Lonergan Workshop 1976 Q&A June 14-18

June 18 (TC 891 A and 891 B). The questions and some written responses by Lonergan can be found at www.bernardlonergan.com file 27920DTE070.

Question: Would you comment on your change of view regarding generalized empirical method? (From the question sheet – recording began a bit late.)

Lonergan: … mathematics and natural science, chapters 1 to 5, are found to consist in cyclic and cumulative repetition of a pattern of dynamically related functions, operations. In natural science, this pattern is applied to the data of sense. In generalized empirical method, the same pattern is applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the data of consciousness. In both, there is experience, understanding, and judgment, but in natural science one operates with respect to the data of sensitive experience, while in penetrating into the 'black box' one operates on the data of consciousness.

Now, the same structure occurs in human studies, and especially in the basic human studies of hermeneutics and history, in which at once you envisage the data of sense and the underlying data of consciousness. The man who talks isn't merely making sound waves. He is also expressing his understanding and his judgment. So the more you know about the 'black box,' the more you know about what is behind the talk besides sound.

But there is a further element involved, judgments of value, and indeed the judgments of value both of the men and women being studied and the assumptions concerning values in the men and women doing the studying. It gives you a situation like in quantum mechanics where the instruments of observation change the data to be observed. Only it is not exactly the same. In this case, you have judgments of value of the people being studied and judgments of value of the people doing the studying. And when there is a conflict between the values of the man doing the studying and the man that is being studied, well, the man that is being studied is apt to get a rough ride, and so on. Well, there is that problem.

In *Insight* this further element is taken into account from a psychological point of view inasmuch as a distinction is drawn between rational consciousness, third level, and rational self-consciousness, fourth level. But this further level is not taken into account inasmuch as the good is conceived not psychologically but metaphysically, as the intelligible in act. The good is that from a divine viewpoint within the intellectualist tradition, but it is something quite distinct inasmuch as its emergence in man involves totally different operations with regard to the true, the past intelligible in act, and with regard to the human good, the perhaps future intelligible in act. It is because of those differences that you get a distinction between the good and the true. An account of the good simply in terms of the intelligibility in act is not the human part of the story.

The foregoing is a change of view that separates *Method in Theology* from *Insight*. It is a substantial change, becoming systematic and much more explicit about the good, and particularly the human good; besides the change of view there has been at least for a while a change of terminology, inasmuch as I speak of transcendental method rather than generalized empirical method. But this change of terminology is not altogether happy, since one is most apt to think in terms of Kant's 'transcendental,' which is the logical condition of the possibility of a priori knowledge qua a priori. Both in Maréchal and in Rahner as represented by Coreth, there is a similar notion of 'transcendental,' which logically concludes, however, not to logical but to real

conditions. Husserl, however, has given rise to a further and distinct notion of the transcendental, namely, that one does not treat of objects without adverting to the operations of the subject, and one does not treat of the operations without adverting to the appropriate objects. You find that view of the transcendental in people like Simon. It is this notion of transcendental that is relevant to understanding my talk about transcendental method, namely, not merely talk about the object but talk of the operations by which you apprehend the objects and set up the heuristic structures for the investigation of them and so on.

This connection with Husserl is not to be taken to imply that my account of the subject and the subject's operations coincides with Husserl's account. One can go from Husserl to Sartre's denial of any reality to the subject; the *pour soi* is not an *en soi*. And there is a certain obscurity about the subject in Husserl that gives Sartre his opportunity. But one cannot go from my one multiply differentiated subject with his many levels of diverse yet related operations to a denial of the subject. The subject is rather solidly entrenched in the operators moving operations from one level to the next, bringing together totally different operations with respect to the same object, totally different operations in virtue of differentiations of consciousness.

So much for that first question on generalized empirical method, what precisely it means, illustrated mainly by the difference between *Method in Theology* and *Insight*. And then a note on terminology with regard to 'transcendental.'

Question: Would you relate generalized empirical method to the functional specialties and praxis?

Lonergan: One reaches the functional specialties and praxis only by moving beyond the generalized empirical method of *Insight* to the successive sublations of sense and consciousness by intelligence, of intelligence by reasonableness, of reasonableness by responsible freedom, and of all by being in love: that series of sublations. When you get that set, the full set not just the first three.

This moving beyond, however, only supplies the terms for describing and talking about functional specialties and praxis. The realities that one speaks of come to light only through a prolonged struggle with the complexity introduced into Catholic theology inasmuch as doctrinal and systematic theology, which formerly had immediate access to scripture and tradition, latterly find themselves separated from scripture and tradition by mountains of exegetical and historical investigation. It is never finished; it is ongoing. What's the theologian to do? One thing is to keep on doing doctrinal and systematic theology in the former fashion in the hope that the new studies will go away or be brushed aside effectively by apologetics, or be overcome by exegetes and historians coming to agree precisely with what the doctrinal and systematic theologians are saying. And that is a hopeless situation.

Secondly, one may give up on doctrinal and systematic theology and become simply an exegete or simply a historian. 'This is what John means, and what more to you want?' 'It's the word of God'; and so on. And then if one practices these disciplines properly, one will find that one cannot account for the emergence of the dogmas. One cannot because the exegete and the historian as such have not the philosophic and theological equipment necessary to distinguish differentiations of human consciousness, to justify their emergence, and to account for the dogmas by such differentiations. You move into a different world when you move from the gospels and Christian writing in the same style as the gospels for undifferentiated consciousness

into the dogmas; you are in an entirely different world. The result is that Christian theology gives up on the dogmas, tries putting something more intelligible in their place, and so on and so forth. And we have a lot of that at the present time, the problem of the dogmas, which is a great concern with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and certain more conservative bishops who find their seminaries teaching nothing at all, and so on.

Or thirdly, one acknowledges differentiations of consciousness, one comes across functional specialties, the end of the age of innocence, and the ultimate key role of praxis. The functional specialties consist in specializing on the objective of a given level. In any functional specialty you are using experience, understanding, judgment, and decision, value judgments, valuations: in every one. But you can be stressing one of the four. The textual critic is out to determine what was the original text. What is the set of data to be understood by the interpreter? He does a mountain of work. If you ever read a prolegomenon to a good edition of the Greek New Testament, you get an account of all the families that have been studied to build up these texts, and so on. And it is all a matter of trying to settle what are the data to be interpreted. And of course, if it's done, people give speculative solutions to difficulties …

So again, one can specialize in the question, What does it mean? What does the text mean? That is the functional specialty of the exegete. One can specialize on the relation between successive meanings, and then you are moving into a history of doctrines or a history of systematics, and so on. Or one can be disturbed by the fact that not all the historians agree with one another. They all practice the same method, and yet they get different results, and that doesn't happen in the natural sciences. And the same for the exegetes. They practice the same method, but don't get the same results. They needn't.

Question: In what way is an insider's knowledge of science relevant to the work of a contemporary theologian?

Lonergan: Well, with respect to knowledge of science, distinguish knowledge of science in a technical fashion of one who can do science by repeating in his own development what already is known and by advancing upon that prior acquisition. That is knowledge of science in the sense in which one is the scientist; one is the mathematician; and so on. But there is also knowledge of science in an exact but schematic fashion. It doesn't attempt to be technically competent at solving differential equations and proving that infinite series converge and all the rest of it … But you can grasp at the rudiments in calculus and analytic geometry, and so on, and are able to read with profit a book like Lindsay and Margenau's *Foundations of Physics*. And there you can get an understanding of what the scientist is up to and what he is talking about. You are not going to be prepared to argue with him about anything, but you can profit by what he is doing and perhaps talk a bit in a way that he'll understand what you are saying.

Besides the aspect of dialogue, some grasp of mathematics and science is important for really knowing what's going on in your own 'black box.' It is a part of intelligence, and there are techniques to mathematics that provide better illustrations of analogy, like taking the limit, than most efforts to try and talk about it. Again, the sciences themselves can provide analogies for an understanding of a part of nature, and it is thought that we can get analogies to the mysteries from nature, and scientific knowledge is knowledge of nature.

Question: Early social encyclicals always spoke in terms of the common good. In a commentary on *Mater et Magistra* John Courtney Murray praised the fact that for the first time the ethical view of the common good was dropped and replaced by the new liberal view of the common good. How would your description of the common good, as the form of society, relate to this question?

Lonergan: I'm not sure. However, my idea of the common good is a conception of human interdependence in terms of the emergent probability of schemes of recurrence. I am not aware that moralists or liberals or the social encyclicals formulated such a view. I should say that the later encyclicals come closer than the earlier, but that is mostly surmise. And I haven't got John Courtney Murray's statement on the issue, so I can't very well discuss that.

Question: Does a change in economic structures not imply a basic shift in patterns of education? In what way will they intermesh?

Lonergan: Well, to talk about changing economic structures is rather vague. I don't really know what they are proposing to do except no doubt do great things. But what I am interested in is formulating economic morality, and this, I think, is a very novel project, because it is beyond the comprehension of moralists who commonly do not fancy that there is any relevance of economic analysis to economic morality; and the comprehension of economists who conceive their science not as an instrument that they put at the disposal of human freedom but as a means of predicting what men will do, whether or not they are free – that is totally irrelevant. You can handle the facts statistically.

If you require a shift in the basic patterns in education, inasmuch as education for a moral economic order will have be an education towards intellectual, moral, and religious conversion, now that type of education is not a novelty but it has fallen into disuse and decay to a certain extent, and that is the shift that is required, and it is an awful shift.

So how do they intermesh? That people will be willing to do what's right, that's all. That's all you have to do, to learn what's right and be willing to do it. Imagine how the media would handle that. Well, there is no doubt there's a lot to be done in the way of education, but it is not obscure, unfortunately.

Question: The view you expressed yesterday regarding the relevance of insight on the spot leaves problematic the question of central directives in both Church and economy. Would you comment on this, please?

Lonergan: What becomes problematic is not central directives but certain types of central directives. If central directives rest on classicist assumptions, namely, human nature is ever the same, human affairs may differ accidentally but substantially they are always the same, and on abstract principles that prescind from concrete circumstance, then obviously they are most unlikely to prove helpful in social development via the implementation of the schemes of recurrence made possible by emergent probability, because that is entirely in terms of the concrete and of things not being always the same. It's just insofar as they can be cumulatively different. But there is no necessity for central directives being based on classicist assumptions and abstract principles. They can be based on feedback from the concrete to the next level of

integration and from that level of integration leading to cooperation on a broader field to a higher level of integration and so on to the source of central directives. And the central directives can be relevant to the integration immediately proximate. They will be able to help the central directive find out whether or not the central directive is to the point, or just more nonsense. And so on down the line. You can have an interaction of intelligent people.

In Galbraith's *Modern Industrial State*, at length he ? the idea that there is one man running the whole show. What's running the show is not one man but constant consultation between four or five hundred experts of different aspects of the enterprise, each one sizing up the expertise of the people he is talking with and weighting his opinions accordingly, and so on. And a consensus develops out of that. That is a way in which things can have a unitary direction and control and yet be in intelligent relation with the task to be done. And able even at times not merely to dodge improvements, and have members of the oligopoly agree to keep certain things off the market, we really don't want that yet, but also really solve problems and get on with proper business. The whole business of this question is conceiving central directives. If you conceive them as a conceptualist must who never pays any attention to intelligence, well, they are going to be awful. But if you bring intelligence into play, and each person exercising his intelligence on his job and his department where he has a say, this is the feedback from below being not regarded as an intrusion or a slight upon authority but a necessity for the fellow higher up if he is going to do his job. Those are little things that make central directives possible without being unhelpful.

Question: A contemporary social ethics would seem to require a philosophy of history. In your view, what is a philosophy of history, and how is it connected with social ethics?

Lonergan: I conceive a philosophy of history as a general social dynamics in which progress results inasmuch as situations lead to insights, insights to new courses of action, new courses of action to changed situations, and changed situations to new insights. There is a permanent scheme of recurrence. You are dealing with the schemes of recurrence that emerge from emergent probability. And if you are implementing all the schemes of recurrence that keep coming to the fore as the previous insights are implemented, well, you have an ongoing increase in the use of intelligence and getting things done in a better way. That is one component in the dynamics, one thread; you can say it is like Newton's first law of motion. Bodies continue moving in a straight line at a uniform speed as long as no external force intervenes. What would happen if everyone always had good will?

Decline results from the monkey wrench of obtuseness, inattention, bias, compromise, suspicion, hatred, violence, as they distort this progressive process and produce objectively unintelligible and intractable situations. Where the application of intelligence to the situation improves the situation, the application of unintelligence in all of its forms makes the situation unintelligible, and an unintelligible situation is intractable; it is a social dump of all the bad ideas people wanted because they thought they'd be good for them, and all the blocking they did on the good ideas that would have prevented other evils from emerging. And that can go on for centuries till you get something terrible in the end. And what are you going to do about it? It is very hard to do much more than wring your hands, unless you introduce the power of religion. Recovery results from redemption, from God's gift of his love, of that love generating hope beyond hope to overcome the determinisms, and the eyes of love revealing the value of religious

belief. It is religious belief that will take one out of the mire of rationalizations, and hoping beyond hope will break economic and psychological and ethnic and so on determinisms. And it is love that will dispense with retributive justice, which would only duplicate the existing evils. What has that to do with social ethics? Well, that is what the game is about, that is what history is about. You needn't have progress, and situations can remain unchanged indefinitely. Civilizations can go to sleep for centuries with only minor decline. That's not the situation in the West.

Question: What is the relationship between symbols as disclosive and transformative and analogy? Is there a place for symbolic language within the functional specialty of systematics?

Lonergan: The basic relationship is between undifferentiated and differentiated consciousness. Eddington distinguished between two tables. One was hard and heavy and brown and solid. And the other consisted mostly of empty spaces with here and there something that was not always a wave and not always a particle: two quite different apprehensions of one and the same table. His janitor knew only about one table. And for Eddington to know about his second table, he had to be able to think on all the fancy stuff from modern mathematics and physics. He had to have an entirely different way of apprehending the universe. He had to belong to a society that usually had to use quite strange technical language that no one else except the group of physicists understood. He had to be able to talk that language and read the books written in it, and there was a whole community that had a second apprehension of the universe, an apprehension through a differentiation of consciousness.

In the field of religion, consciousness as undifferentiated thinks in symbols. As differentiated it seeks to formulate analogies. The analogies provide something similar, a way of handling the mysteries that, while not attempting to understand God as he is in himself, at least doesn't leave you with a complete blank. Consciousness as undifferentiated thinks in symbols, as differentiated it seeks to formulate analogies. Systematics is the activity of going from symbolic language to analogy and is fully aware of both types of thinking and is busy constructing the second type in a way that is equivalent to the first but is thinking of an entirely different sort, thinking that is logical.

I repeated somewhere from Susanne Langer an account of thought that is not simply governed by logic, but discourse that's governed to some extent by logic but also by feeling and imagination. An effective human communication is usually of that type. But what the systematic theologian is attempting to do is to think logically of what undifferentiated consciousness thinks of not logically but with an admixture of imagination and feeling.

Now, it's the undifferentiated consciousness that is the consciousness to be helped, to be preached to, to be instructed, and you have to use that language; but the trouble is that you speak it differently with different groups, different classes, different cultures, and so on. You have to have a pluralism of ways of communicating the gospel, if you are to preach the gospel to all nations. And how do you know you are preaching the same one? Well, you need the systematics to know what to say in any of the different languages.

Is there a place for symbolic language within the functional specialty systematics? It is what you move from and what you move back to, but it is not your concern.

Question: Generally, how would you envisage a contemporary systematics of Christology? Would it involve genetic or dialectic method?

Lonergan: Christology is a large subject. To be content with the basic components, consider just what is meant by the doctrines of Nicea – the Son is consubstantial with the Father; the doctrine of Ephesus – it is not somebody else that was born of the Virgin Mary and somebody else who was God from God, light from light, consubstantial with the Father; Chalcedon – one and the same, both God and man. Well, is God and man one and the same? Oh no, there is one person and two natures. What does that mean? Fundamentally, I think it is a matter of knowing precisely the different meanings in which you use the word 'one.' There is one on the level of experience, one more. The first car off the assembly line is one motor car. And the second, it's the same; the ideas are exactly the same; it's just more matter, it is one more, numerical difference. Or you can have one assembly line producing motor cars and another beside it producing motor bikes. You have different natures, different artificial forms, different intelligibilities. So besides difference from the viewpoint of mere experience, there also is difference from the viewpoint of intelligibility. So you can have one motor bike, but you don't get two from adding one motor bike to one motor car; what you get is two machines. And there is a third 'one,' one and the same. That is the one in judgment. In judgment you are applying the principles of identity and contradiction: this one and not any other, one and the same. It is that third 'one' that you are talking about when you say one person. And it is the second 'one' when you are talking about nature. That is an example of systematics: you're clarifying the meaning of 'one.' It is genetic method that is relevant to understanding the historical process to Nicea, Ephesus, Chalcedon. How on earth did that come about? The genesis of the ideas. And dialectic is relevant to understanding the opposing heresies and then the contemporary confusions and doubts.

Question: You speak about a 'startling strangeness' in connection with intellectual conversion. Would you comment about this?

Lonergan: Well, there is a period before we learn to talk. We have some surmise about the differences; we don't talk about what really is so and what isn't, but we are not entirely misled by pictures and so on. We have a sense of reality developed at that period, and then we learn to speak, and we're using new faculties, we're using intelligence, and we have an age of reason when you can distinguish between true and false and right and wrong. I remember Freddie Copleston once saying that he was beaten as a child for telling lies. He didn't believe now that it was lies he was telling, it was just grand stuff … being clear about true or false and so on (unclear). Well, there is this process of developing intelligence and developing judgment. You are bringing in new operations, you are entering a new world, a world mediated by meaning; you're using new criteria, the exigencies of intelligence and reasonableness. And you do it all spontaneously. It all comes naturally. You don't have to advert to it. Common sense develops spontaneously. And then perhaps you do philosophy and get asked questions about reality, and that's the moment very propitious for infantile regression. You go back to the sense of reality you developed before you could talk, and you want to empty out of the world mediated by meaning everything you couldn't experience as an infant. You remain an empiricist or a positivist or what not. And then you may start reading the idealists and discover in what sense they are idealists: they accept the empiricists' notions, their sense of reality, but they know that

that isn't the way you know. When human beings are knowing they are doing something entirely different. It is a matter of intelligence and judgment, and they stress especially the intelligence side, relations, the intelligible relations. And so you see there is something to be said for the idealists too. But when you go over and say it's the world mediated by meaning, that's really what I mean by the real world, and not what you know by your sense of reality; what counts is not the sure and firmset earth on which I great but the truth of your judgments. That can be startlingly strange if you take it really seriously. It can be called *veritas in solo iudicio*, and *ens et verum convertuntur*, and all the rest of it, but it doesn't have much impact. The proof that it doesn't have much impact is the centuries of disputation about the real distinction between essence and existence. There can't be a real distinction between essence and existence if knowing is taking a look. You can't take a look at an essence that doesn't exist. It is one and the same look that knows both, and so there is no real distinction. On the other hand, if you know reality by understanding and judgment and what you know by understanding is distinct from what you know by judgment, then you have the difference between essence and existence of some sort.

Is there a similar strangeness that is associated with moral and/or religious conversion? Well, it is entering a new world. It may be slow or it may have its startling moments. It can occur very suddenly. Like the story of a man who instructed a woman in Catholicism, and the evening before she was going to be baptized she said, 'I don't believe this, this, and this. This is nonsense.' And they went through everything. The next morning she came along and said she wanted to be baptized. There is something startlingly strange there. It is a shift.

Question: What would the 'black box' say about prayer?

Lonergan: It is what prayer would say about the 'black box!' In other words, prayer, religious experience, is further data on human consciousness. And that type of experience you can relate to other types of experience and the way they intermingle. Knowledge of the 'black box' gives you a set of basic terms to talk about when you talk about prayer. You talk about lights in prayer, well, they are insights. You can have a technical language that has a precise meaning, and so on.

Question (not on question sheet): Would you explain how intellectual conversion can save Barth from his fideism? In the light of your statement that faith is the knowledge born of religious love, how does your understanding of faith compare with Barth's?

Lonergan: It is not my understanding of faith that differs from Barth's, it is my relation between faith and intelligence and the use of intelligence with respect to religious beliefs. That is where the difference comes in. In both cases faith is the eye of religious love, but what does that imply? Well, you can be more thoroughly given to praxis than I am, and in that case you just want praxis, faith alone, *sola fides*. My position on praxis, of course, is different from earlier positions I was in and was led to adopt with regard to faith, but still it isn't in total coincidence with Barth, although my friend Henri Bouillard delighted Barth with his three volumes. Barth was delighted that someone wrote about him, not just to argue against him, but to say what … And there have been rapprochements between Barth and Catholic theologians.

Questions from the floor (891 B)

Question: Roman law and other forms of law – question inaudible.

Lonergan That's a problem. A friend of mind, Kevin Quinn, an Irishman was teaching in social studies in Rome, and he presented an account of the cooperative movement in England and the millions of pounds turned over annually, and how the cooperatives worked and all the details. He spoke at considerable length, several lectures, and finally the legal basis for all this was an act of Parliament on such and such a date to the effect: let there be non-profit organizations known as cooperatives, period. And all the students from South America and Portugal and Spain and Italy and France, were saying that's impossible. For them, there could be a handling of social problems only by assembling a group of legal experts and having them draw up a set of laws that envisaged all eventualities and provided for them. Once the great work had been done, the problem was solved. That is a place where education is needed. You have that difference in the law itself. The tendency to impose; the code does not admit reinterpretation in the way the judge makes laws, the common law. The present Attorney General has a small book on legal reasoning. And what is it? It's a matter of the judge taking the previous decisions, seeing how the case there differs from this one, and using his insight into the difference to modify the judgment and so set up another precedent. You have increasing intelligence of the human situation going along as successive judges handle successive cases. It has a flexibility which automatically adapts to new situations and new cases without going back to legislation. And you have a whole series of distinctions between different types of judicial decisions and different types of laws and all the rest of it. If by a central directive you understand something that is legally all established, that is a bit of what I would call classicism.

Question: Romans 5.5, etc. Does differentiated consciousness pray any differently from undifferentiated consciousness.

Lonergan: It certainly does when you become a mystic. You turn off all the images. Prayer can become a differentiation of consciousness. Differentiated consciousness: insofar as one becomes a theologian, one's prayer is not struggling with intellectual problems; you throw them aside. You have dealt with intellectual problems as a theologian, and your prayer is something entirely distinct from that. If you are not a theologian, you haven't got that differentiation; then your problems will be part and parcel of your issues in prayer or your blocks in prayer, and so on. Insofar as intellectual problems can be blocks in prayer, you eliminate them by doing theology. The relation between God's gift of his love and your prayer … it can take the form that you'd like to pray but you can't, or of your putting in the time and being faithful to prayer even though you don't get anything out of it, and it can take the form where things ease up a bit. It's a matter of one's spiritual life. God handles everyone (differently? – not clear).

Question: Can differentiated and undifferentiated consciousness pray together, for example, in the charismatic movement?

Lonergan: Well, undifferentiated consciousness might take to it more spontaneously. But I don't know.

Question: It's a question in the charismatic movement too, the relation between theology and holiness. Why not just stay with scripture? Why waste all our time studying theology? How would you answer something like that?

Lonergan: Well, the study of theology is not for everybody. It is a specialization. It is important to have some theologians, but it is ridiculous to want everyone to be a theologian, in the sense of the differentiation of consciousness.

Question: Everyone should know theology, right?

Lonergan: Everyone should know their catechism and their religion. Religion is one thing, and theology is another. Theology mediates between the culture and the religion. That is why we get different theologies in different places and times. The type of theology developed in the Middle Ages regarded the whole of Christian doctrine. That didn't exist in the Patristic period. John Damascene might be the beginning, but that was the very end of the Patristic period. But theology as a comprehensive study of all tradition was something that emerged in the Middle Ages. And modern theology is struggling with the new techniques of interpretation and history. Petavius, one of the first of the positive theologians, considered Justin Martyr to be a heretic. Why? Because Justin Martyr, writing about the year 140, did not think in accord with the Council of Nicea in 325. Historical mindedness did not exist at that time except here and there, and certainly not even among positive theologians. There is a book by Chadwick on Bossuet and Newman on the development of doctrine, and he says that for Bossuet St Paul didn't use the word homoousion, consubstantial, but he knew perfectly well what it meant. It is like the American going into a shop in London and wanting a pair of suspenders and knowing perfectly well what he means, but he isn't able to use the word that only the English use, namely, braces. He knows the reality, but he doesn't know the word. Likewise with St Paul and homoousion. There you have the situation in theology prior to the full development and acceptance of historical studies. There was no problem of the development of dogma because what's held now – either you were a Catholic and you held that what's held now was held by the apostles, or you were a Protestant and you considered that the dogmas, at least some of them, were due to priestly aberrations, and so on. Insofar as people start reading and finding difficulties and so on, then theology becomes helpful. If you want to know why this and why that, then you start doing theology, but that's because of problems they have arising out of their culture.

Question: Doesn't theology bring me closer to God apart from holiness?

Lonergan: It can. It depends on the kind of person you are. If you have highly differentiated consciousness in the sciences and in history and so on and have no theology, and if your religion is still at the same stage as it was when you were at elementary school, well, then you will start finding your religion rather childish. What you need is some theology to make it on the same level as the rest of your development. You have to keep things in balance.

Question: So you would say that there are not two ways to God, the way of knowledge and the way of virtue?

Lonergan: Oh no! There's one way. There is the cognitional element, eh? And even if you are a theologian you only go so far, and then you stop. You say I'll never be able to handle *that* question.

Question: With regard to the moral theologian and the economist, there has been something of a trend in the analysis of the world economy that says that sometimes the best thing we can do for other countries is to do absolutely nothing. Both from a Marxist point of view that says let the market develop internally, a kind of anti-colonial point of view, and secondly, from a viewpoint of dependence of a population that cannot be sustained for a population that increases, and so you don't do anything? That seems to give us the situation of science saying do nothing and the Club of Rome warning us not to follow our instincts, that what we want to do spontaneously won't work. What can the moral theologian do when science seems to go against our moral intuitions? To reject the results of science: is that a valid sort of praxis on the part of the moral theologian or moral person?

Lonergan: Well, does the moralist in that case admits that he is causing greater harm; that that's what he wants, moral instincts? And if he disagrees with the scientists, can he show them where they are wrong? Or is it because he doesn't know or doesn't want to work and study? In other words, there's the conflict. He wants to talk about something he doesn't know. He doesn't want to try and know.

Question: In public dialogue a lot of times science comes across as saying something like that with justification (?) and then there is a certain kind of helplessness on the part of the public when they hear different things from moral economists.

Lonergan: The thing is that these things are enormously complex because of all the different opinions. But you needn't think that importing stuff from abroad is going to improve the situation. That isn't automatic at all. You require an awful lot of anthropology and so on to deal intelligently with people at another stage of development. The Jesuits came out to North America in the seventeenth century or sixteenth century and worked with the Indians. But they did not understand Stone Age mentality. They thought of them more as barbarians than as human beings, and it happens that it still is the case that they are Stone Age people. Educating them is not just a matter of setting up a school and sending in teachers you pay a salary to, and so on. The process from the Stone Age to contemporary time is more than something that is startlingly strange.

Edmond Wilson has a series of articles on the Iroquois, and the Iroquois around Montreal about 1860, when a bridge was built across the St Lawrence River – it was discovered that they did not suffer the slightest bit from heights, they had no acrophobia. They could walk along carelessly, walk along steel beams no matter how high up. They have become the experts at high steel across North America. He was talking with one man, an Iroquois, who had moved quite high in the industrial hierarchy and was a supervisor earning quite a salary and all the rest of it. And he was discussing the change in his life and so on, and he said to Edmond Wilson, 'You know I often feel I'd have been much better off if I had stayed with the animals.' That living with the animals is something, the whole texture of these peoples' lives is in their relations with the animals and the Lord of the animals. You can find terrific religious feeling in the way they

speak to the animals. They almost recite to the animals just how they feel when they are taking away from the animal his food and all that. When they saw the buffalo being slaughtered by the whites simply because they were pulling triggers and so on, it was simply unbelievable to them. It was the worst outrage they had witnessed. They would never kill any more than what they could eat, and they were terrifically sensitive to ecology and ecological concerns. They had a whole different world and a whole different mentality. To intrude into that without knowing what you are doing is to be a bit of a blunderer, you know, trying to play the surgeon when you don't know anatomy. So there is a lot of complexity to these things.