

916 June 20, First discussion 916 A&B

We will start with the second question.

**Question 2:** Would Lonergan now agree more with Kant and Küng that knowledge of God is finally resolved in the realm of practical rather than pure reason?

**Lonergan:** Well, the distinction between practical and pure reason is in Aquinas and Aristotle the distinction between speculative and practical intellect, pertaining to a faculty psychology. In the contemporary context of intentionality analysis, one gets a different mode of speech. The full operation of man is not what is called the scientific mentality, as though that were some special faculty; it is the result of a decision. It is a part of praxis, namely, the part of praxis that isn't concerned with doing, but with knowing. People who are concerned with knowing without any thought of any doing, they are not a spontaneous product. That's something that results from a certain amount of development. It is praxis that is concerned with coming to know the truth, that deliberately sets aside all other concerns, to concentrate on coming to know the truth, that proceeds methodically towards the actual attainment of truth or at least towards a better understanding of some matter.

This detached inquiry is not just what the moralists used to call an *actus hominis* but an *actus humanus*, a fully deliberate dedication of oneself as pure desire to know, despite the possibility and even the clamor of other desires. So speculative intellect is just one of the decisions of praxis, of man as deliberating and controlled by his deliberations. The level of deliberation sublates the level of factual judgment, which sublates the level of intelligence, which sublates the level of sensitivity. And 'sublate' means 'goes beyond,' introduces a new principle, gives a new range of significance to the previous levels, includes them, makes them ever so much more efficient.

When I see a bug going across the table, I call it a bug, and that is all I'd have to say about it. An entomologist could talk to you for two hours about that bug, and you would have to learn all sorts of new words that name various aspects of the bug. Using your intellect doesn't impoverish your senses; it enriches your sensitive experience.

Now, this position, the acceptance of intentionality analysis, involves the subsumption of what used to be called speculative intellect as simply an earlier level than the level of praxis but directed to their own proper ends. The end of experience, understanding, and judging, the end of those three levels, becomes the end that is sought by a decision to concentrate on them, to do the knowing as a specialty, as something apart from everyday living.

Now this position in no way brings me any nearer to Kant or Küng. I have never had any reason for doubting the validity of chapter 19 of *Insight*. My decision to argue for the transposition of chapter 19 into the context of the study of theology has been simply a pedagogical decision, a decision limited to the education of theologians. Why do a certain part of theology twice, once on the basis of reason and another time on the basis of revelation? If you put them together, they can help one another. And you have the great advantage of getting a little help at getting people out of Plato's cave. You will have supernatural as well as natural motives, and that isn't a bad thing. Abraham Maslow, the psychologist, said that self-actuating people are less than one per cent of the adult population. So most of us need, insofar as we are not already a

very select group, we need all the help we can get, and we have to give others all the help they can get to get out of the cave.

So much for question 2. Everything is in the realm of praxis, even therapy, although you are concerned simply with your feelings or fundamentally with your feelings.

**Question 3:** If religious conversion is more the apprehension of value than the grasp of a virtually unconditioned (a proof), does it bypass the question of the complete intelligibility of the real, or does it hinge *implicitly* on it?

**Lonergan:** Well, I wouldn't conceive religious conversion as an apprehension of values. It is an event, a falling in love that perdures as a being in love. In Ezekiel, it is God's plucking out our hearts of stone and replacing them with hearts of flesh. And that's not something desired by the heart of stone. The heart of stone very much wants to remain a heart of stone. [In the last two sentences Lonergan said 'heart of flesh,' but obviously means 'heart of stone.'] In Augustine, dealing with the Pelagians, it is operative grace. In Aquinas, it is the infusion of sanctifying grace and the supernatural virtues, and when you take that infusion in all its implications it is justification, which Aquinas conceives as the order of the soul: the body is subject to reason, and reason is subject to God. It is not primarily an apprehension of values, but rather the principle that transvalues our values. As sensitivity takes us beyond the unconscious, as intelligence takes us beyond sense, as reflective rationality takes us beyond intelligence, as deliberation takes us beyond reflective rationality, so God's gift of his love brings us to a consummation of our affectivity, our energy-laden bodies and the dynamism of the spirit. It is the spirit of man sparked by the Spirit of God.

Now, in relation to complete intelligibility, and so on, from the viewpoint of intentionality analysis it diminishes the obscurantism that manifests itself when we brush aside the further questions that would make us change our minds or mend our ways. Questions can be brushed aside. It is much more convenient to do so. The law of inertia works even with us, the law of falling bodies. When we are completely cured of such obscurantism, we find ourselves already acknowledging the complete intelligibility of being. Acknowledging the complete intelligibility of being as a performance is honestly facing every honest question. There is no point where you can say, 'Well, let's forget that. Let's confine philosophy to talk about language; anyone that isn't talking about language is on the wrong ship. Or, let's identify human knowledge with scientific knowledge. Habermas defines positivism as the refusal to reflect, and ever since Kant, all sorts of arguments have been thought up to prove that you shouldn't ask any questions that don't pertain to this world; and the arguments can be very complicated, and they can be valid as far as they go. If causality is conceived as the scientists conceive it, certainly it can't be anything out of this world. Therefore, you can't use *that* principle of causality to go from this world to God.

Since Kant, the question of God has become a twofold problem. It is a problem, first of all, of the horizon of the human mind. Is it confined to this world, or is it not? And how do you get a mind that isn't? Well, you have to have the pure desire to know. But if you have it and live it, you are acknowledging already the complete intelligibility of being, because to deny it you have to in some way say, 'This sort of question is not to be bothered about.' And you can attempt to prove that it can't be answered; and so on.

So questions about moral decisions may be brushed aside, but they keep coming back and constitute the uneasy conscience. Questions that occur to us with regard to our factual judgments – maybe I was wrong – they can be brushed aside, but they keep coming back too, to unsettle our minds. Further questions about our insights may be brushed aside, but they too keep coming back to set us off once more on the process of inquiry. To grant that all honest questions call for an honest answer, that none are to be crudely brushed aside, is to acknowledge the complete intelligibility of being. Conversely, to deny the complete intelligibility of being is to acknowledge that there are regions where the further questions are to be buried, because they have no intelligibility that can be known by us. There *are* regions where *we* can't attain intelligibility, and there are things that are unintelligible, but you can define exactly what those cases are.

But as I already suggested, such denials are common today in various schools. Hence falling in love with God can happen to one who has brushed ultimate questions aside. It is not that falling in love with God depends upon the complete intelligibility of being or your knowing the complete intelligibility of being. It is a first, and that falling in love is something that God does in us. And that can happen in one who has brushed ultimate questions aside, but its effect will be to reinstate the openness that is open to all questions and so in practice acknowledges the complete intelligibility of being.

So either you already acknowledge it, you already have the openness to the whole of being, or you haven't. And if you haven't, then this falling in love with God will move you to it. Religious conversion leads to moral conversion, and both lead to intellectual conversion, which is commonly the last one arrived at. The church arrived at intellectual conversion at the Council of Nicea, and after about fifty years of struggle the Council of Nicea was generally accepted in the church. But you have to pull people out of Plato's cave. They don't crawl out on their own.

**Question 1:** When one 'falls in love,' the experience is self-authenticating; when one falls in love without qualification, the experience of God is self-authenticating. But the conversion experience is not 'merely subjective.' Subsequent reflection can seek to disclose the 'reasonableness' of religious experience. Would your post-*Insight* reflection on the objective reference of fourth-level religious experience be the same as the theistic argument of chapter 19 of *Insight*? If not, what form would it take?

**Lonergan:** Well, there is an objective reference to love once you discover that it is love. But when you have your heart of stone plucked out and your heart of flesh put in, you haven't even got those symbols to tell you what happened. People learn about the existence of grace in themselves not because they are aware of an experience of love. The first effect may be great repentance for one's previous sins and avoiding the repetition of them, the purgative way of the spiritual life. And the second phase may be learning all the implications of what it is to love God, the illuminative way. And it is only when you get through those two ways that you begin to think, oh, this may be love. And you begin to read the scriptures in a new way.

Once it is discovered as love, it has an objective reference, because love is to another, of another. So there is an objective reference to the experience once it is identified as love. But does God give his grace to the Buddhist and Zen mystics? Does he give them sufficient grace for salvation, which is charity? After all, nothing else counts, according to 1 Corinthians 13. They don't interpret it as being in love, but it can be that. There are indications that it is, because when

Catholic missionaries in Japan make their annual retreat in Zen monasteries in company with Zen monks making their retreats, it is quite easy for them to talk to one another about their spiritual experience, even though their philosophical and theological contexts are quite different.

Again, ‘the objective reference to fourth-level religious experience’: I conceive it more and more explicitly since about 1972 as a fifth level. This gift of God’s love is as much a sublation of all that goes before as any of the others are sublations of what went before them.

Now, in *Insight* we conceive God as unrestricted understanding, and go on to argue in a passage on the notion of God, from that basis, if the understanding is unrestricted then there are no oversights, and if there are no oversights then it is true. Therefore, by identity that unrestricted act of understanding also is knowledge of truth, and if it is knowledge of truth it is knowledge of being, and the being that is known is the unrestricted act of understanding. And this is good; it has no limitations, no imperfections. Just as being has to be known through truth, so the good that is there is identical with love, and so on. You get out of that key the whole list of divine predicates. And what is going on? We are just using the implications of intentionality analysis.

If you think that knowing is taking a look, then you are projecting on the sky the a priori questions that are the operators that move activity from the level of sense to the level of intelligence: why, how, what for, and so on; and the operators of questions for reflection: is that so, are you sure. And then there is the other operator at the level of deliberation: is it worthwhile. The good, the true, the real, the intelligible, they are all combined. And we use those a priori categories of our being, on the philosophic level, to form our notion of God, the classical notion of God.

Now, the experience of falling in love: how is it? It is a different experience. As being in love with God, it is something different from any of these other things because we haven’t had being in love on those levels. We have it on a separate level. How does one tie together the objective referent of being in love with the teleology of questioning on the level of intellect, on the level of reason, rationality, on the level of deliberation? I think the connecting link you find by going to the unconscious.

There are in consciousness horizontal finalities. There is the finality of attention; we wake up and see the world about us and learn to live in it. On the level of inquiry we head for all that is intelligible; on the level of reflection to all truth and reality; on the level of deliberation to all that is good.

Now, the unconscious is related to all of these finalities with a vertical finality. How do insights happen? They happen because the appropriate image comes into consciousness, and whether you call it the censor or whatever you please, what releases that image, well, it is released from the unconscious. It was a potential image that has become an actual image, and it is just the image that gives you the insight that you were looking for. Again, it leads to truth. Why? By recalling memories that confirm or oppose a judgment you are thinking of making, or again by envisaging possibilities, imagining possibilities, that would run counter to the judgment, or on the other hand favor it. To the process of deliberation: by memories and images that remind us of our uneasy conscience or warn us of the perils of our proposed course of action. All these things: there is a terrific interaction between those conscious levels and the help they have from an unknown source that really works rather marvelously. Even the people dealing with the sick marvel at the things that the unconscious brings to light. And finally, it is related to being in love. For being in love is the consummation of unconscious desire. Augustine speaks not only of *amare* but also of *amans amare*, a desiring to love. As someone remarked, it is easy to get what

you know you want; the difficulty is found out what you really want. And that is understanding where your unconscious really is tending, coming to grasp that. And if you read the world's poems and listen to the world's songs, and so on, it is not hard to say that what they really want is being in love. God's gift of his love is the *agapē* that sublates *eros*, the loving that sublates desiring. So one can sympathize with George Morel's statement that man is a symbol of God

**Question 4:** If you want to transpose chapter 19 into a post-*Method* context, what would be the general line of your approach and some of the specific elements in it?

**Lonergan:** Well, the transposition is not theoretical but pedagogical. We don't want the transposition for everyone. The transposition doesn't mean that people who do not study theology shouldn't do philosophy of God; of course they should. The question is, What about the education of theologians? Does the question of God come up in philosophy principally, or along with the revealed truths? Now, just how one integrates the argument from chapter 19 with the doctrine on religion in *Method in Theology*, that connection is what I dealt with in answering the first question just now. Namely, the relation of the unconscious to conscious processes and the relation of the whole business to love, which is no longer just me; it is all internal process as long as you talk about *your* unconscious, *your* sensations, *your* intelligence, *your* reasonableness, *your* deliberations, but you become linked to others when you fall in love.

**Question 5:** Do you have any thoughts on how Professor Braxton's specification of theistic, Christian, and ecclesial conversions could enter into the discussion of transposing chapter 19?

**Lonergan:** Well, the specifications are specifications of different contexts. If you are born and brought up in a Buddhist context and their religious experience really is God's gift of his grace though they don't conceive of it the same way as we do, it is not yet in a theistic context, because they don't identify it as love as related to something else. To get it into a theistic context you have to have philosophers, theistic philosophers at least. And of course Voegelin speaks of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle as the mystical philosophers. They were concerned with the good of the polis, the social problems of their day, and changing people or trying to get a state that would change people. The Christian context, conversion to Christ, being a Christian, *Christ Sein*, Kūng's *Christ Sein*, and ecclesial, belonging to some specific church, some community of belief – wherever you are, you are in a different context, and you study the others as contexts that are distinct from yours.

**Question 6:** Could you comment on the relevance of intentionality analysis to the issue of contemporary psychotherapeutic pluralism (i.e., both depth and height approaches)?

**Lonergan:** Fr Tyrrell's paper this morning. Well, all I can do is throw out a few tidbits. Fr Cruchon, who teaches educational psychology at the Gregorian (at least he did while I was there), described in *Nouvelle revue théologique* about 1951 or 1952 the process of going under anesthesia and coming out of anesthesia. His account was to the effect that when one was coming out first the Id speaks, and then the Ego comes to life, and finally the Superego makes its appearance; but when you are going under, the Superego is the first to go silent, and then the

Ego, and finally the Id. There are the different levels, and with the experiment of anesthesia you can separate them off. And there can be trouble with any of the three. Ergo.

Vergote, if I remember rightly, says that the Id reveals itself only by displacement and by condensation, in other words, by upsetting the works. Displacement: if you dream about a lion and you are not afraid of it, then it isn't a lion that you are dreaming about. Displacement is the heaping of totally different things into some bizarre conjunction, and it all points in a single direction if you can figure it out. In other words, the manifestation of the Id is implicit; it really hasn't got a language of its own. So there are levels of depth that can need attention, and there are higher levels that also need help. And you help them in different ways.

**Question 7:** In your talk this spring at the American Catholic Philosophical Association – it will be inflicted on you again tomorrow night – you spoke of affective conversion. Could you indicate what you mean by this expression and how it relates to intellectual, moral, and religious conversions?

**Lonergan:** Well, I got the term from Bob Doran in one of his papers. Affective conversion is when one lets desire blossom into love, whether the love of the family, the love of one's neighbor, or the love of God. It is an affective conversion; we can be motivated by desire or fear or again by love, and then it is an entirely different ballgame.

**Question 8:** Would you comment on the role decision might be said to play in the psychotherapeutic process?

**Lonergan:** Well, the therapeutic process has an earlier stage, where people are led along towards self-discovery. They don't know what's wrong, but the transference may occur and one might start hating the analyst. It is not really the analyst they are hating, but they'll discover in themselves a hatred they didn't know was there. The light gradually dawns. It may be this or it may be that, and all sorts of ways. Harry Stack Sullivan tells of a man he was dealing with who was always talking about his father and never said anything about his mother. And he had a dream of a beautiful windmill, beautifully kept, on a green lawn with walls of perfect shape, veins [vines?] majestically moving around. And then he went into the windmill, and it was just a mass of spider webs and rust and machinery that creaked, and so on. And the analyst said, 'Well, what does that remind you of?' And he said, 'My God! My mother! She poured herself out on everyone else around her and kept nothing for herself.' At least that was his individual impression.

So there is a process of self-discovery, and the analyst is the fellow pulling the strings, figuring out what's up, and so on. But there is a later stage when the client has to cooperate manfully or womanfully, in mopping up or working through all the damage inflicted by the past derailment. You don't go to an analyst just because of one little thing being wrong. It may be one big thing that's wrong, with all sorts of implications all over the shop. And if you just get the big illumination, so that you know that's the trouble, that isn't enough. That has all sorts of tentacles, and so on, and they all have to be loosened. That is where decision comes in.

**Question 9:** Fessard conceives the decision process in terms of four key moments. Do you see this analysis as helpful for understanding conversions as you have conceived them?

**Loneragan:** Conversion is not on the level of decision. It is something prior, something that takes over, something that makes decisions possible. I tried to illustrate it with Ezekiel: God plucks out the heart of stone and puts in a heart of flesh. A more concrete example may be helpful. In 1938 during Lent I was supplying at a parish in Scotland, about twenty miles west of Edinburgh, and the parish was not simply in the one town, but included seven towns, and I was visiting homes in a place called Bonnyrig about two miles away. And there, there was one devoted Catholic mother whose daughter intended to marry a non-Catholic. And I was to tell the daughter that she was mistaken, and that she would be thrown out of the house and all the rest of it. So I saw the daughter and spoke to her, and to everything that I could think of saying she would reply, 'Well, I'll ask him.' She was in love. She wasn't going to figure anything out for herself. She would ask him first. What did he think about it? Together they would make a decision. But she wasn't born that way. She fell in love. And it is that gift of love, that falling in love, that makes people different, and it is what makes the decision. The decision is the acceptance of the gift of love in itself and in all its implications. And it is the implications that make a marriage a big process of education, learning all those implications.

Questions from the floor

**Question:** Do you see the unconscious as the locus of conversion and falling in love?

**Loneragan:** Wait a second. It is the ultimate teleology that is love.

**Question:** Seeing the unconscious as the context of that, do you understand the unconscious in the same way as Freud?

**Loneragan:** I take it literally: not conscious; and consciousness in the way I understand consciousness.

**Question:** So it wouldn't be the same as an unknowing consciousness?

**Loneragan:** No. Consciousness as a component within knowledge is to my mind the unconscious in Jung's sense, in Horney's sense, in Stekel's sense. Stekel says that they know, of course they know, but they won't say it. Then he explains it. He says there are always several thoughts running along in peoples' minds, but one is the dominating voice. The others are going on too, but they don't get the center of the stage. And what does psychotherapy do? It gets these things out into the center of the stage. There are processes that are not known but are conscious. The way Horney speaks of it: there are things that register but aren't known. We are not born with names for each of our feelings or ways of attaching these names onto the feelings as the feelings occur. It is the inarticulate feelings that can be discovered through the images that begin to stick out, the symbols with which they tie in, that have an objective reference, or you have something you can connect them with and identify them by.

**Question:** Fr Lonergan, there are a series of documents called the Seth materials which have been out for the past five years, and it consists of ten or fifteen thousand pages of manuscript

dictated by this personality called Seth. He calls himself a personality energy Gestalt or a spirit who has dictated material on the nature of reality, the nature of time and space, and the physical universe as ideally constructed to this woman called Jane Roberts. Now my question is, Is it possible for Seth, whose existence is very real, very actual, is it possible for him to be a new conjugate form or a new genus, perhaps?

**Lonergan:** Has anyone met him?

**Question:** Yes. He holds classes in Elmira, NY, ESP classes, and he has ground of students there and occasionally he comes through and talks, and so there are witnesses.

**Lonergan:** Is Seth identical with this man, this teacher?

**Questioner:** Yes, this is his identity.

**Lonergan:** Well, why would you want to postulate a new conjugate?

**Questioner:** Because his metaphysics is entirely different from that proportionate to human experience, and he characterizes himself as a personality.

**Lonergan:** Does he always talk this way, or is it only at certain times that he talks this way? In other words, is there any split in his personality?

**Questioner:** No.

**Lonergan:** OK.

**Question:** Is it possible for Seth to be a new conjugate form providing a superlook transcendent of human experience, something that we can conceptualize, something that we can intelligently grasp but that cannot be verified by our experience? He talks at certain times about life after death and reincarnation.

**Lonergan:** Well, there are things like that. There is a whole book by Moody. I haven't read it myself. He recounts the experience of people who died and were met by a bright light and they were asked, Well now, are you satisfied, or would you like to go back and continue your journey on earth? And so on. Some decided they wanted to go back and others said No. There are realms and so on and so forth. But I'm certainly not going to pass judgment on the man with this limited evidence, or think up a new conjugate to handle the case. There are mysterious things: automatic writing, writing poetry in a language you don't know, excellent poetry in a language you don't know, and so on. These things occur: second sight, people who will see a block of houses, a magnificent street with trees, and thirty years later the magnificent street with the trees will be there.

**Question:** Are you familiar with a book written a few years ago called *The Experience of Love* by Jules Toner?



**Lonergan:** I'm not familiar with it, but I know Jules very well.

**Question:** He has made a basic distinction in the book between radical love and incremental love, and I was just curious if you would agree with such a distinction.

**Lonergan:** Very possibly, very possibly.

**Question:** One being the basic, that is, radical love being the basic affirmation of the person in and for himself and so forth, and incremental love a kind of love directed towards any object which you are directed towards for the benefit of the person.

**Lonergan:** Primary and secondary objects.

**Questioner:** Yes.

**Lonergan:** That is an essential distinction. St Thomas in the *Secunda secundae* about vainglory, is answering the objection that God created the world for his glory. St Thomas says he created it not for himself but for us; we are his glory; we are his external glory. And how can that be? Well, we are not created as means but as secondary objects of love. God loves primarily infinite goodness, and secondarily everything that de facto comes out of that. But secondary objects of love are loved in themselves. Love me, love my dog. You have to think that this is a fine dog or you are not really a good friend of mine.

**Question:** You distinguished this afternoon between a fourth and a fifth level of consciousness. Now, I don't know if you mean that the fourth level would be moral conversion and the fifth level would be religious conversion.

**Lonergan:** Well, morality is on the fourth level, and one becomes moral when one's deliberations are, not what's in it for me, or what's in it for us, but what's worthwhile. I put that on the fourth level because it sublates the previous levels. And it seems that falling in love, being in love, sublates previous levels too, all four of them. The distinction of levels is between operations that are sublating and operations that are sublated.

**Question:** You talked last year or the year before about the role of upper and lower quasi operators, to deal with what you are now talking about in the context of the unconscious. Would you still make that kind of distinction?

**Lonergan:** Well, you could call it what Freud calls the censor. There can be different names to it. What selects the images that come into consciousness and the combinations and so on? If anything at all came into consciousness, then we would be all crazy.

**Question:** Is religious conversion on the fourth level or on the fifth level?

**Lonergan:** The fifth. Wait a second, eh? Religious conversion as joining a religious community or taking the religious community you are in much more seriously than you have in the past, that is an effect, eh? That is a thing you decide on. The decision is on the fourth level, but the possibility of the decision is what I call religious conversion, the being in love.

**Question:** Father, is your idea of being in love, grace, is that a reality for all men? All men are in fact loved by God, and their heart of stone has from the moment of conception, or the moment of consciousness a heart of flesh?

**Lonergan:** No, it isn't that simple. It is a common opinion of theologians that God gives everyone sufficient grace for salvation. Now, it is not held immediately that that is God's gift of charity, but if it is ever going to be sufficient, it will be the gift of charity according to 1 Corinthians 13. Faith and all the good works you can think of without charity, they are nothing. So the sufficient condition of salvation is charity. And if God gives everyone that, then at least they are being prepared for the gift of charity. And St Thomas asks the question, someone who grows up in the fields and never met anyone, when is he justified? Well, after he reaches the age of reason. Either he opts for God or not. And if he does, he is justified. I don't know what subsequent theologians would say on the matter, but that is an instance of it. Now, of course, the Middle Ages didn't have our knowledge of other religions, and so on. So they didn't raise all the complex questions that can be raised today.