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Thursday, June 15, 1978

**Question:** In your earlier Trinitarian theory, chapter 5 of *Verbum*, you stress that the second procession, of love, is covered over in the mists of obscurity unless there is an adequate understanding of the first procession as truth based on the rational judgment of inner word. More recently, with the biblical shift of Vatican II, you propose an understanding of the Trinity in terms of love: love as source (Father), love as unrestricted value (Son), and love itself as lover and beloved (Spirit). The earlier accusation you make would seem to apply to your most recent remarks on the Trinity, where it seems that truth is eliminated, so that love proceeds without rational foundation. Please clarify.

**Lonergan:** Well, first of all, regarding the mists of obscurity, you find if you read the theologians that they just throw up their hands when they come to the second procession, in attempting to explain how it differs from the first. Aquinas treats the Trinitarian processions as *emanationes intelligibiles*. In my study on *Verbum* in Aquinas I concluded that *emanatio intelligibilis*, intelligible emanations, means an intellectually conscious or a rationally conscious or a morally or responsibly conscious origin or origination. Karl Rahner asked one of my devotees, Bernie Tyrrell I think, what on earth does Lonergan mean by an *emanatio intelligibilis*? It was a good question for him, for one cannot know what is meant without adverting to and objectifying the origination of one's intelligently formed concepts, rationally formed judgments, responsibly formed decisions. Rahner's *Geist in Welt* is a metaphysical account for what in Aquinas is psychological. And *emanatio intelligibilis* means something psychological. It is a psychological analogy. Either the analogy is psychological or it is physical: light from light, fire from fire, and so on and so forth. You have to advert to the fact that you have a mind and notice the way it works before you can have a psychological analogy.

For me the Father is love as the dynamic state of being in love; it is God as *bonum* where *bonum est diffusivum sui*, love spreads itself. The Son is a responsible judgment of value; it is a true judgment of value, the Word; so truth is not eliminated. It is a judgment that pronounces on the value of being in love; it is a judgment that praises the goodness of God. Praise the Father, pray to the Son, and thank the Holy Spirit: the rhythm of the prayer of the faith healer in Toronto, the Indian. The Spirit is *Amor Procedens*, the act of loving that proceeds from, is based on, the judgment of value; it has a rational foundation, a foundation in truth, but it is the truth of the judgment of value. Does that meet the issue?

**Question:** What knowledge about the historical Jesus can be validly inferred from the faith statements of 2000 years of Christianity. What can we say about the political stance of Jesus on the basis of the statement that Jesus is the Savior of the world? Is this a valid methodological approach to the historical Jesus?

**Lonergan:** By the historical Jesus one can mean the real Jesus. That is what people usually understand by it. What the exegetes mean by the historical Jesus is Jesus as known by some specific method of studying history. Methods of studying history are manifold. What commonly is meant by scientific history, methodical history, is that all historical data form an interdependent, intelligible manifold where 'intelligible' is taken to mean necessarily connected.

The only meaning theorists of historical method can give to the word 'intelligible' is 'necessary.' That is why miracles are impossible. They do not advert to the insights but only to necessary connections between terms. In fact, in modern science 'intelligible' means not 'necessary' but 'possible.' It is because human understanding of physics, chemistry, and so on, is just a grasp of possibility that verification is needed. If it were a grasp of necessity, then no verification would be needed.

Now, the question goes on to valid inference. No valid inference contains more than is contained in its premises. If you have faith, you do not need inference. If you need inference, it is because you do not have faith. You have to start somewhere. What one learns from the study of the Christian tradition is an understanding of one's faith and of its object; because the act of faith is a supernatural act, it cannot be produced by such natural means as valid inference. The idea that theology proves is a fundamental blunder. It is a lack of understanding of what theology is. Theology is to help you understand your faith; because people don't know what understanding means, then they start talking about necessity and proof and so on. That was one of the points of writing the book *Insight*.

The only valid methodological approach to the historical Jesus is the approach formulated as Salvation History, that is, a method of history that includes faith as a presupposition. If you proved your faith, you wouldn't be having faith. Jesus as a political figure is Jesus scourged, condemned, and crucified. He is God's judgment on human injustice. He gave his life to bear witness to the truth that men are unjust. Only insofar as men acknowledge their own injustice can justice and peace come to the world, and in that sense he is the savior of the world.

**Question:** Origen suggested that God suffered. Luther in his treatment of *communicatio idiomatum* came up with a position that allowed him to say God suffered in Christ. Heschel in his book *The Prophets* speaks of Israel living in the *pathos* of God. Certainly in the prophetic literature God expresses deep emotions of love, anger, jealousy, etc. In your later work, especially *Method*, more space is given to feelings. You have acknowledged and accepted Doran's contribution of psychic conversion. If the authentic subject in the third stage of meaning needs to integrate the psyche, do you think that the doctrine of the Trinity in the third stage of meaning will in some way speak of the feelings of the three Persons?

**Lonergan:** In some way certainly, anthropomorphically. The gods of the Thracians were said to have blue eyes and fair blonde hair, and the gods of the Ethiopians to have flat noses and thick lips, and most men are Thracians or Ethiopians, and you have to talk to them about the feelings of God, or they won't know what on earth you are talking about. But you can explain to them too that it is anthropomorphic to do so, and you needn't explain what you mean by 'anthropomorphic.' The first Church Father to advert to the anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament was Clement of Alexandria, who flourished about the year 200. So one must intimate that one's speech is not perfectly accurate, and that it is not to be made a basis for drawing all the conclusions that follow from it. If God has a psyche, well, he may have complexes and so on, just like us. Tell them not to draw conclusions.

**Question:** You attended the von Balthasar workshop last year. What is your reaction to him and his theology?

**Lonergan:** I agree entirely with his basic message: only one who loves can be believed. I approve of his aesthetic approach to theology, but it is not my cup of tea. I can't do that sort of thing. He is a magnificent litterateur and artist. I don't think I can say anything more on that. Now we will get into economics.

**Question:** The common saying is that savings equal investment. Why is it more accurate to say that the crossovers should balance?

**Lonergan:** Well, because it gives you the reason why. Savings equal investment in the sense that unless the equivalent of current investment is saved and invested, then there will be a contraction of the economy. If it is spent on consumer goods, well, you will have an inflation of consumer prices. If it is not invested, you will have a contraction of capital formation. And balancing the crossovers is doing precisely that. Balancing the crossovers means that the velocity remains at least constant, and that the acceleration remains constant. You can add to them both, and that is when you have expansion; and if you subtract them, then you'll get contraction.

**Question:** In section 11 of your economic analysis, you speak of the economic equivalence of the device of deficit government spending and the favorable balance of foreign trade. What is the nature of that equivalence?

**Lonergan:** Really, there is a triple equivalence. The portion of total current income that is equal to current investment in capital goods and services cannot be spent on current standard of living without causing inflation of the prices of consumer goods and services. It is surplus income. It is over and above what is needed to keep consumers as they have been in the past. Similarly, the income derived from a favorable balance of foreign trade: why is it favorable to sell more to other people than you get from them? What's favorable about that? It means that you get the gold, and if you get the gold you can have an expansion. Your economy can't expand unless you have more money circulating, so that's what's favorable about it, and that is why they had mercantilism as the great ... of a favorable balance of foreign trade. It was an equivalent and more surplus income, a further addition to the gravy train. And when everyone tries to have the favorable balance of foreign trade, well, no one can have it. Well, to add to the gravy train in that case, what do you do? You have deficit government spending, the government spends money that it hasn't got. It puts more money into circulation over and above the surplus income that comes out of investment, and in place of the surplus income that will come out of favorable foreign trade. There is bigger income for people who are in the right positions to pick it up. It is flowing around. So that is what the equivalence is.

**Question:** Why does your economic analysis require a redefinition of 'costs' and 'profit'?

**Lonergan:** Well, the answer to that is very simple. All scientific thought requires a redefinition of ordinary language terms. No scientific thinking can be expressed in ordinary language, in the meaning of ordinary language. Water is H<sub>2</sub>O, but I'm quite certain that what is in this cup is not H<sub>2</sub>O and nothing else. It comes out of the tap, and what comes out of the tap is water, but that is a different definition of water from the chemist's. And instances of that are just as numerous as the number of scientific terms you are able to use. What is mass? Newton called it quantity of matter, but nobody takes it as that today. And it is not weight. That is mass multiplied by the

acceleration of gravity. And it is not momentum. That is mass multiplied by the velocity. What on earth is mass? Well, it is what is equivalent to the  $M$  that keeps recurring in all sorts of mechanical equations. It is defined by these equations implicitly. That's a perfect example of implicit definition, and so on for all scientific matters.

And so you can talk of forced savings. What are forced savings? Well, forced savings are the savings you are forced to save by the mere fact of an inflation. Your money is worth that much less. Everybody saves in that case. And you have forced savings whenever you have investment, because you are increasing the money in circulation. And similarly, you can think of costs and profits, and so on, in terms of a systematic setup. Unless you are willing to learn a system, you are not going to learn any science whatever. And it is well to accept that basic truth rather than try to fight against the science.

**Question:** Can your paradigm of the productive process fit with a dynamic notion of general equilibrium? Point 1.

**Lonergan:** General equilibrium means total equilibrium as in Walras and Wicksell. All prices and all quantities are determinate through an appropriate number of simultaneous equations. And if they are determinate, they are fixed by those equations; and you have something that is immovable. You have to drop some of the equations, and then you no longer have the equilibrium. Marshall did not hold general but only partial equilibrium. All his economic thinking is in terms of partial equilibrium, that is, the balancing of supply and demand through a varying of one factor at a time, other factors remaining constant. If you increase the number of workers, how much bigger will your profit be? If you took out this machine and put in this other machine, how much bigger would your profit be? And so on. That is partial equilibrium, and there is no problem about partial equilibrium in my paradigm. A dynamic notion of general equilibrium has been pictured by Joan Robinson as a dog running along behind a man on a bicycle. How do you get movement into it? Well, you can have a series of sets of simultaneous equations, but it is just linked from one set to the next. You have no account for what goes on in between. If it were really dynamic, you would be using differential equations and not just ordinary ones for things like prices and quantities. And Joan added that mathematics does not tell us what happens when the dog catches up with the bicycle and bites the tires. So to have motion and satisfy general equilibrium is to have two sets of simultaneous equations: one set for position 1 and another set for position 2, and no general equilibrium for the movement from one position to the next. That is a dynamic notion of general equilibrium. My paradigm of the productive process has no difficulty with partial equilibrium in the money market, or partial equilibrium in the production and sale of consumer goods and services, or general equilibrium in the production and sale of new plant and equipment to another capital goods and services within those different compartments. But to have an economy in movement, you have to have something moving, and something changing all the time, a process of growth. General equilibrium is a static notion.

**Question:** Would you comment on the defense of capitalism in the writing of Joseph Schumpeter?

**Lonergan:** Well, it is years since I read his book on socialism and capitalism. I recently have read through again his *Theory of Economic Development*. It was written in German in 1911 and

translated into English in 1934 and given an eighth reprinting in 1968, and now it is out of print. It no longer satisfies the requirements of the computer at the Oxford University Press.

But Schumpeter is an extremely well-informed and clear-headed thinker. His book written in 1911 on a theory of economic development is a beautifully thought-out piece of work, something comparable to Collingwood's *The Principles of Art*, and if you want to see what a beautifully thought-out piece of work can be, read Collingwood on *The Principles of Art*. It moves right along, and you are almost ready to cheer, the way he handles it. If you wish my opinion of socialism, you can find it in the current issue of *Time*, June 12. The description of Health, Education, and Welfare is a first approximation to socialism. The second approximation is when the pretense of doing good has to be dropped, and the do-gooders are replaced by the secret police. What is right about capitalism is found in the measure it leaves room for what in *Insight* I describe as emergent probability (chapter 4). What is a firm? It is a scheme of recurrence with a probability of emergence and a probability of survival. And because it has no more than a probability of survival, it can go to the wall and leave room for a better firm to be put in place. And it is ultimately the secret hand, the invisible hand, that guides everything. Emergent probability in chapter 4 of *Insight* is my account of this universe of ours, in which you have quantities, enormous numbers, and long intervals of time, millions and millions and millions of years. And what is it you need large numbers for, and long intervals of time? It is to make anything probable no matter how small the probability may be.

Finally, how do we get it done?

**Question:** Would you comment on the relationship between the requirements of macro-units, i.e., that macro-units act with an understanding of the stages of the productive process, and the possible role of governments in enabling this?

**Lonergan:** Well, the basic problem is much earlier. It is a matter of educating the politicians and the journalists and the businessmen, educating them not only intellectually but also morally. It is producing a revolution of minds and hearts. And you don't sell ideas like that with an army, and you don't sell it quickly. It takes time. So don't look forward to the realization of my theory of economics. You know, Marx believed in doing things by force, and it took him almost a century to get a Marxist state. And if you are not going to work by force, it takes longer.

**Questions from the floor:**

**Question:** Is being in love as the first moment in the procession of the human spirit, is it a fourth-level act

**Lonergan:** It is on the fifth level. It is you getting beyond yourself.

**Question:** Is it a feeling?

**Lonergan:** It's a dynamic state, and it seeps down through the whole. But it is transforming. A person in love is a different person to what he or she was before.

**Question:** Does it give the possibility, then, of a moral and religious conversion quicker than any other?

**Lonergan:** Yes. Especially moral. It *is* religious conversion; God's love has flooded our inmost hearts through the Holy Spirit he has given us (Romans 5.5).

**Question:** The question of love brings us back to the Trinity and the fifth level. I am assuming that that would be the place to find the basis for an analogy for the Father.

**Lonergan:** Right.

**Question:** Would the basis for the Son and the Spirit be on the fourth level, as the judgment of value and the love that proceeds?

**Lonergan:** Insofar as that gift of love is sanctifying grace, insofar as these acts are said to be supernatural, they are in a different category and are on a different level, but there is always interaction between above and below. There is ascent: experiencing, understanding, judging, deciding, and sometimes falling in love.

**Question:** Would it be fair to say, then, that the analogy you elaborated of the Father as Love, as source, etc., that this sublates the former analogy in the second part of *De Deo Trino*?

**Lonergan:** Well, it transformed it. It does a better job, I think. One can always keep on learning.

**Question:** Could you say which writer or writings helped you most in catching on to the pure cycle?

**Lonergan:** Well, it is just a matter of dropping the slumps. And dropping them is not, you see – Schumpeter's account of the cycle: he distinguishes between normal and abnormal elements in the cycle. Normal elements are that when you have developments, you're going to have something better brought in, and you are going to have firms that are obsolete going to the wall. And that is normal if you are having growth. But the abnormal elements are the panics and all the fears and so on that are generated when people see a slump coming. This is the sort of thing he thinks education can get rid of. And that is what the pure cycle, more fully stated, would do. It would distinguish between obsolete firms that have to be allowed to go to the wall and firms that are suffering from some incidental block that can be remedied by giving credit and carrying them over. And making these decisions is where government would have something to do with it.

**Question:** Could you say something about the permanent wartime economy that we are living in?

**Lonergan:** Well, it is the deficit spending, eh? Why are Germany and Japan on the top of the world in economic affairs? Because they haven't been supporting a navy, an army, and an air force since the end of the Second World War. A Montreal businessman said to me, 'When agents for a German firm come to Montreal, they don't have to look me up. I have to find them. Otherwise my competitors would be underselling me.' They didn't have the social overhead of an army, a navy, and an air force, and that is a big overhead. It is called the social overhead.

**Question:** You have rather consistently disavowed the term ‘pioneer’ as descriptive of your achievement, and you continue to thematize yourself in story. I have in mind your statement about the deficiency in *Insight* regarding what we now term ‘psychic conversion.’ Would you comment on the possibility of accepting the title of ‘original genius’ as you apply that to Aquinas in the *Verbum* articles? My reason for asking that, apart from, I think, the justice involved, is to clarify the place of *Method in Theology*. The functional specialties seem to me – the terms research, interpretation, history, doctrines, systematics, and communication – can be misleadingly construed in cognitional categories. So I think it would clarify that ...

**Lonergan:** Well, if it helps you thing that way, do so. But let me point out the drawback. The drawback is that people find me very hard to understand, and people who are enthusiastic about my stuff, they think they are fanatics, and they write me off, eh? You could say it is new.

**Question:** I want to try and get at where the newness is. It seems to me that the six functional specialties of research, interpretation, history, and then doctrines, systematics, and communications are really defined in relationship to dialectic and foundations. Is that a proper way of going about understanding method?

**Lonergan:** There are four levels, eh? And the idea of method is distinguishing tasks. What do you do when you are doing research? Well, it is not the same as interpreting, although you have to do a certain amount of interpreting when you are doing research. But research is finding out what the proper text is, a critical edition of the text, assembling the materials. My *Verbum* articles rested on 6 by 9 cards about this thick, you know, one at a time, and so on. To distinguish these different tasks: I started with the problem teaching theology, and when you’d be doing doctrines, the question would arise, Well, what does it mean? What could it possibly mean? Well, you have to go to systematics to give an answer to that question. And when you’d be doing the systematics, the question would arise, well, is it true? And they could keep banging you back and forth from pillar to post all the time. I got that distinction made first. And I have that in my textbooks. In the summer of 1964 I gave a course on method in terms of four functional specialties. In February 1965 I decided there were eight. In, for example, my *De Deo Trino*, the first part of the first volume I conceived as positive theology, and that is separate from systematic and dogmatic. But in that first part there is research – look at all the footnotes – interpretation, there is doctrines, all sorts of doctrines, and consequently there is dialectic, picking out where the mistakes were and where the advances were and what they consisted of. Am I meeting your question?

**Question:** I think I might formulate the question this way. Tom is asking about the story. He is also asking about the fact that the general categories are used in the other, certainly in the six lower functional specialties. The general categories emerge in the existential subject only through some story which thematically becomes dialectics and is formulated as foundations only through a long story. And Tom is asking you possibly about the possibility of the home fires going out.

**Lonergan:** That is always possible.

**Question:** Could you comment a little further on that?

**Lonergan:** Well, your story is your life, eh? It is existential. It is your constitutive meaning. It is your private diary, if your private diary were complete. And everyone has to write his own story by living it. I think theology before Vatican II was done in a more intelligent way. You had four solid years of really high school work before you were expected to be entitled to have an opinion on any subject. Since Vatican II people start thinking for themselves before they start doing theology. Now there is no harm in thinking for yourself. But theology is, requires, an awful lot of positive knowledge, an enormous amount. There is the wicked story told about the Cardinal visiting the North American College, and he was shown the library, and he saw a hundred or more volumes bound in green leather, and he asked what these were and was told that's Migne. And then he saw another equally big set bound in red leather and was told that was Migne in Greek. And the Cardinal replied, 'The same man wrote in Greek and Latin!'

**Question:** Is there any other dynamic state of act on the fifth level other than being in love?

**Lonergan:** Well, one could figure them out, eh? All supernatural acts insofar as being in love is supernatural, grace. There is a distinction between natural and supernatural acts, and insofar as you are doing intentionality analysis and you are not introducing new potencies or anything, you haven't the constrictions of the old type of thing.

**Question:** In referring to your eight functional specialties, you mentioned them as differentiated tasks. In *Method*, sort of formally you put the conversions located after the first four. Would you comment a little more on the reason for that?

**Lonergan:** The reason for it is that the first four functional specialties do not presuppose that everyone has faith. Anyone can take part in that game. They won't all be right, but faith is a presupposition of conversion and doctrines and systematics and so on. But that event of faith can precede any investigation of theology.

**Question:** It seems to me that it's obvious that subjectivity is involved in the doing of all eight, and the fuller the subjectivity is the clearer and the more fully the first ones can also be done.

**Lonergan:** One shouldn't think of the eight functional specialties as performed simply by members of one religious group. But you start getting divisions long before you get to dialectic, and the dialectic arises because you are getting the divisions before.

Well, I thank you for your kind attention.