moral and just as spiritual in a medieval monastery, but that won't help the modern world or the modern church. The discernment has to be intelligent, and the intelligence has to be ready to be corrected, qualified, modified, developed by further intelligence that comes out of others' heads, not one's own. The essence of emergent probability in human history is insight into situations, and insight is an operation of intelligence.

So much for the first part of the first question. The second part: 'What institutional implications regarding the good of order in the church would you see arising from your chapter on communications in *Method*?'

Well, above all a cultural change, the weakening of rigid centralization. You always have to ask somebody above all along the line. Cultural change, then, a weakening of the feudal conception of order, and the fixed conceptions, ideas, attitudes of classicist culture, into a contemporary dynamism in arrangements and thinking; so that cultural change. Then with regard to operations, a double action, a scissors-like action, from above downwards and from below upwards, as in all empirical method. Modern science has progressed not only because it observes, experiments, and measures and counts, and so on. That could go on indefinitely, and accumulate all sorts of bits of information, without ever giving you any science whatever. It is insofar as that empirical work intersects with the use of mathematical ideas – mathematics is the exploration of possible ways of correlating data – it is insofar as, from Galileo on, science became the mathematization of nature, understanding nature not in terms of Aristotle's metaphysics but in terms of mathematics verified in experiment, that you have that development, the scissors-like operation from above downwards and from below upwards. From above downwards, theology becomes interdisciplinary, learning from and exerting influence on other human disciplines. That interdisciplinary aspect of philosophy replaces the Aristotelian hierarchy of the sciences, in which theology was the queen of the sciences. Well, it has no allegiance at the present time, but it has a possibility, if it becomes methodical, of becoming interdisciplinary, of having a built-in capacity to learn from other sciences, and insofar as it learns from them also exerting some influence at least upon people that accept your religion. So that interdisciplinary aspect, from above downwards; and from below upwards, innovation at the grass roots, leading to innovation in the higher integrations. In other words, the higher integrations are integrations of what is below, and it is below where the basic innovations occur.

Question: Given the history of the American Church and the imperialism of the practitioner and the strength of general bias, what suggestions would you have for people who are trying to bring theological reflection to bear in that situation?

Lonergan: I don't think you should look to theology for recipes. A method is not a recipe. A recipe tells you how to do something correctly so that your cake will always be a good cake, it won't fall and some of the disasters that occur when people are baking cakes. And in 'new method laundry' the clothes are always nice and clean, it always has the same effect. Theology, insofar as it is going to influence practice, hasn't got the job of devising the schemes of recurrence, the way of getting the same good effect over and over and over again. That is what the scheme of recurrence does, and it is up to the man on the spot to discover what schemes of recurrence work and how you can improve the ones we have. And you always start off from what you have. But theological reflection operates in a number of different ways. On the personal level, it enlarges one's prayer and one's study. On the level of teaching, from catechetics to the university, theology can impinge all along the line. On the interdisciplinary level, theology is one of the sciences learning from them and contributing to them. And on the level of practical discernment, which grasps first that progress is from concrete intelligence, intelligence with regard to the concrete situation, that the avoidance of decline is from moral conversion, and that recovery from the effects of decline is through the law of the cross. That last is on the level of discernment.

Question: Why is there so much difficulty in relating the first seven specialties to the eighth? In what forum will the critical dialogue among theology, the sciences, and pastoral leadership take place?

Lonergan: I think the main difficulty in connecting the eighth to the first seven is that the first seven are, people will say, well, we know all that, it doesn't change anything, it is what we have been doing all along. But the trouble with the eighth is that it makes unmistakable that what is going on is a new ballgame. And a new ballgame is hard to put across, to do anything about. Method in theology breaks from Greek and medieval thought, from the Aristotelian hierarchy of the sciences, from the feudal notion of sound social arrangements, from the classicist notion of culture, and that is all along the line. Its idea of science is from modern science, its idea of human studies is from the *Geisteswissenschaften*, the German Historical School, and it brings in, it doesn't evade, judgments of value – versus 'anyone that follows right reason will agree with this' – and so on. It acknowledges the existence that the age of innocence is over, and what is needed at the root of theology and everything else are intellectual, moral, and religious conversion.

'In what forum will the critical dialogue take place?' Well, if you want a concrete answer I suggest perhaps Fr Mulligan's successor institutions to replace the seminaries, which you heard about this morning in his paper, a locus in which the questions of the present time ... The seminary was simply a preparation for the priesthood. A successor institution would be a matter not merely of that but of ongoing education and ongoing collaboration.

Question: How or at what point do the data of pastoral experience enter into the theological enterprise?

Lonergan: Well, they enter in as the feedback from pastoral experience to the innovators on the spot; they learn from their pastoral experience whether their ideas are working or not, and how to handle them and overcome the difficulties: from the innovations to the proximate higher integrations, from the policy making of the higher integrations and to the planning of the higher integrations. The higher integrations set up policies with regard to all it is integrating; and planning, it sets up planning and orders things. The feedback will help to modify the policies and planning that they were doing. Pastoral experience in a further sense enters into the theology through sociological studies, psychological studies, historical studies, and so on. That is the whole historical side of theology, and theologians are learning from that in all different ways.

Question: If theology continues to be done within the institutional matrix of the university (given the Enlightenment presupposition of that matrix), how will a university-based theology seriously and correctly involve itself in praxis within the ongoing process of self-constitution that is the church?

Lonergan: Well, first of all by doing first-class theology. Catholic theology in the twentieth century would have been nowhere without the Catholic faculties in the German universities and without the Institut Catholique in France, without one or two universities such as Louvain in Belgium and the University ... in North Italy. It was the professors in those places that gave the

twentieth-century Catholic theology its existence. Without them, we would still be using manuals from 1850, and you have no idea what that means.

So by doing first-class theology, by its contact with religious studies to inform its ecumenism and its relations with non-Christian religions, by its self-understanding as interdisciplinary, and so by its conception of itself as something in relation with, as part of the circle of learning. There's a theorem to Newman's *Idea of the University*, that is, that if some part of the culture is neglected by the university, then the circle of learning will first of all be mutilated. Secondly, that mutilation will leave the remaining disciplines to try to make up for its absence, to extend their boundaries and try to cover the whole area, the whole demand. And when the whole is mutilated, then the parts are distorted. And finally, that part of the culture remains unknown to the community as cultivated, people just don't know about it, it passes out of existence, it becomes a forgotten art like staining glass. And finally, the interdependence of theology with other human fields, and the scientific community generally. It is something that a religion can forget about. The priests in the Greek Church are farmers, they cultivate their farms six days a week and then conduct the liturgy on the Sunday. Theology still exists, but it is taught by laymen in the universities. But our traditions don't want to conceive their priesthood in that fashion. If you want to opt for the change, OK, but know what you're doing.

Question: If praxis is the art of living, a guide to the creation of the future, is psychic conversion a necessary constituent of authentic praxis?

Lonergan: Well, psychic conversion as I understand it is the sufficient flow of communication between organism and mind and heart. And such a sufficient flow is needed. When is it needed? Well, one can make up one's mind for oneself or other people can make up your mind for you. To make up your mind for yourself ... having difficulties, and most people have no difficulty in running off to psychiatrists these days; more important there is who helps you do the psychic integration. Other people deciding for you: there are obvious cases, for example, having psychological tests prior to admitting people to religion or to a seminary has not always worked perfectly. In one province they decided to introduce psychological tests before entry into the novitiate, and the Provincial said, If it saves us one nut, it will be worthwhile; but after they had finished novitiate and started their studies, the consensus of the professors was that all the people doing studies were middle of the roaders. There were no nuts, but there were no geniuses either. So one can't go all out for helping people psychologically. They may be better off the way they are. However, it is a matter of prudence.

Question: What influence do you see psychic conversion having on doctrines, systematics, and communications?

Lonergan: Well, it may cut down a bit on the people who waste an enormous amount of time on mistaken efforts to improve doctrines and start up new systems in theology. More people are apt to feel they can do it than can actually succeed, and perhaps there is a certain psychological imbalance that gives that idea. Again, it enhances a person's capacity to communicate to others what he really knows and feels. If he can't communicate between organism and mind and heart in himself, then there will be something odd about his efforts to communicate with others. More

generally, it improves his interpersonal relations and his interpersonal activities. You know when you are dealing with an oddball after a while.

Question: Could you give some indication of the sublation of your systematics of the Trinity into praxis?

Lonergan: I wouldn't speak about it that way exactly. I'd say that systematics enters into praxis in two ways. First of all, inasmuch as it frees the preacher or the teacher or the instructor or the counselor from the necessity of choosing between two horns of a dilemma. Either he repeats the formula without understanding what it means, or else he passes off as Christian doctrine something that is not Christian doctrine. It provides the preacher or teacher with an understanding of the doctrine that he can express accurately in countless manners. People repeated the formula about the supernatural till they were blue in the face, and no one wanted to hear the word again. And part of the problem was that the notion of the supernatural had been pretty badly mauled in the course of, not development, but decline.

So the function of systematics is to know exactly what you are up against, what you are dealing with, why people say that, to have command of the language of the formula. If you master the meaning of the formula thoroughly, then you are able to talk it, you are able to say it in your own words. You are able to change what you are saying when the person looks puzzled and say it differently, or try another tack; you can think up all sorts of illustrations and know just how much they are to the point and what's relevant and where they might be misleading. You have a control over the whole process of teaching. Any teacher, insofar as he understands what he is saying, has something to communicate at least. You need a command of language and other gifts and so on if you are effectively going to teach, but the fundamental requirement in teaching is knowing what you have to say, what you have to communicate. Without systematics you don't know. You can repeat the formula, the Son is consubstantial with the Father, and the Holy Ghost is consubstantial with the Father and the Son, and so on, but that is as far as you get. Another thing is that successful preaching largely is a matter of keeping the formulae out of your talk. If you preach on the hypostatic union, people might think you are talking about something else.

Question: In relation to the Tuesday discussion of philosophy and method, would you still consider defining philosophy as the pursuit of wisdom or the search for understanding?

Lonergan: Well, the word 'philosophy' etymologically means love of wisdom. But if you want a definition in the strict sense, then you don't use etymologies or ordinary language. The analysts have taught in the twentieth century that ordinary language does not define; it knows the meaning of the word, and it expresses the meaning of that word by saying whether the use of the word is opportune, apposite, and so on. If one can use the words correctly, appositely, then one knows their meaning. That is the meaning of words in ordinary language. When you move into a system, then you can define. The Athenians couldn't define courage, and they couldn't define temperance, and they couldn't define justice. Socrates was able to put them all in a box, and he did so in dialogue after dialogue on different topics, and it wasn't that the Athenians didn't know what the words meant; they knew perfectly well but with their apprehension of ordinary language. But two generations later, Aristotle defined all the virtues and all the vices. How did he do it? He introduced a system. He took the word *hexis* and gave it a meaning, a technical

meaning, what he meant by hexis every time he spoke about it. Then he distinguished two kinds of habit, the ontic habit and the operative habit. And he distinguished good operative habits and bad ones, and the virtues were the good operative habits and the vices were the bad ones. And where did the virtue lie in relation to the vice? It lies in the mean; you have the vice by defect and the vice by excess, and he went on to the particular virtues and vices, and wrote a book about them, all beautifully defined. But it presupposes a system. Now what system are you using when you are defining philosophy? If you mean by philosophy what was meant by philosophy in the history of philosophy, then I would say that the historian does not define but describes and narrates. He tells what this fellow said and that fellow said, and so on, and why he said so. If you mean some particular philosophy, then you get the definition from that particular philosopher you have in mind. But there is a classicist presupposition in the question, What is the definition of philosophy? Because the classicist recognizes only one philosophy, and the rest were mistakes. There's the perennial philosophy and that's it. And within that, everything can be defined. And there is one right definition for anything. Through the historical viewpoint there are a succession of definitions, and studying the subject is understanding what is meant by the successive definitions. I've no difficulty conceiving philosophy as the love of wisdom. I speak of the pure desire to know, and they are very much the same.

Question: Now that we recognize a fourfold structure of consciousness, is there a metaphysical element that corresponds to the fourth level as potency, form, and act correspond to the first three?

Lonergan: Potency, form, and act are isomorphic to experience, understanding, and judgment. But now we also have deliberation, evaluation, and decision on the fourth level. Is there a fourth metaphysical element corresponding to that fourth level? I'd say that judgments of fact and decision both regard act. Judgment of fact regards act as existing, as already existing or as certain to exist in the future, if you have certain knowledge of the future. But decision regards act as future and not yet existing, and divine foreknowledge would know whether it will exist or not. But that future act won't exist necessarily. You make the resolution today but may not fulfill it tomorrow.

Question: Granted the conversions and the ongoing studies in the history, psychology, etc., of religious experience, could a sublated version of chapter 19 of *Insight* be located in the third set of special theological categories of foundations?

Lonergan: Yes, certainly. My three lectures at Spokane, *Philosophy of God and Theology*, propose that natural theology for theological students, not for those who are studying philosophy with no probability of ever studying theology, but for theological students, be situated in the theology course. The reasons for that proposal are given in those lectures. Now, where would it come in the theology? Method in theology is not a method of teaching theology, it's the method of doing theology, of contributing to theology, of changing theology. But it is a matter of systematics; fundamentally it is systematics. But the basic concepts, the derivation of the basic concepts, occurs in foundations. Now, whether you put it in foundations or systematics, well, it's probably best in systematics, because it's a big job. In foundations, you just want to get the key things from which you get the rest.

889B, Questions from the floor

Question: Obviously if you want to have adequate categories of the love of God, etc., you have to have a fair little piece of *notio Dei* in foundations. Would you say something on that?

Lonergan: Well, to have a full account of it, yes. But if you are appealing to experience or encouraging people to discover the experience and telling them not to worry if they don't find it because introspective psychology is not easy and people with peak experiences don't know about it – but a general description suffices to separate the theologian, the theological enterprise, from other enterprises. It is not a matter of preferring intelligence to stupidity or distinguishing between the world mediated by meaning and the world of immediacy, or of preferring values to satisfactions, and so on. That is sufficient for foundations, I'm inclined to say. But heavens above, I'm not legislating

Question: In relation to the first question, the need for decentralization in order that the concrete insights on the spot can give rise to creative schemes of recurrence, could you say anything about what to do in relation to the global corporations and certain insights that theologians would be concerned with vis-à-vis mediating, reflecting upon the church's role vis-à-vis these corporations? I know that's a big question.

Lonergan: The fundamental step is the one initiated by John XXIII. His social encyclicals marked a great leap forward from the agrarian world to the industrial world. But Duquoc's criticism is the lack even in *Gaudium et Spes* of technical economic knowledge. That has to be had if you are going to talk about economic reality. Otherwise, you are going to do what Duquoc calls *moralization*: it's good to be good.

Question: Would you see the corporations, then, as being able to adequately handle this problem of decentralization?

Lonergan: What is relevant is a matter of issues that are being discussed in learned journals at the present time: the problem in the semi-developed countries in which you have two economies. When I was a boy there was an awful lot of work being done in the homes, and today you buy cans. For example, in the summer it was a matter of cooking and putting into jars various types of preserves, and so on, right through the season, one thing after another. The 'canned' industry didn't exist. People weren't entirely dependent on the monetary economy. People on farms do have a good deal of independence from the monetary economy, but not as much as people on farms once did. It was just their surplus that they traded for their odds and ends, and they would travel into the town only once a week. But it was a good deal of subsistence living and working. With the fuller development, the elimination of the corner grocer and all the rest of it, that shifts. A man described his mother's cousins, in Detroit, who worked on the assembly line – when they became too tired for that, they started up small tool shops, and they worked their own times according to their own hours, when they got tired they would stop and all the rest of it. They gave their sons college educations, and what were their sons doing? Well, they were also working on the assembly line and spending their free time watching TV and going to baseball

games. Why didn't they have these other side interests that their fathers had? Well, because all these opportunities for small enterprise had vanished. The small shop had given way to the supermarket, and so on all along the line. In the developing countries part of the economy is the old style thing; it is not in the industrial economy, but the industrial economy can be very rich in drawing people off the farms and the countryside into the city but not finding jobs for all of them. And if people in the country start preferring to move into the city, just on the hope of getting a job, and being in the city and having a hope of getting a job is better than the rather dull life in the country, in their estimation. This sort of problem is being discussed, and it is not going to be solved by people who don't want to spend years at technical learning. If you are going to deal with a highly specialized society, you have to have expertise. Otherwise they just smile.

Question: It seems like the recognition is toward the fact that we live in a world, that we have to take seriously other nations, in terms of our own economics. Multinational corporations, on the one hand, seem to put us in touch with that, but on the other hand because it is perhaps from above downwards, it puts us out of touch with it. Do you see the multinational corporation as perhaps a paradox or is there an oversight?

Lonergan: The fundamental oversight is the maximization of profit. If that is your idea, then the problem is not that of the backward nations with regard to the advanced nations. The advanced nations are going to suffer just as much as the backward nations and more so, because you will get the work done more cheaply in the backward nations. I think I read somewhere that the United States no longer produces electronic equipment. It now comes from Japan and Taiwan and Hong Kong, because people work for far less there. Of course, in Hong Kong you pay far less taxes. As it was pointed out, while New York isn't able to assimilate the people who have poured into New York, it's nothing like what poured into Hong Kong. It went from 500,000 to four or five million in a very short time. Nobody is starving. Everyone has work. There is no law about children going to school. All the children are in school. There is no truancy. All want to learn. It is not a welfare state. The welfare state reduces real wages.

Question: You spoke of imagination in contact with sensible data, and one doing a poor job of integration without a clear insight into the data. Could you speak on the lack of imagination and integration in Janov's primal therapy and how these various therapies have affected our contemporary consciousness of evil?

Lonergan: Well, all I can tell you is with regard to Janov. What I was told he did – I don't know if it is true or not but it is reported – that he enabled people to regress, he brought them right back to infancy, they were all lying on the floor howling, and he had a large number of assistants, about sixteen, who left him in the hope of bringing these people forward from infancy again. Well, whether that criticism is valid is not certain, but that's all I know about Janov. He was very interesting, and when he tried it on his own family he was quite successful. But then it wasn't a big business.

Question: I wonder if you could say something about groups who are working at understanding your method and groups that are working at implementing your method. Could you say something about that? You could spend your life reading *Method in Theology*. Then you could

spend your life doing specialized theology. Now, what do you think of people trying to implement your method and the other people just trying to understand the method?

Lonergan: Well, the point to the method is to change the ideas on which people think theological cooperation goes on. I taught theology for twenty-five years in Latin, usually with professors at the start older than myself, and in the last twelve years in Rome there were about fifty professors in the theology department, and the presuppositions of what it is to teach theology and to know theology and to pass people in exams in theology and so on are not going to be settled by any professors. They are what everyone else had learned when they were students. The idea of writing *Method in Theology*, the fundamental idea, is to work towards, to make a contribution to the possibility of setting up a different approach, different criteria, and so on and so forth: how things relate and changing what the students are apt to take for granted. The first block I discovered: I was interested in systematic theology at that time. The question was, Is it certain? It is never certain. The best you can say is that it is probable. But it is worthwhile to have some grasp of the meaning of a doctrine, the point to it, but if you wanted to know which of the parts were certain, you are just eliminating the possibility of doing systematics. Inversely, of course, if you were trying to teach, say, just what the doctrine of the Church is on a certain point, well, there you can say whether it's certain or whatever. But people then want to know, What does it mean? How do you explain it to the people? My first distinction was between doctrines and systematics. When I started writing a book on Doctrines, well, I had to get a distinction between that and positive theology, and gradually I worked up to eight functional specialties. It is eight different things that you do, differently. You have to know the differences, otherwise you will be all mixed up in doing any one. And if you are interested in some one, well, you'll have an imperialistic tendency to make it the only one worth bothering about. The others are relatively unimportant because they are not what you know is the real significance of theology. And so on and so forth. It is a matter of balance, of knowing the differences, of assimilating systematically in theology the question. Well, if you have spent years studying the history of doctrines, you'll soon find out in a practical sort of way. What I tried to do in *Method in Theology* was to figure out what exactly goes on in a critical historian's mind when he is doing critical history, so as to know what to expect and what will be absent if you didn't think it was critical history, and so forth: to have your ideas clear on something that has entered recently into Catholic theology.

Question: Well, are there examples of this new specialized theology that would come out of your method?

Lonergan: Well, a lot of it is just putting together various elements that have been existing and coming into theology for the past hundred years. Have you ever seen the text, *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, a work in sixteen or seventeen volumes? They started off about 1906 and finished it in a hurry after the Second World War about 1947. Compare the articles at the start and the articles at the end. They are written in entirely different ways, with entirely different interests, with entirely different criteria. The articles are becoming more and more historical in their approach the whole way through, and they find dodges for cutting down on the old-style theology. They had two articles, one on St Thomas d'Aquin and the other on Thomisme. And of course Thomisme was written by Garrigou-Lagrange and St Thomas d'Aquin was written by historical specialists. They put in two. The earlier parts are all the Thomisme style of article or

tending that way. There is a transition going on there in the course of forty years, in the way theology was done in France. And that work influenced theology throughout the rest of the Catholic world ... That work in large part has been done, that style of work, but there did not exist an integration, a rationale; they spoke of the auxiliary disciplines. The theologian had no command over these auxiliary disciplines, and to know what they were they had to be a practitioner in them, and you couldn't be a practitioner in all of them, so people taught their classes and left it to the students to put things together.