

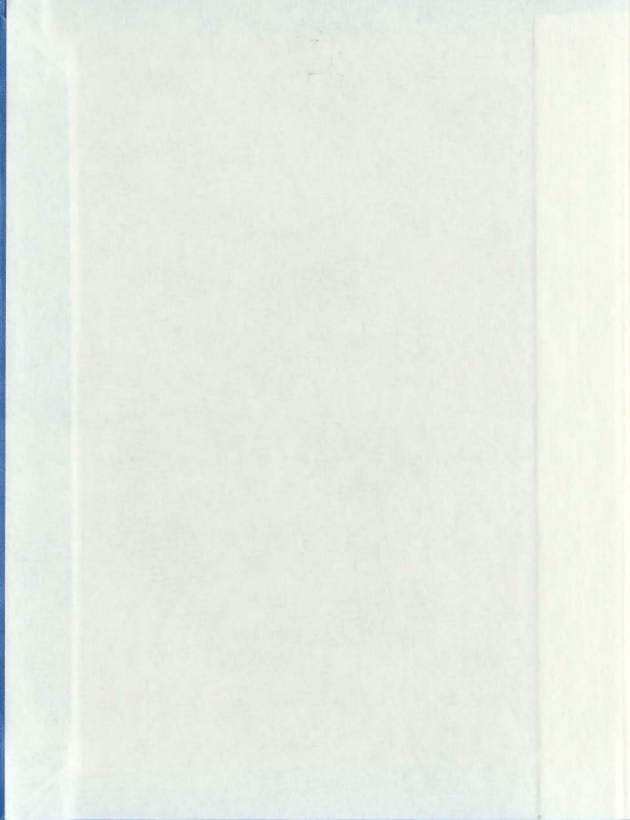
BERNARD LONERGAN'S METHOD AND
RELIGIOUS STUDIES:
FUNCTIONAL SPECIALITIES AND THE
ACADEMIC STUDY OF RELIGION

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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**BERNARD LONERGAN'S METHOD AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES:
FUNCTIONAL SPECIALITIES AND THE ACADEMIC STUDY OF RELIGION**

by

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Abstract

This thesis asks the question, "In what way can the generalised empirical method of Bernard Lonergan contribute to an understanding and development of the methodology of religious studies as it is currently practised in Canada?" The author first presents a brief history of Bernard Lonergan's understanding of the academic study of religion, including his encounter with the phenomenon upon his return from Rome, his reevaluation of 1968, the development of functional specialisation, and his subsequent reflections on the relationship between religious studies and theology. Following a presentation of functional specialisation as an empirical method is an analysis of *The Study of Religion in Canada*, a series of state-of-the-art reviews published by the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion. The author is able to discern patterns of critique amongst the reviewers and ground their findings in Lonergan's method. Finally, the author presents a series of methodological questions concerning religious studies in Canada and his own tentative answers.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Michael Shute of the Department of Religious Studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland for his guidance through this process. His insistence on a return to the sources to examine not what I thought was said but what was actually said has not only made the work stronger, it has turned up some interesting discoveries along the way. To that end, I would also like to thank Dr. Hans Rollmann and the participants of RELS 6100 Interpretations of Religion for their patient witness to earlier attempts at the historical analysis.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Phil and Sally McShane and all the participants of the Second West Dublin conference, not only for their input and intellectual stimulation, but also for their support during a personal situation which at the time seemed tragic but with the distance of time has become somewhat amusing.

Dr. Paul Bowlby of St. Mary's University did me the great service of giving me a pre-publication copy of *Religious Studies in Atlantic Canada*, which enabled me both to complete this project in a timely manner and to include the entire *Study of Religion in Canada* series in my analysis. Without his act of kindness to a stranger, this project would have been for naught.

And, of course, to Jodi McDavid, for her patience, intelligence, and wit.

Table of Contents

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Abstract | ii |
| Acknowledgements | iii |
| Table of Contents | iv |
| Preface | vi |
| Chapter 1 | Religious Studies and the Work of Bernard Lonergan |
| 1.1 | The Origins of Religious Studies |
| 1.2 | Lonergan and Religious Studies and the Writing of <i>Method in Theology</i> |
| 1.3 | Lonergan's Use of Sources: Three Examples |
| 1.4 | Lonergan and <i>The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology</i> |
| Chapter 2 | Lonergan's Method: Functional Specialisation |
| 2.1 | Three Types of Specialisation |
| 2.2 | An Eightfold Division |
| 2.3 | Grounds of the Division |
| 2.4 | <i>In Oratione Obliqua</i> |
| Chapter 3 | Lonergan and Religious Studies |
| 3.1 | The Revaluation of 1968 |
| 3.2 | Religious Studies and Theology - Dialogue and Dialectic |
| Chapter 4 | Analysis - <i>The Study of Religion in Canada</i> |
| 4.1 | The Aims of <i>The Study of Religion in Canada</i> |
| 4.2 | <i>Religious Studies in Alberta</i> (1982) |
| 4.3 | <i>Les sciences religieuses au Québec depuis 1972</i> (1988) |
| 4.4 | <i>Religious Studies in Ontario</i> (1992) |
| 4.5 | "Religious Studies in Manitoba" (1993) |
| 4.6 | "Religious Studies in Saskatchewan" (1993) |
| 4.7 | <i>The Study of Religion in British Columbia</i> (1995) |

| | | |
|---------------------|---|------------|
| 4.8 | <i>Religious Studies in Atlantic Canada</i> (2001) | 110 |
| 4.9 | Reviewing the Reviewers | 127 |
| 4.10 | Addressing the Reviewers: The Possible Contributions of Lonergan's Methodology | 140 |
| Chapter 5 | Towards a Conclusion, in Five Questions | 146 |
| 5.1 | Is Religious Studies a Field Specialisation? | 146 |
| 5.2 | Does Religious Studies Serve a Mediating Function? | 148 |
| 5.3 | Does Religious Studies Have Special Categories? | 151 |
| 5.4 | Is Religious Studies a Subject Specialisation? | 161 |
| 5.5 | What are the Special Categories for Religious Studies? | 165 |
| Conclusion | | 168 |
| Bibliography | | 170 |

Preface

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the possible relevance of functional specialisation, the heuristic method developed by the Canadian philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan, to the study of religion outside of theology as it is practised in Canada in the present day. Informing this application is the history of Bernard Lonergan's own understanding of religious studies. Although the centre of the thesis is the methodological development of functional specialisation, much of the work is properly a *Pars Analytica* and not a *Pars Systematica*.

Chapter One is a brief history of the movement towards an academic study of religion and Lonergan's use of some of its discoveries. Included is a general discussion on how interpreters approach their subject's use of sources, and Lonergan's own use of three sources (Bultmann, Manilowski, and Otto) are given as examples. Finally, Lonergan's 'discovery' of Mircea Eliade and Joseph Kitagawa's anthology, *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology* is shown as a turning point in his own revaluation of religious studies.

Chapter Two is an explanation of functional specialisation. Sections one, two, and three describe the notion of specialisations, the division into two phases, and the further division by four resulting in the eight functional specialities: research, interpretation, history, dialectics, foundations, policies, systematics, and communications. Section four is a history of how the specialities came to be.

Chapter Three in essence begins where Chapter One left off, at the Eliade and

Kitagawa anthology. However, instead of focussing on the contribution of the book to Lonergan's methodological work, it instead looks to the revaluation of religious studies that it instilled in him. From 1968 onward, Lonergan had a growing appreciation for the discipline and over the next ten years he made frequent remarks concerning the role he envisaged religious studies to play in the modern context and its relationship to theology.

Chapter Four leaves the presentation of Lonergan's thought to analyse the six volumes which comprise *The Study of Religion in Canada*, a series of state-of-the-art reviews published by the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion / Corporation Canadienne des Sciences Religieuses. Following a brief introduction, this lengthy chapter presents the findings of the reviewers, focussing on their evaluation of undergraduate curricula of religious studies departments in Canada. The chapter ends with two sections, one which establishes an overall pattern to the series, and one which places that pattern into the Lonergan context as presented in the first three chapters.

Chapter Five is a conclusion which, in five questions, presents a summary of an understanding of religious studies within a new context in a way that doesn't compromise the important work already being done in the discipline: Is religious studies a field specialisation? Does religious studies serve a mediating function? Does religious studies have special categories? Is religious studies a subject specialisation? What are the special categories for religious studies?

A note on gender language: it has been my custom in the past to use the 'generic she' in place of the 'generic he:' that pattern is continued herein.

Chapter One: Religious Studies and the Work of Bernard Lonergan

This chapter sets out to provide the background of the relationship between the study of religion and the work of Bernard Lonergan, the Jesuit philosopher and theologian. Although distanced by training, it shall be shown that Lonergan slowly assimilated some of the ideas of authors considered 'canonical' in the study of religion, particularly of Eliade and the Chicago school.

1. The Origins of Religious Studies

To give a precise date to the origins of religious studies would be, however informed, an educated guess. In the mid-nineteenth century, at the time of empire-building, encounters with 'new' cultures coincided with the last flush of romanticism and the phenomenon of the 'gentlemen-scholars.' In 1812, the brothers Grimm published their first collection of fairy-tales. In 1822, Champollion deciphered the Rosetta Stone. In 1851, Sir Richard Burton wrote his ethnological study *Sindh, and the Races That Inhabit the Valley of the Indus*. In 1870, Heinrich Schliemann made the dig at Troy. The polyphony of attempts to understand this new other, with a tip of the hat to Rousseau's noble savage, gave birth to the interrelated, yet-to-be-made-distinct disciplines of folklore, anthropology, philology, and religious studies. When the insight came to turn these new tools on oneself, when it became apparent that western 'normative' culture

could be investigated similarly, an impenetrable wall was met.¹

This wall can be dated back to 1680. Lonergan, in his 1968 paper "Theology in its New Context," gives this date as the origin of three key movements in western thought. "For that, it seems, was the time of the great beginning. Then it was that Herbert Butterfield placed the origins of modern science, then that Paul Hazard placed the beginning of the Enlightenment, then that Yves Congar placed the beginning of dogmatic theology."² The shift from a deductive to an empirical notion of science threatened theology, the 'queen of the sciences,' whose classicist theses were "conclusions to be proven from the premises provided by Scripture and Tradition."³ Empirical sciences, in the eyes of theology, could not impinge on matters of faith, which were proven either by scripture alone for Protestants, or scripture and tradition for Catholics. The First Vatican Council of 1870 maintained this subordination of sciences to theology. It was in this climate that religious studies, which sought to examine faith, tradition, ritual, and holy writings, not as premises to be deduced from, but as data, came head to head with theology.

There had been, for the sake of missiology and politics, some effort at studying other cultures within the confines of theology. The Reformation and the Counter-Reformation had demonstrated the usefulness for the missionary of translating the tradition into the vernacular, even if only conceived as a transitional measure towards full

¹ The term 'impenetrable wall' is taken from Sean McEvenue, "Scholarship's Impenetrable Wall," a paper delivered at the Lonergan Workshop, June 1999.

² Bernard Lonergan, "Theology in its New Context," *A Second Collection*. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell, eds. (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974), 55-67, at 55.

³ *Ibid.*, 58.

conversion. Such study of other cultures was certainly not a concession to ecumenism in the modern sense, as the *anathemas* of the First Vatican Council betray. Nevertheless, the study of religions developed in Europe, sometimes despite its detractors from theology, sometimes hidden within the relative safety of a neutral discipline like anthropology, sometimes ostensibly within the confines of theology. With a few exceptions, the study of religions has never really been conceived as a separate discipline in Europe.

Meanwhile, in North America, the nineteenth century saw the slow development of programmes of religion, with Yale offering the first PhD in religion in 1869. Over time several private universities, originally founded as denominational centres of learning, severed or divided their theological and religious studies departments from one another. A pivotal time for the new discipline came in the economic boom following the end of the Second World War. For the first time universities were being established *de novo*, and in Canada what were once exclusively church-affiliated institutions came under the control of provincial governments. Schools like the University of Ottawa (founded 1848, under provincial control 1965), Windsor (founded 1857 as Assumption College, under provincial control 1963), and McMaster (founded 1887, under provincial control 1957) in Ontario⁴ all found themselves re-evaluating their foundational stances as they donned their new 'secular' mantle. At the same time, an American Supreme Court

⁴ Harold Remus, William Closson James, and Daniel Fraiken, *Religious Studies in Ontario: A State-of-the-Art Review*, The Study of Religion in Canada Vol. 4 (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier Press, 1992), 6.

decision allowed for the academic study of religion in state universities.⁵ Theology, meanwhile, was still in the process of reflecting on what it could gain from attending to the 'new learning.' For Catholicism, the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), and most particularly its document *Gaudium et Spes*, called for a renewal in theology and for tolerance of and engagement with world religions. It was in this atmosphere that Lonergan returned to Canada from Rome in February of 1965 to begin what would have been a year-and-a-half long sabbatical.⁶

2. Lonergan and Religious Studies and the Writing of *Method in Theology*

It should be remembered that, for all intents and purposes, as an academic Lonergan was a European. His North American schooling consisted of his parish school in Buckingham, St. Michael's, the Jesuit-run boarding school in Montreal, Loyola College, and his novitiate and juniorate years at Guelph. His philosophy was done at Heythrop, he received a BA in languages and mathematics at the University of London, and his theology was, of course, at the Gregorian, having been pulled from the Collège de l'Immaculate-Conception in Montreal after only a few months. He then taught for twenty-five years at Catholic colleges and universities (six at Collège de l'Immaculate-

⁵ *Abington Township School District v. Schempp*, one of many cases concerning the proper role of religion and religious instruction in public schools, had the following ruling: "[I]t might well be said that one's education is not complete without a study of comparative religion or the history of religions and its relationship to the advancement of civilization. It certainly may be said that the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historic qualities. Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistently with the First Amendment." Excerpted from Robert T. Miller and Ronald B. Flowers, *Toward Benevolent Neutrality: Church, State, and the Supreme Court* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 1977), 347.

⁶ All biographical information for Lonergan, unless stated otherwise, is from Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan, Outstanding Christian Thinkers Series* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992).

Conception, six at Christ the King, now Regis College, in Toronto, and thirteen in Rome). Of these years, he had little kind to say: "I taught theology for twenty-five years under impossible conditions. It was that the whole setup of the school was predicated upon things that were fine in the sixteenth-century, but you could not use modern scholarship the way things are lined up."⁷ The revolution (or, at least, revaluation) in theology that he longed for had not yet come: "[The] situation I was in was hopelessly antiquated, but had not yet been demolished – it has since been demolished."⁸ His return to North America provided the opportunity to work in an atmosphere of modern scholarship in the major context of the phenomena of the study of religion as an empirical science and the proximate context of a generation of his students from Canada and Rome who were trying to effect the changes he had been advocating.

Soon after his arrival, Lonergan was diagnosed with lung cancer, eventually resulting in the removal of his right lung. Prone to infection, he was slow to recover, and he never resumed his teaching position in Rome. Instead, he was a professor Emeritus at Regis College for the next ten years (with one year, 1971-72, as Stillman Professor at Harvard), and later, from 1975 to 1983, the Visiting Distinguished Professor at Boston College.

From 1965 to 1971, Lonergan, fearing he would not finish in time, worked on *Method in Theology*. The book was a development of some of his earlier work, most notably the cognitional structure outlined in *Insight*, his *magnum opus* of 1957, his

⁷ Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophy of God, and Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973), 15.

lectures on theological method taught at the Gregorianum between 1958 and 1962, and reflections on his own theological writings, from his doctoral dissertation on the notion of operative grace in Aquinas to the course manuals for his theology courses in Rome.

Loneragan had discovered the work of Mircea Eliade in 1954, too late to insert more than a footnote into *Insight*.⁹ But in the various summer symposia given on *Insight* following its publication, two of which have been published (the August 1958 lectures at St. Mary's University in Halifax with the title *Understanding and Being*,¹⁰ and the August 1959 lectures at Xavier University in Cincinnati with the title *Topics in Education*¹¹), Eliade's work is incorporated into the text. Lonergan notes Eliade's insistence that the proper field to investigate the significance of symbols is primitive religions, and how fundamental images form a transcultural language.¹² Taking Eliade within the Jungian tradition, he notes the Jungian 'collective unconsciousness' as Eliade's key to the study of the history of religions.¹³ Finally, he identifies the history of religions as a unique school of thought in which Eliade is working, as opposed to some study

⁸ Bernard Lonergan, "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S. J.," *A Second Collection*, 209-30, at 212.

⁹ Lonergan draws attention to Eliade's *Images et symboles* (Paris: Gallimard, 1952) and *Traité d'histoire des religions* (Paris: Payot, 1948) in *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 572 n. 7. The dating of the discovery to 1954 is through a letter of 5 May 1954, to F. Crowe, cited in Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994), 147-79, at 152.

¹⁰ Edited by Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli. Revised and augmented by Frederick E. Crowe with the collaboration of Elizabeth A. Morelli, Mark D. Morelli, Robert M. Doran, and Thomas V. Daly. *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* 5 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

¹¹ Edited by Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, revising and augmenting the unpublished text prepared by James Quinn and John Quinn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

¹² *Understanding and Being*, 216 and n. 24, 217 and n. 25; *Topics in Education*, 56 and n. 24, 65 and n. 49, 221 and n. 28.

¹³ *Topics in Education*, 57.

undertaken by Eliade within another branch of learning.¹⁴ In two special courses given in 1959, “De Intellectu et Methodo” in the spring and “De Systemate et Historia” in the fall, which flank the *Topics in Education* lectures, Eliade is given some prominence. “De Intellectu et Methodo” names Eliade as one working on the project of bridging the ‘chasm’ (taken from Luke 16:26) between intellect and the senses.¹⁵ “De Systemate et Historia” gives Eliade as an example of progress in the human sciences that contributes towards understanding history as a science in the classical sense.¹⁶

After these symposia, though, within the published material Eliade is mentioned less frequently. He is referenced in a footnote in the 1961 text of *De Deo Trino: Pars Analytica*.¹⁷ “Time and Meaning,” a lecture given at the Thomas More Institute in Montreal in September 1962, makes mention of Eliade’s work on shamanism and how it indicates the rise of individualism.¹⁸ Lastly, in a talk entitled “Dimensions of Meaning” given in May of 1965 at Marquette University, Lonergan enumerates Eliade in a list of those involved in the twentieth century project of the rediscovery of myth, with specific reference again to Eliade’s idea of a primal, transcultural symbolic language.¹⁹ This is the last mention of Eliade in the published works for a stretch of four or five years, during

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁵ Bernard Lonergan, *De Intellectu et methodo*, Notes by students of theology course, Gregorian University, 1959, 23-24 of the MS.

¹⁶ Bernard Lonergan, *De Systemate et Historia*, Notes for theology course, Gregorian University, 1959, 8 of the MS.

¹⁷ Bernard Lonergan, *De Deo Trino: Pars Analytica* (Rome: Apud Aedes Universitatis Gregorianae, 1961), 287.

¹⁸ Bernard Lonergan, “Time and Meaning,” *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* 6 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 94-121, at 120.

¹⁹ Bernard Lonergan, “Dimensions of Meaning,” *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Lonergan* 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 222-45, at 242.

which time he would have been concentrating his efforts on the writing of *Method in Theology*.

There is a tendency to read the people we study somewhat abstracted from their own history as if they arrived at their ideas and their sources fully formed, and that, barring the man from Porlock, we have it all. We forget that there are moments when the author has yet to have the insight for she has yet to read the sources, which provide the phantasm. Lonergan's 'discovery' of Eliade, for example, came too late for *Insight*, but is mentioned only in passing in *Method in Theology*, having been absorbed into the larger context of Lonergan's work in between. Were one to plot a trajectory, there is a discernible 'bell curve' in Lonergan's citations of Eliade, reaching its apogee in the *Topics in Education* lectures of 1959.²⁰ A similar graph, again reaching its peak in 1959 but with a slower descent, could also be demonstrated for his citations of Karl Jaspers' *The Origin and Goal of History*.²¹ Much has been made of Lonergan and Jaspers,²² but, in the published work, 1962's "Time and Meaning" is the last time Jaspers warrants more than a sentence or two, and the editors of both *Collection* (both the 1967 and 1988 editions) and *A Second Collection*, and Lonergan himself for *Method in Theology*, found the references so passing that they deemed them not to warrant footnotes.

This point begs an important question not simply for the study of Lonergan but

²⁰ This observation thus contradicts (or, at least qualifies) Fred Crowe's assertion that "references to Eliade are regular from [1954] on," in "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," 152.

²¹ Michael Bullock, trans. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1953).

²² Philip McShane, for example, working within the Lonergan tradition, has taken the correlation between Lonergan's three stages of meaning and Jaspers first and second axial shifts as a manifest for effecting change in the academy through functional specialisation, and the Axial Press has been incorporated to publish works relating to that same Lonergan/Jaspers second shift.

for any work of interpretation or history. When does a source become a commonsense insight? Taking the editorial decisions as our key, we can note various stages in the use of sources. First there is the point prior to the encounter with the source, where the author may be grappling with an idea. There is an anecdote (perhaps apocryphal) that illustrates this point quite nicely. At a symposium soon after the publication of *Method in Theology*, Lonergan was asked whether he discovered the importance of feelings after reading Max Scheler. Lonergan, in a voice both hurt and irritated, looked at the interlocutor and said, "I have feelings too, you know."²³ There is a difference between understanding the importance of an issue and having the technical apparatus and language to hand. Such would be the second stage, when a source is found, is cited frequently, is compared and contrasted with the author's own work, and is absorbed or, if found wanting, discarded.

[The] study of the text is a process of learning. As one learns, one discovers more and more the questions that concerned the author, the issues that confronted him, the problems he was trying to solve, the material and methodological resources at his disposal for solving them. So one comes to set aside one's own initial interests and concerns, to share those of the author, to reconstruct the context of his thought and speech. My own experience of this change was in writing my doctoral dissertation. I had been brought up a Molinist. I was studying St. Thomas' *Thought on Gratia Operans*, a study later published in *Theological Studies*, 1941-1942. Within a month or so it was completely evident to me that Molinism had no contribution to make to an understanding of Aquinas.²⁴

This process of learning is this process of playing with an author or an idea until it

²³ See note 26, below, for a similar account.

²⁴ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London, 1972; latest reprint Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 162-63 and n. 5. The study he is referring to has been reprinted as *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

'makes its contribution to an understanding' or, just as likely, does not. Thus the spike of Eliade and Jaspers references in *Topics in Education*. At the time he would have been teaching the courses on the Incarnate Word and the Trinity at the Gregorian, preparing course manuals for both, all the while trying to introduce notions of historical consciousness and empirical scholarship within the 'impossible' conditions.²⁵ Thus the lectures would have been a prime opportunity to test some new ideas within the confines of an eager audience.²⁶

Finally, there is a third stage, and this is what prompts the question for interpreters. There comes a point following the process of learning when the source has been assimilated into the thought of the author, when she is no longer studying the text. References, then, are not in the nature of those from within the process of learning. The sources are used implicitly, as if the author is operating within the tradition, and reference is made back to the source more as an illustrative example. This is especially true for complementary source material. Lonergan cited Aquinas consistently throughout his

²⁵ By 1959, Lonergan had taught his course on the Incarnate Word three times (Fall 1953, Fall 1955, and Spring 1958), and his course on the Trinity three times (Spring 1955, Spring 1957, and Fall 1958). These courses, and a regular seminar ('Exercitatio') on operative grace in Thomas, constituted the core of his teaching at Rome. The Incarnate Word course produced *De Verbo incarnato* (Rome, Pontificis Universitatis Gregorianae, 1st edition 1960, 3rd 1964), and the course on the Trinity produced *Divinarum personarum conceptionem analogicam evoluit Bernardus Lonergan, S.I.* (Rome, apud aedes Universitatis Gregorianae, 1st edition 1957, 2nd edition 1959), and *De Deo trino: Pars analytica* (1961), brought together in one volume as *De Deo trino* (1964). The *Topics in Education* lectures were also sandwiched between the two special courses taught in the 1959 calendar year: a course on understanding and method (*De Intellectu et methodo*) in the spring and a course on system and history (*De Systemate et historia*) in the fall. For an indication of his attempts to introduce modern scholarship into the impossible conditions of the Gregorian, see chapter one of *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica*.

²⁶ "The viewpoint kept moving. In the summer of 1959 [...] I gave an institute at Xavier in Cincinnati, on the philosophy of education. In preparing that I read a lot of Piaget, also Susanne Langer, *Feeling and Form*, things like that, and that was the beginning of entry into these things. Then von Hildebrand, and Frings' book on Scheler were a big help. I was also meeting questions of my own. One also has feelings oneself, you know." "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan S. J.," *A Second Collection*, 222.

writing, and he clearly saw himself, not as a Thomist, but under Thomas' influence. But other sources that enriched and nuanced his work, like Jaspers or Eliade, disappear as source material but not as influences. The insights that they bring become habitual, and they can be called upon when context warrants, knowing that "a wink is as good as a nod, that full statement is superfluous and would only irritate."²⁷ By no means was Lonergan an Eliade scholar or Jaspers scholar, but he knew enough to relate their work to his own.

To illustrate, in "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S. J.," Lonergan was twice asked about Jaspers. "Asked to comment on the present cultural crisis in relation to his own recent interests and to Jaspers' *The Origin and Goal of History*, Fr. Lonergan remarked: 'I won't go back to Jaspers (it is some time since I read his book).'"²⁸ But later, he does contrast his work with Jaspers' more explicitly:

On being asked, in the context of Jaspers' discussion of axial periods, whether the shift, or the possibility of a communal shift, to interiority, was axial, Fr. Lonergan replied: "Yes. Of course, with Jaspers, his axial age is the emergence of individualism more than anything. My distinctions are first of all: realms of meaning."²⁹

It is in this spirit, perhaps, that we should proceed when referring to the relationship between Lonergan and religious studies. He was not a scholar of religious studies; his perusal of the literature was mostly of someone working in a complementary study wishing to discover similarities and differences, trends and variations. When asked to comment on these similarities, he could draw on what he had read in an intelligent, reasonable and responsible way without any claim to expertise. He was, in effect,

²⁷ *Method in Theology*, 71.

²⁸ "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S. J.," 209.

working precisely in the manner he set forth in his method: working within a functional speciality, relating his work to others working within the same speciality, relating that to other specialities within the discipline, relating the discipline to other sciences, relating the sciences to human living.³⁰

3. Lonergan's Use of Sources: Three Examples

It is possible, then, to look at the sources used by Lonergan from religious studies (or commonly used by religious studies) and see how they shape and complement his work. Without being exhaustive, these include Bultmann, Malinowski, and Otto.

Lonergan makes reference frequently to the work of Rudolf Bultmann throughout his writing, both in a critical and a supportive manner. In *Insight*, Lonergan identifies Bultmann as one in whose work myth is a prominent category,³¹ but locates Bultmann in the existentialist counterpositions that make to "block the identification of the real with being, of being with the intelligently grasped and reasonably affirmed, and of the protean notion of being with the objects of putative intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation."³² But, in 1958's "Method in Catholic Theology," Bultmann is an example of one who at least takes the methodological step of reversing counterpositions,³³ while in *Topics in Education* he is noted for drawing his hermeneutical principles from a

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 226-27.

³⁰ The next chapter will focus entirely on functional specialisation.

³¹ *Insight*, 554.

³² *Ibid.*, 607.

³³ Bernard Lonergan, "Method in Catholic Theology," *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, 29-53, at 36.

philosophical stance.³⁴ This is given fuller voice in 1960's "The Philosophy of History:"

[Bultmann] distinguishes between understanding and preunderstanding, *Verständnis* and *Vorverständnis*. The understanding, the *Verständnis*, is this interlocking of the data (although he expresses himself somewhat differently). But the preunderstanding, the *Vorverständnis*, is a philosophy, and his philosophy for interpreting the New Testament is Heidegger's. I think he has the better part of the argument against the less sophisticated New Testament scholars, insofar as they say he is using a philosophy to interpret the New Testament. 'But so are you,' he says, 'and I know what my philosophy is; yours is just a set of unconscious assumptions. I am making it quite plain to people what I am presuming. You are unconsciously – perhaps deliberately, but then you are just trying to fool them – passing off your assumptions without letting them know.'³⁵

This love-hate relationship with Bultmann – on the one hand, respecting him for explicitly rooting his hermeneutics in philosophy, on the other, decrying the philosophical principles he is employing – continues throughout his writing, and Bultmann is the principle modern scripture scholar with whom Lonergan engages. Perhaps his definitive statement on Bultmann comes from 1963's "Exegesis and Dogma:"

At the present time in New Testament studies, there is Bultmann, who represents something analogous to the classical type of exegesis insofar as he demands a philosophy to state his ultimate concepts; his philosophy, however, is just the opposite of the classical philosophy, which is in objective categories. For Bultmann, objective categories are myth, and everything has to be transposed into subjectivity.³⁶

Such is the nature of Lonergan's assessment of Bultmann, and he continues to make reference to this split throughout *Method in Theology* and the associated writings.

³⁴ *Topics in Education*, 121.

³⁵ Bernard Lonergan, "The Philosophy of History," *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, 54-79, at 59-60.

³⁶ Bernard Lonergan, "Exegesis and Dogma," *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, 142-159, at 154.

In the *Understanding and Being* lectures of 1958, Lonergan at one point speaks of these differences between practical concerns and theoretical concerns, between common sense and philosophy, a theme recurrent throughout Lonergan's writings.³⁷ He brings up Branislow Malinowski's *Magic, Science, and Religion, and Other Essays*,³⁸ and uses the Trobriand Islanders in comparison with the modern scientist.

The Islanders were as intelligent and reasonable as any westerner when it came to practical concerns: preparing the ground, planting the seed, pulling the weeds, reaping the harvest, keeping enough seed for the following season. But anything outside that sphere of knowing was myth and magic, and said magic would interrupt the practical sphere when something new or uncontrollable occurred. Similarly, the modern scientist has an analogous worldview. The Trobriand Islander is intelligent and reasonable in the practical, and irrational in the theoretical. The modern scientist, too, is intelligent and reasonable in the practical, and irrational in the theoretical, but not because beyond her practical sphere is myth and magic, but because beyond her practical sphere is "antimyth and antimagic – a blank."

If a vacuum exists in the popular mind, a terrific irrational national convulsion can result. This is one of the main problems of our time. We cannot be content merely to make more cultivated and more civilised the intelligent and rational part of Trobriand living, while maintaining a surrounding no man's land which used to be inhabited by myth and magic but which is now empty – we do not admit, Here be strange beasts; we simply do not bother about it. The real problem of human living is the problem of occupying this territory, this blank, with intelligence and reasonableness, just as we have occupied the territory that can be

³⁷ The relevant pages are *Understanding and Being*, 99-101.

³⁸ (New York: The Free Press, 1948).

controlled by sensible consequences.³⁹

This is the same 'problem of the chasm' with which he was struggling in *De Intellectu et Methodo*,⁴⁰ although he does not allude to Malinowski there. It is thus, in effect, the necessity for method, for an intelligent way to not only answer the questions that are prompted by exigencies outside sensible consequences but to mediate and communicate those answers to the larger community.

Malinowski also serves to illustrate the analogous problem of the differences between Hebrew and Greek culture in the section in *De Deo Trino* about the ante-Nicene movement.⁴¹ He is used again to discuss, by its absence in the Trobriand Islanders, technical meaning in 1963's "The Analogy of Meaning."⁴² Lonergan uses him in the context of early language in his section on stages of meaning in *Method in Theology*.⁴³ Lastly, he is given as an example of developments in the sociology of religion where religion is understood as ultimately more significant than mere superstition in the 1974 paper "Method: Trends and Variations."⁴⁴ In none of the instances does Lonergan go into any detail on Malinowski's findings: he does not criticise methods, check sources, address critics, or any task that would be required were one to become an interpreter of Malinowski or an historian of primitive cultures. Similarly, Lonergan makes limited

³⁹ *Understanding and Being*, 101.

⁴⁰ See note 15, above.

⁴¹ *De Deo Trino: Pars Analytica*, 86-87. Sections of the 1964 edition (renamed the *Pars Dogmatica*) were translated and published as *The Way to Nicea*, trans. Conn O'Donovan, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976). The corresponding pages are 108-109.

⁴² Bernard Lonergan, "The Analogy of Meaning," *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, 183-213, at 194.

⁴³ *Method in Theology*, 89.

⁴⁴ Bernard Lonergan, "Method: Trends and Variations," *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan*, S. J., Frederick E. Crowe, ed. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 13-22, at 19.

albeit not uninformed use of Rudolf Otto's *The Idea of the Holy*.⁴⁵ In *Insight*, Lonergan discusses the sense of the unknown:

[On] the intellectual level the operator is concretely the detached and disinterested desire to know. It is this desire, not in contemplation of the already known, but headed towards further knowledge, orientated into the known unknown. The principle of dynamic correspondence calls for a harmonious orientation on the psychic level, and from the nature of the case such an orientation would have to consist in some cosmic dimension, in some intimation of unplumbed depths, that accrued in man's feelings, emotions, sentiments. Nor is this merely a theoretical conclusion, as R. Otto's study of the nonrational element in the *Idea of the Holy* rather abundantly indicates.⁴⁶

Both 1970's "The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World,"⁴⁷ and the section on religious experience in the chapter on religion in *Method in Theology*, in language so similar that they must have been written virtually contemporaneously, list Otto's *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* along with Tillich's 'grasp of ultimate concern' and Karl Rahner's expounding on St. Ignatius Loyola's consolation without a cause.⁴⁸

4. Lonergan and *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology*

Lonergan's use of Otto is limited, but it is of a piece with a major contribution he found to his work from the history of religions school, namely, Friedrich Heiler's essay "The History of Religions as a Preparation for the Cooperation of Religions," in an anthology of methodological essays edited by Mircea Eliade and Joseph Kitagawa.

⁴⁵ (London: Oxford, 1923).

⁴⁶ *Insight*, 555.

⁴⁷ *A Second Collection*, 165-87.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 173; *Method in Theology*, 106.

This anthology, *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology*,⁴⁹ seems to have fallen into Lonergan's hands in the summer or early autumn of 1968. In *Method in Theology*, he cites three articles from the volume: Heiler's, Eliade's "Methodological Remarks on the Study of Religious Symbolism," and Ernst Benz's "On Understanding Non-Christian Religions." Benz's work on Shintoism (and, to a lesser extent, Buddhism) is cited to clarify the notion of hierophanies, the association of the otherwise imperceivable, unimaginable divine as the objective of the transcendental notions in their unrestricted and absolute aspects with the object, event, ritual, or recitation, that occasions religious experience.⁵⁰ Eliade's essay is given as representative of his collected work in the area of symbol and primitive religions.⁵¹

It is Heiler's essay that Lonergan finds the most useful. The summer of 1968 was given above as the probable date for Lonergan's first encounter with the volume, because it is in October and December of that year that Lonergan gave two papers which contain the first references to Heiler which are to be referred to again not only in *Method in Theology* but throughout his writings on religious studies in the decade following. "Theology and Man's Future" was given at the sesquicentennial celebrations of St. Louis University on October 17, 1968. "The Future of Christianity" was first given at Holy Cross College, Worcester Massachusetts, on December 14, 1968. Both, as their titles indicate, are concerned with the place of Christianity in the modern world and its relevancy for the future.

⁴⁹ (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

⁵⁰ *Method in Theology*, 88, 108.

The theme of St. Louis University's celebratory symposium was "Theology in the City of Man." Lonergan's paper takes the approach of dealing indirectly with theology in three manners: "as it is situated in a contemporary university influenced by other disciplines, as possibly relevant to questions other disciplines raise and to problems they confront and, consequently, as making its contribution to the thought that will direct the future of man."⁵¹ For his first theme, he notes five areas that merit attention for the influence that they have had on theology: history, philosophy, religious studies, method, and communications. On religious studies, he gives a lengthy description, here repeated in full.

A third major influence is the field of religious studies: the phenomenology of religion, the psychology of religion, the sociology of religion, the history of religions, and the philosophy of religion. I call this a major influence, not because the influence has been conspicuous, but because of very significant and powerful contemporary trends. The first stems from Vatican II, and it consists in the Church's concern with ecumenism, with non-Christian religions, and with the atheist negation of religion. This fact requires the theologian to reflect on his religion, not in isolation from all others, but in conjunction with others. It requires him to attend, not only to the differences separating his religion from others, but also to the similarities that connect them with one another. To meet such requirements theology will be led into the field of religious studies and, indeed, while retaining its identity, to conceive itself as a particular type of religious studies. There is a second factor leading to the same conclusion. I have already spoken of the relations of theology with history and with philosophy. But if it is to take its place in contemporary culture, it has also to be related to all the human sciences; and it is in the field of religious studies, in the phenomenology and psychology and sociology of religion, that it will find models exhibiting what can be done and accounts of what has been tried and found unsatisfactory. Finally, there is the theological doctrine that God grants all men sufficient grace for their salvation. This doctrine is relevant to religious studies; it makes them

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁵² Bernard Lonergan, "Theology and Man's Future," *A Second Collection*, 135-48, at 135.

studies of the manifold ways God's grace comes to men and operates as the seed that falls on rocks or amidst thorns or by the way side or on good ground to bring forth fruit thirty or sixty or a hundred fold.⁵³

On his third theme, the contribution of theology to the thought that will make the future of man, Lonergan again draws the conclusion that ultimately, when engaged in a project the authentic person, or the person striving for authenticity, will ask questions of the value of the project they are undertaking. "Is what I have achieved really worthwhile? Is what I hope for really worth while? Because men can raise such questions, and answer them, and live by the answers, they can be principles of benevolence and beneficence, of genuine co-operation, of true love."⁵⁴ This love, for Lonergan, is not man's achievement but God's gift. Following an exhortation of Paul (Rom. 5:5, 8:35, 38-39), he cites Heiler, a "celebrated student of religions," who has listed seven features common to the "high religions."⁵⁵

Whereas in "Theology and Man's Future" Heiler's findings warrant a single paragraph towards the end, by the time "The Future of Christianity" was presented, two months later, Lonergan uses Heiler's seven features as a starting point:

For it will draw attention away from what is outward and toward what is inward and vital in religion. It will reassure us that the Christian churches and congregations, despite their many differences, have in common something that is very profound and dynamic, that promises Christianity a future, that constitutes a basis for serious dialogue not only among Christians but among the representatives of all the world religions.⁵⁶

The lecture is a further exploration of how being in love in an unrestricted manner

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 138-39.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 144.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 146.

⁵⁶ Bernard Lonergan, "The Future of Christianity," *A Second Collection*, 149-163, at 149.

is a universal phenomenon, and how it is existential commitment and not appeal to dogma that sets the course of how we live in the world.

If one takes the various lectures Lonergan was giving throughout 1968, they neatly correspond to various sections within *Method in Theology*. "Belief: Today's Issue"⁵⁷ roughly corresponds to section 5, 'Beliefs,' of chapter 2, 'The Human Good.' "Natural Knowledge of God,"⁵⁸ which attempts to address whether God is an object that can be known as such, leaves its mark in section 4, 'Pluralism in Religious Language,' of chapter 12, 'Foundations,' and section 2, 'Closed Options,' of chapter 13, 'Systematics.' Lectures of 1969, most of them unpublished, can by their titles alone be linked to sections of *Method*.⁵⁹ The general themes of "Theology and Man's Future" and "The Future of Christianity," namely the universal experience of being in love in an unrestricted manner, are echoed in sections 3, 4, and 5, 'Religious Experience,' 'Expressions of Religious Experience,' and 'Religious Development Dialectical,' of chapter 4, 'Religion.' Here he condenses Heiler's main conclusion to a simple paragraph:

[There] is at least one scholar on whom one may call for an explicit statement on the areas common to such world religions as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrian Mazdaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism.

⁵⁷ A paper prepared for the Pax Romana Symposium on Faith, Synod Hall, Pittsburgh, March 16, 1968. In *A Second Collection*, 87-99.

⁵⁸ A paper at the CTSA Convention, Washington, D.C., June 17-20, 1968. In *A Second Collection*, 117-33.

⁵⁹ These lectures include "History," at the Thomas More Institute, Montreal, February 24, 1969; "The Alerted Mind: Theology and Other Disciplines" also at the Thomas More Institute, Montreal, Feb. 25, 1969; "Meaning as a Category of Interpretation," a lecture in the Symposium on Hermeneutics, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., April 25-26, 1969; "What Is Theology?" during orientation week at Regis College, Willowdale (Toronto), Sept. 16, 1969; "Faith and Beliefs" at the meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Baltimore, October 24, 1969; "Hermeneutics and the Philosophy of Religion" at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., Nov. 21, 1969; and "Religious Commitment" at the convocation of the University of St. Michael's College, Toronto, Nov. 28, 1969.

For Friedrich Heiler has described at some length seven such common areas. While I cannot reproduce here the rich texture of his thought, I must, at least, give a list of the topics he treats: that there is a transcendent reality; that he is immanent in human hearts; that he is supreme beauty, truth, righteousness, goodness; that he is love, mercy, compassion; that the way to him is repentance, self-denial, prayer; that the way is love of one's neighbor, even of one's enemies; that the way is love of God, so that bliss is conceived as knowledge of God, union with him, or dissolution into him.⁶⁰

'Religion' is a pivotal chapter (in a book filled with pivotal chapters) on which turns the notion of functional specialization. For through it, through establishing the dynamism of sanctifying grace not as simply a theological (Christian) category but as a phenomenon found throughout the world, making it as constitutive of the human person as cognitional structure, Lonergan can ground the eightfold division of the functional specialities into two groups of four, one which is prior to conversion, and one which follows.

Thus with Heiler, Lonergan is making a move that will be integral to his method: being in love in an unrestricted manner. Heiler's seven areas common to world religions, Otto's *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, Tillich's 'grasp of ultimate concern,' St. Ignatius Loyola's consolation without a cause, the orientation towards mystery in Eliade's shamans, and the practical / theoretical, subjective / objective chasm which he observed in Malinowski's Trobriand Islanders, and Bultmann's aborted way of coping with the chasm all inform functional specialisation and its importance.

⁶⁰ *Method in Theology*, 109.

Chapter Two: Lonergan's Method: Functional Specialisation

In February of 1965, Lonergan returned to Canada from Rome to begin what would have been a year-and-a-half long sabbatical. His major concern at that time was theological method, discovering a way of turning theology into an empirical science that is understood as an ongoing process and not a permanent achievement. Since 1959, he had been teaching special courses on theological method at the Gregorianum,¹ and what was published as *Insight* had, originally, been conceived as a preface to a theological method.² In February of 1965, though, a moment of insight hit him, and he drew a primitive diagram which was the first tentative description of functional specialisation.³

This chapter, however, will not proceed *in via inventionis* but *in via doctrinae*: the history of how the specialities came to be distinguished will come afterwards. The major divisions of this chapter come directly from the first three sections of the fifth chapter of *Method in Theology*, "Functional Specialities."

¹ Two courses were given with the name *De Intellectu et Methodo*, one in the spring of 1959 and one in the fall of 1961; both were cross-listed with philosophy, which may account for the name. Three courses called *De Methodo theologiae* were offered: one in the spring of 1962 (cross-listed to Moral Theology), one in both the spring and fall of 1963 (the latter of which was cross-listed to philosophy, while the former is not given as cross-listed in the Tekippe bibliography). *De Systemate et Historia* was offered in the fall of 1959. For all of these courses, there are either his own lecture notes or notes taken by students and approved by him for circulation. There is one further course from the fall of 1954, *De Methodis universum inquisitio theoretica*, cross-listed to philosophy, but there does not appear to be any notes extant.

² "I worked at *Insight* from 1949 to 1953. During the first three years my intention was an exploration of methods generally in preparation for a study of the method of theology." *"Insight Revisited," A Second Collection*, 263-78, at 268.

³ Page labelled Batch V, 7, 1 (A472), available from the Archives at the Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto.

I. Three Types of Specialisation

Specialisation is first and foremost a form of collaboration. Collaboration is necessary when the effort required to accomplish a specific task exceeds the abilities of one person. The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. When a task need be performed only once, collaboration can proceed on a more or less ad hoc basis. When a task is ongoing, collaboration becomes normative.

A task can be simple or compound. A task is simple when it can not be broken down into two or more smaller, different tasks. A task is compound when it can be broken down into two or more simple tasks. When a simple task exceeds the abilities of one person, collaboration takes the form of dividing up the labour required and having each person perform a part of the same simple task. When a task is compound, collaboration can take one of two forms, either dividing up the labour required and having each person perform a part of each simple task, or dividing the compound task into its simple tasks and having each person perform a specific simple task in its entirety. When a compound task is ongoing and collaboration is normative, a compound task divided into its constituent simple tasks can either be performed by having the simple tasks performed by various persons on an ad hoc basis or by having the same person perform the same simple task on an ongoing basis. When the same person performs the same simple task on an ongoing basis, that is specialisation.

When a simple task exceeds the abilities of one person, and collaboration takes the form of dividing up the labour required and having each person perform a part of the same simple task, division can either be ad hoc or based on the content of the task. When

the same person performs the same simple task on the same content on an ongoing basis. that too is specialisation.

When a compound task is divided into its simple tasks, each task can be located in time according to its relationship to the other simple tasks. Thus, each task, save for the first and the last, has a task that comes before it and one that comes after. When a task need be performed only once, the first task has nothing prior and the last task has nothing to follow: the first task is the beginning and the last task is the end. When a task is ongoing, the first and last tasks are first and last only formally: there is no beginning and no end, the first task follows the last, and the last task is followed by the first.

As a task is ongoing, as new situations arise, a person performing the same simple task devises new techniques, new language, new insights into the task being performed. A simple task may evolve into a compound task, and further collaboration may be required. Traditions develop and progress, and techniques, language, and insights are passed down through the tradition, ever growing more complex and specialised. Traditions decline, and the wealth of technique and skill nevertheless forgets that there is a larger, unified, compound task of which they are but a part, albeit, like all the other constituent tasks, an integral part. There is instead an emphasis on the content on which the tasks are performed.

Three types of specialisation can now be discerned. There is specialisation based on the division of content of the formally first task. There is specialisation based on the division of content of the formally last task. There is specialisation based on the division of a compound task into its simple tasks prior to the division of content of the simple

tasks.

The task of any human science is to mediate between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of something in that matrix. The task of mediation entails a movement from the accumulation of data to the communication of results. There is thus a type of specialisation based on a division of the accumulated data, the formally first task, which Lonergan calls field specialisation. There is a type of specialisation based on a division of the communicated results, the formally last task, subject specialisation. There is a type of specialisation based on the divisions of tasks in the movement from data to results, functional specialisation.

When one understands one's speciality simply in terms of the data one investigates, one understands oneself as working 'in the field of...' Thus the field of theology can be divided into the genera of scriptural, patristic, medieval, reformation studies (*inter alia*); scriptural studies can be further divided into the species of Old Testament and New Testament; Old Testament studies can be further divided into the subspecies of Law, the Prophets, the Writings. When one understands one's speciality simply in terms of the results to be communicated, one understands oneself as working 'in the subject of...' Thus the subject of theology can be divided into the genera of biblical, pastoral, historical, and theological departments; the biblical department can be divided into Semitic languages, Hebrew history, the religions of the ancient Near East, and Christian theology.⁴

⁴ These examples are taken from *Method in Theology*, 125-26. As a mnemonic, one can think of field specialisation determining what your primary sources are, while subject specialisation determines in which

The danger with both field and subject specialisation is twofold. First, as one's speciality (either field or subject) grows narrower, there is a tendency to forget how the task one is performing relates to the tasks others are performing within the collaborative enterprise. Second, as one's speciality (either field or subject) grows narrower, there is a tendency to perform all the simple tasks that constitute the compound task of moving from data to results and thereby fail to distinguish between the various tasks.

Functional specialisation answers the twofold danger of field and subject specialisation. It distinguishes and separates successive stages in the process from data to results, the ordering of tasks from what is formally first to what is formally last. This division is not the contingent division of data of field specialisation or the contingent division of communication of results of subject specialisation, but is grounded in the cognitive structure of the human person. It is not a replacement of field or subject specialisation: rather, it sublates them, locating them within a larger heuristic framework.

2. An Eightfold Division

There are eight functional specialities: research, interpretation, history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines (policies), systematics, and communications.

Research is concerned with the gathering of data. It makes available the data relevant to investigation. Research is of two kinds, general and special. General research is the location, excavation, and mapping of ancient cities, the filling of museums and archives with transcriptions, inscriptions, symbols, and statues, the deciphering of

languages, the collection and collation of texts, the development of critical editions, the composition of indices. It makes the best data available in the best way. Special research is the assembling of data relevant to a particular question or problem: it reaps the fruits of the tools and techniques of general research, but is performed by or for someone operating in one of the other functional specialities. As research is concerned foremost with data, it is the formally first speciality.

Interpretation is concerned with understanding what was meant. It seeks to understand what the author was writing about, what language the author used to express herself, and what the author understood about what she was writing about.⁵ The more a text is written in a systematic way, the less it stands in need of exegesis, but the less it was written in a systematic way and the more it was written in the common sense mode of the time and place in which it was written, the more it stands in need of exegesis. Coming to understand the common sense milieu in which the text was written is a slow process of learning which may involve the existential element of understanding oneself and one's own common sense milieu, and judging whether it be authentic or inauthentic, in a state of progress or a state of decline. There is also the task of judging whether one's understanding is correct (which is not the same as judging whether the author's understanding was correct), and stating the meaning of the text. This statement is a technical restatement of the author's understanding in a manner suitable for verification.

⁵ 'Author' can here be understood as 'producer of text,' with text in its broader sense of 'carrier of data.' Traditional theology is, obviously, mostly concerned with scripture and patristic, conciliar and encyclical documents, but there is nothing limiting interpretation to these. Anything that needs to be understood (ritual, dance, oral narrative, film, material culture, art, etc.) can be subject to the hermeneutical and exegetical task of interpretation. The examples, however, will allude more to texts in the narrower sense of

It is not a declarative on what was actually going forward at the time of the text's composition.

History is concerned with general movements through time and actual events. History places the understanding of a text as discerned by the interpreter within a broader context. Where the interpreter makes judgments on whether her understanding of the author is correct, the historian makes judgments on whether the author's understanding of what was going forward is correct. History can thus be broken down into three types: basic, special and general. Basic history is concerned with where and when and how who did what to which end. It therefore finds the facts of history within the data of the text (the history that was written about within the history that was written). Special history is concerned with movements: cultural, institutional, or doctrinal. General history is basic history illuminated by special history. As a functional speciality of a discipline, the historian's main focus would be the special history particular to that discipline: for theology, it is the doctrinal history of Christian theology, whereas for economics it would be the institutional history of economic exchange. But within the speciality the special history would presuppose basic history and not remain aloof from general history, so as within the full view there can be grasped the differences and similarities to other movements.

Where part of the historian's task is to identify these differences and similarities between movements, dialectic is concerned with choice. It seeks first to classify the differences between movements. Movements can differ in three ways: they can be

*documents' simply to avoid confusion.

genetic, complementary, or irreducible. Genetic differences are different by differences in stages of development. Later stages presuppose earlier stages, partly to include and partly to transform, thus genetic differences are either different moments within the same development or, when crossing cultures, moments from cultures at different stages of development. Complementary differences are differences of speciality within compound tasks. Different objects involve different techniques, as do different contents, thus complementary differences can be overcome by their integration into a larger whole (which, as an example, is what Lonergan's method attempts to do). Irreducible differences are what can not be explained by genetic or complementary difference. What for one is black for the other is white: one yes, one no: one wrong, one right. Dialectic seeks to order the differences and the similarities, find what is at the root of them. It prepares the way for the choosing of one over the other.

The fifth speciality, foundations, thematizes and objectifies the choice. Where the first four phases were concerned with the past, listening to history, the specialist in foundations voices where she stands in the course of general history, to which movement she belongs, the reason she belongs to that movement and not to others. The choice she has made is existential: it is not a simple expression of preference, it is instead a constitutive shift by which she ceases to be an observer and becomes a participant. Although the choice is personal, it is not necessarily private, as the choice can be made by many and thus a community can be formed to sustain each other in the consequences of their choice, and this community can spread historically through generations and across cultures. As the movement exists in time, it is subject both to progress and to

decline: the specialities of dialectic and foundations are thus in an ongoing process of choosing and expressing those choices. The foundationalist is also concerned with the mediating nature of her discipline within the larger shift in horizon of the existential act of choosing. Foundations is thus also concerned with the development of special and general categories. General categories are those shared with other disciplines, while special categories are particularly of her own. Lastly, foundations addresses the irreducible differences from the horizon of one who has made the choice by developing positions and reversing counter-positions.

Doctrines are the expressions of the judgments of fact and value embodied in the positions developed by foundations. They are not simply the objectification of the existential choice of foundations, which locate the present in the movements of the past, but are also expressions of how the movement is to engage the future. As such, they are equivalent to policies, in that they deal with attitudes and ends. If one of the aims of the functional speciality history is to study the special history within the context of general history to determine what was actually going forward, doctrines reaffirms that what was going forward should continue to go forward and play a role in the broader social context by stating definitively what that movement actually is. In theology, doctrine is a permanent achievement in that the meaning remains true despite its expression being historically conditioned. It is a retrieval of what truths may be lost by a tradition in decline or by the confusion caused by differences in common sense meanings and historically conditioned expressions.

Systematics aims at making the statements of doctrines understandable and

therefore effective. It is the preparation for effective communication, and is thus concerned with the reintegration of doctrinal meaning in a way that addresses historically conditioned human living. In a classicist mode it entailed simply the intelligent ordering of answers extrinsic of the accidentals of human history, but in a modern context it also must contend with the varieties of human experience and the differences in common sense. The more systematic a text, the less it is in need of exegesis and interpretation. The systematician must therefore be as concerned with her own cultural milieu as the interpreter is concerned with the cultural milieu of the author she seeks to interpret. As doctrines correspond to policies, so systematics corresponds to policy planning.

Communications is concerned with a discipline in its external relations. A discipline can only express itself through its data; thus communications is the speciality of data generation. A discipline relates both to other disciplines and to people of common sense in all cultures and places, and it seeks to take advantage of any communicative media available to it. It is the execution of the policies made in doctrines and planned in systematics. Just as each speciality performs its own form of special research dependent on the question it seeks to answer, so too each speciality has its own form of special communication. There is communication among specialities as well as among disciplines. The data generated is the result of a discipline's reflection, and is thus the formally last speciality.

3. Grounds of the Division

The functional specialities are not, in name, different from what went before:

there had been doctrinal theologians, systematic theologians, historians, interpreters, and so forth prior to Lonergan. But Lonergan's method places them within a framework that has as its validity two invariants: the structure of intentional consciousness and the two movements of learning.

Insight is a work that concentrates on cognitional structure, the invariant manner in which humans come to know. In it Lonergan discerns seven elements (taken from Aquinas and Aristotle) that make up the movement from data to a judgment of fact: experience, question formation, insight into phantasm, answer formulation, question for reflection, reflective insight, judgment. Each element can be located on one of three levels: experience, understanding, and judgment.

The level of experience is constituted by one element, experience of data. Things are only known to us through our senses, sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing. We have memory, so what we recall from previous experiences (whether understood or not) can also be experienced. To not experience is to be in some dreamless sleep, but we can also be simply inattentive to the data of sense. At the level of experience we are at our most embodied, at our most animalistic, and our attention may be drawn away from data by other consequences of our embodiment, such as non-intentional states and trends. But being inattentive to data can be corrected when we seek to understand.

The level of understanding is constituted by three elements: question formation, insight into phantasm, and answer formulation. The question effects the shift from simply experiencing the data to asking the intelligent question, "What is it?" The insight into phantasm is the discernment of an organisational principle, a pattern, within the

otherwise random data. There is thus an answer to the 'What is it?' question, which can be made articulate either as a formula or some form of statement. Failing to effect the shift from experience to understanding, not asking what it is one is experiencing, is an act of unintelligence, although we can also be stupid in our understanding. The phantasms we construct can be either too sparse of data, in which case we fail to take relevant data into account, or too awash in data, in which case we take irrelevant data into account. But being stupid can be corrected when we seek to judge.

The level of judgment is constituted by three elements: reflective question formation, reflective insight, and judgment. The reflective question effects the shift from an apparent answer to asking the reasonable question, 'Is it the right answer?' The reflective insight seeks both the conditions that need to be fulfilled in order for the answer to be true and whether those conditions are indeed fulfilled. The judgment is the 'yes' or 'no' answer to the reflective question. Failing to effect the shift from understanding to judgment, not reflecting on our answers, is an act of unreasonableness, although we can also be silly in our judging. We may be too quick to affirm the fulfilment of conditions, or we may too reluctant to ever commit ourselves to an answer.

In *Insight*, judgments of value worked along the same structure as judgments of fact. The same seven elements from data to judgment were in effect, but the question 'What is it?' was replaced by 'What good is it?' But after *Insight*, the notion of a distinct fourth level begins to appear: the level of decision.⁶ There are several approaches to

⁶ One must bear in mind that 'levels' are pedagogical approaches to ordering the operations of cognitional structure, not absolutes. However, given the import of diagrams and phantasms, it is not

understanding the emergence of this fourth level. One can equate the level of decision with the judgments of value, and leave the level of judgment as synonymous with judgments of fact. This results in moving the six elements that follow experience onto the fourth level. This movement accounts for judgments of fact, in the main, coming prior to judgments of value: one needs to know what something really is before making assessments. But it is questionable whether judgments of fact necessarily come prior to judgments of value. It is undoubtedly true for the realms of theory and scholarship, but the realms of interiority, art, transcendence, even the realm of common sense are as likely to approach data with questions of value foremost. The dynamism and fluidity of operations and levels can be invoked to explain this disjunction, but it is an explanation that hinders effective communications.

But if one approaches the fourth level as one that sublates the levels prior, just as judgment sublates understanding and experience and understanding sublates experience, the fourth level must be substantially different from the levels prior. The first element on the fourth level would have as its content the last element of the third level, the judgment. If the first element on the second level is a question concerning experience, and the first element of the third level is a question concerning the formulated answer, the first element of the fourth level is a question concerning judgment: 'What does it imply to have judged that way?' Being silly can be corrected when we seek to decide.

The fourth level is thus the level of affirmation of oneself as a judge. As it is an

inconsequential to take issue with how levels are presented. Furthermore, there is a dynamism to the operations, but they are given in an intelligent ordering: if one reflects on the purpose of systematics and its

affirmation of self, it is existential, and it is a decision. It is the level on which we orient and orientate ourselves in relation to the reality we ourselves have affirmed. It is constituted by three elements: existential question, dialectic insight, and decision. The existential question is that which seeks to affirm oneself as a judge (as a knower). The dialectic insight is the grouping, classification, and sifting of differences, until we are left with only irreducible differences. The decision is the choice of one over the other. Failing to effect the shift from judgment to decision is irresponsible, but we may also be psychotic in our decisions. We may deny ourselves as a knower, and act nonetheless, or we may deliberately choose evil over good, falsehood over truth.

With the existential choice on the level of decision, there comes the end of dealing with the concrete embodiment of the past and begins the turn to the potential embodiment of the future. We have been brought here along these lines and made these decisions: where do we progress from here? There is now an inversion of the levels of cognitional structure: as one contemplates the future, one's sense of the really real is grounded in one's existential stance, the understanding of one's own future acts is grounded in one's sense of the really real, one's actions are grounded in the understanding of them.

There is a clarity that comes with proceeding in this fashion and it is the next grounds for the division. There are two movements of learning: one begins with objects as they relate to us (*priora quoad nos*), and one begins with objects as they relate to each

relationship to the level of intelligence, there is a concern for clarity and the unnecessary of subsequent exegesis as one moves towards communications.

other (*priora quoad se*).

In the first movement we begin with data, we develop hypotheses, we experiment, hypotheses are found wanting, we develop new hypotheses, they work, and we stumble along in this manner towards some form of coherence. It is the way of discovery (*via inventionis*), and is exemplified by the work a student does in a lab. Trial and error, multiple experiments, and a slow accumulation of insights lead to a gradual development. It is the indirect path (*oratione obliqua*), sidelined so often with the error and confusion that historicity can bring.

In the second movement we begin with theories as articulated by an authority that we trust, and we struggle to understand the impact of those theories. It is the way of teaching (*via doctrinae*), and is best exemplified by the lecture and the textbook. Because the lecturer and the book are to be trusted, the student learns what is taught without the distraction that error brings. It is the straight line (*oratione recta*) which only requires clarity of voice.

Without the way of teaching, traditions can not develop, for everyone (or every generation) would have to prove for themselves that which others before them had already proven. Without the way of discovery, a tradition would stagnate, for firstly students would not know what it means to reach a conclusion and thus (possibly) fail to see the genuine achievement that has gone before, and secondly the absence of new situations and new experiments would fail to strengthen the genuine achievement by challenging it, expanding it, or moving to a higher viewpoint which encompasses both it and the new findings.

Therefore, as one reflects on the past and struggles to reproduce (so as to understand the process) and add to (so as to progress) the achievements of the past, one moves from data to a knowledge of relationality. As one plans one's actions and future achievements (so as to make the future as it ought to be), one moves from this knowledge of relationality to results.

The four levels of intentional consciousness multiplied by the two movements of learning account for the unity of the eightfold division of the functional specialities. Research, interpretation, history, and dialectic correspond to the first movement of learning, from experience, through understanding and judgment, to decision. Foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communications correspond to the second movement of learning, from decision, through judgment and understanding, to experience. The first four specialities are the phase of what is and what was. It studies not only genuine achievements but mistakes, happenstance, and fortuitous reversals of fortune. The second four specialities are the phase of what ought and what will be. It studies how to avoid the mistakes of the past while retaining the achievements and promoting a less circuitous progress for the future.

At the pivot between past and future is the engaged subject. In the choosing of one over the other she forever changes the way she understands the world. Lonergan called this process conversion. This term, like doctrines, is elemental in theology, but certainly causes a problem when brought into a more general human science.⁷ If,

⁷ Some working in the Lonergan tradition have noted the problem: see, inter alia, Philip McShane, *Process: Introducing Themselves to Young (Christian) Readers* (Halifax: Axial Press, forthcoming).

however, conversion can be understood as a shift in position from a less to a more fruitful intellectual, moral, or religious stance, the process may be given credence despite the unsettling name. Intellectual conversion is a radical clarification of a naïve notion: that knowing is equivalent to seeing. Moral conversion is the shift from satisfactions to values. Religious conversion is falling in love in an unrestricted manner, a shift from egoism to universal concern. All three both free the subject to new horizons and new ways of knowing the world and free the subject from the limitations that naïve realism, satisfactions, and conditional love impose. Intellectual conversion is transcultural because all human beings are capable of thought and as a species operate in the same manner. Moral conversion is transcultural because all human beings live in time and in commune with other human beings and their actions affect others. Religious conversion is transcultural because being in love in an unrestricted manner is a feature common to all world religions.

4. In Oratione Obliqua

This last point, that religious conversion is transcultural because being in love in an unrestricted manner is a feature common to all world religions, is proven by Lonergan not by an appeal to data but by an appeal to authorities: namely, Heiler's "The History of Religions as a Preparation for the Cooperation of Religions." Heiler's essay, as discussed in the previous chapter, helps to provide Lonergan with the last link in the transcultural applicability of his method. But having described his method, it is now possible to trace the history of how it came to be. This is not so much the basic history of the events, but

the special history of the development of Lonergan's theological method.⁸

The two movements in learning are classic theological principles. In his doctoral dissertation, *Gratia Operans*,⁹ Lonergan wrote of the four reasons the will is said to be free. The fourth of these, "because the will may or may not move itself to its free act," is the necessary and sufficient reason, for, among other reasons, it solves the ultimate problem of the *via inventionis*, how the will does accept or not accept a given object, and is thus the first proposition of the *via doctrinae*.¹⁰ In his introduction he had already written of a 'pincer' process, a movement from particular to general and a movement from general to particular, that is sufficient to yield conclusions in sciences simpler than the history of speculative theology.¹¹ In the *Verbum* articles, Lonergan demonstrates how Thomas's brilliance in his *via doctrinae* can only be fully understood when one considers how he takes into account the achievements of his predecessors working in *via inventionis*.¹² Much of the Roman courses on theological method are reflections on the differences and relationships between the two movements. The ordering of questions and answers precedes a reflection on the notion of science in *De Intellectu et Methodo*, and this discussion on how history is a science in the modern sense is the main thrust behind *De Systemate et Historia*. The two parts of *De Deo Trino* are each written in one of the

⁸ For a basic and special history of the topic, see Craig S. Boly, S.J., *The Road to Lonergan's Method in Theology* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991).

⁹ Bernard Lonergan, *Gratia Operans: A Study of the Speculative Development in the Writings of St Thomas Aquinas* (STD diss., Pontifical Gregorian University, 1940), published as the second part of *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas*, Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, eds., *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan I* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

¹⁰ Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom*, 320-21.

¹¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom*, 158.

¹² Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum*, 213-22.

two movements.

Insight ends with a discussion of special transcendent knowledge, and it is an analysis of the structure of history. Following nineteen chapters on understanding how one comes to understand, the fundamental question of the importance of belief is raised.

But a fundamental methodological issue is whether each man should confine his assents to what he knows in virtue of his personal experience, his personal insights, and his personal grasp of the virtually unconditioned or, on the other hand, there can and should be a collaboration in the advancement and dissemination of knowledge.¹³

A book so concerned with the *via inventionis* can only briefly touch on the *via doctrinae*, but it is necessary if the *crede ut intelligas* and *fides quaerens intellectum* of classical theology is to be informed by the necessary *intellige ut credas* and *intellectus quaerens fidem* of an empirical science.

Insight's main discovery is the levels of cognitional structure, which is a retrieval of Aquinas and Aristotle. *Verbum* is the explication of the three levels in Aquinas, and *Insight* brings history and development into consideration. The problem of evil and the possibility of exercising liberty adds a fourth level that sublates the three prior. Conversion is the moment of the present that connects the past and the future.

The page that contains the first schematic sketching of the specialities¹⁴ begins with the 'operational structures': the levels of intentional consciousness (deciding, judging, understanding, and experience), and the two movements of learning (here called 'as knowing' and 'as moral'). These two movements are further described as 'Hearing'

¹³ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, 726.

¹⁴ Page labelled A472, V/7/1, from the archives of the Lonergan Research Institute, Regis College.

and 'Listening' further down the page, when they form the two centre columns of a table, the rows of which are formed by the levels of intentional consciousness. It would be silly to recreate the 'doodling' of February of 1965 in terms of how it was composed, but having established this table, a process whereby the cells were filled by traditional divisions of theology could begin. "I started off with four functional specialities and then I added on a fifth and a sixth. I had the eight, for the first time, in February of 1965."¹⁵ It was simply a matter of filling in the blanks. The first schema had a few variations from what came after, but the insight was there on the page. The seventh functional speciality, systematics, is called 'explanation' here: dialectic, the fourth functional speciality, is 'conversion.'

Locating conversion outside of the functional specialities created some problems for Lonergan when it was presented. The chapter was published in *Gregorianum* in 1969, three years prior to the *Method in Theology's* publication in 1972. Karl Rahner's principle objection was that he thought the method "to be so generic that it fits every science, and hence is not the methodology of theology as such, but only a very general methodology of science in general, illustrated with examples taken from theology."¹⁶ To

Toronto.

¹⁵ Pierre Lambert, Charlotte Tansey and Cathleen Going, eds., *Caring about Meaning: Patterns in the Life of Bernard Lonergan* (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1982), 59. For another modest account, Philip McShane recalls a conversation he had "with Bernard Lonergan in the summer of 1966. He was in Toronto, recovering from a lung-removal. I knew that he had had a break-through regarding specialist collaboration before he was hospitalized the previous year. What was it, I asked. 'Well, it's easy,' he said, facing the four fingers of each hand towards each other, 'you just double the structure.' That 'easy' jump had come to him in February 1965, more than a decade after he had finished the book, *Insight*." Philip McShane, *A Brief History of Tongue: From Big Bang to Coloured Wholes* (Halifax: Axial Press, 1998), 98.

¹⁶ Karl Rahner, "Some Critical Thoughts on 'Functional Specialities in Theology,'" in Philip McShane, ed., *Foundations of Theology: Papers from the International Lonergan Congress 1970* (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1971), 194-96, at 194.

this, Lonergan responded:

Indeed, the eight specialities we have listed would be relevant to any human studies that investigated its past to guide its future. Again, since the sources to be subjected to research are not specified, they could be the sacred texts and traditions of any religion. Finally, while there is a theological principle assigned, still it is not placed in authoritative pronouncements but in the religious conversion that turns men to transcendent mystery; and while I believe such a turn always to be God's gift of grace, still it becomes specifically a Christian conversion when the gift of the Spirit within us is intersubjective with the revelation of the Father in Christ Jesus.¹⁷

Religious conversion, then, is a general principle, which generates categories common to all sciences that understand that there is an orientation towards a sense of the transcendent. It sublates moral conversion (which is the shift from satisfactions to values) and intellectual conversion (which is the end of understanding knowing as 'taking a good look'). It generates general theological categories when it is considered operative, and the fact that it is operative in the world's religions provides a transcultural basis for the possibility of communication and dialogue across denominations and faiths. It only generates special theological categories when it comes to be understood as commensurate with the narrative reality of a faith community. General and special categories will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

What role does religious studies play? Lonergan defined theology as mediating between a cultural matrix and the role and significance of a religion within that matrix.¹⁸ What separates theology from religious studies could be the 'a' in that definition. It

¹⁷ Bernard Lonergan, "Bernard Lonergan Responds," in McShane, *Foundations of Theology*, 223-34, at 233.

¹⁸ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, xi.

differs from theology in that its categories are not derived from revelation, but it also differs from other human sciences that have religious activity as a possible content (sociology, anthropology, etc.) in that it places the orientation to transcendence as the foundational element. The next chapter will follow a twofold movement: in the foreground will be Lonergan's understanding of the relationship between religious studies and theology, while the background will be the ongoing development of generalised empirical method and its applications for a broader human science.

Chapter Three: Lonergan and Religious Studies

In a nascent manner following his return from Rome in 1965, and in a more explicit way following the publication of *Method in Theology* in 1972, Lonergan was frequently asked to talk about the relationship between religious studies and theology, on religious studies in general, and on the general applicability of his generalised empirical method. As mentioned in chapter one, the phenomenon of religious studies was a bit of a novelty to Lonergan, and it was a new audience for him. This chapter progresses in two phases: first will be a review of the papers of 1968 which led to Lonergan's revaluation of religious studies, then will come *Method in Theology* and the papers following concerning the relationship between religious studies and theology.

1. The Revaluation of 1968

1968 seems to have been a watershed year for Lonergan and what he understood as the relationship between religious studies and theology. In January, Wilfred Cantwell Smith presented at the University of Toronto a paper entitled "Faith and Belief, As Seen by a Comparative Religionist," and it appears that Lonergan was in attendance.¹ In

¹ For his own paper entitled "Faith and Beliefs," at the AAR in Baltimore, October 1969, Lonergan was working from a typescript sent to him by Smith (Smith was one of two respondents to Lonergan's paper). He refers to this lecture again in 1970's "Religious Commitment," in Joseph Papin, ed. *The Pilgrim People: A Vision with Hope*, Villanova University Symposium 4 (Villanova University Press, 1970), and in 1972's *Philosophy of God, and Theology: The Relationship Between Philosophy of God and the Functional Specialty, Systematics* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973). He refers to this lecture again in 1976's lectures on the relationship between religious studies and theology ("Religious Experience," *A Third Collection*, 113-28, at 122), and again in 1980's "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" (*A Third Collection*, 202-23, at 216). It is only Lonergan's language that makes me claim that he was in attendance: there seems to be a tacit implication that he was indeed present. For more on the relationship between

February, he spoke at the University of St. Michael's College on "The Absence of God in Modern Culture," while March saw "Belief: Today's Issue," at the Pax Roman Symposium on Faith, in Pittsburgh. Just prior to a July institute at Boston College called "Transcendental Philosophy and the Study of Religion," in June he delivered a paper on the "Natural Knowledge of God," at the Catholic Theological Society of America convention in Washington, D.C. He ended the year with "Theology and Man's Future" at St. Louis University in October, and "The Future of Christianity," at Holy Cross College in Worcester, MA, in December.²

In "The Absence of God in Modern Culture,"³ Lonergan delivers a grave (and somewhat depressing) critique of the state of modern affairs. He contrasts the (North) American term 'behavioural sciences' with the German '*Geisteswissenschaften*:' the former emphasises the analogy with natural sciences, while the latter stresses the difference, that over and above observable and quantifiable data there are data to which one attaches some common-sense meaning. By omitting this form of data, any talk of meaning and value is absented from discussion. There is thus a radical dilemma in modern culture: "Is science to be conceived and worked out in total independence of philosophy or is it not?"⁴ If it is, it is empty, because it does not speak of value, which makes humans human: if it is not, which philosophy? Thus "the modern notion of

Smith and Lonergan, see Walter Conn, "'Faith' and 'cumulative tradition' in functional specialization: A study in the methodologies of Wilfred Cantwell Smith and Bernard Lonergan," *SR* 5:3 (1975): 221-46.

² This is not an exhaustive list of the lectures of 1968. In addition to March's "The Subject," and "The Future of Thomism," the only other original lectures of that year to have been collected (*A Second Collection*, 69-86, 43-53, respectively), Lonergan delivered a variety of theological papers, some untitled lectures, and contributions to congresses, none of which are pertinent to the question at hand.

³ Bernard Lonergan, "The Absence of God in Modern Culture," *A Second Collection*, 101-116.

science tends to replace theology, which treats of God and all other things in their relation to God, with religious studies, which treat of man in his supposed dealings with God or gods or goddesses."⁵ But Lonergan is not calling for a reversal of the process, for religious studies to be replaced in turn by theology: rather, theology must renew its methods and assumptions which have been stripped by the empirical inquiry of religious studies. "In brief, religious studies have stripped the old theology of its very sources in Scripture, in patristic writings, in medieval and subsequent religious writers. They have done so by subjecting the sources to a fuller and more penetrating scrutiny than had been attempted by earlier methods."⁶

"Belief: Today's Issue"⁷ continues on the theme of the difference between classical and modern culture. Any sphere of human activity, in a modern culture, has a science that reflects on it. Thus, commerce has economics, law has jurisprudence, the arts have criticism. There is a superstructure besides the meaning and value immediately intuited in human activity and, although the superstructure and the sphere of human activity are inherently linked, they are separate. A faulty economics, therefore, does not imply that commerce can not function, and a flawed criticism does not mean that the arts are devoid of content. The superstructure relating to religious activity, in this paper, is for Lonergan still theology and not religious studies. A crisis for Catholics (and indeed, all people of faith) was occurring when the superstructure of the day was not able to effectively contend with the questions being asked by those engaged not only in their

⁴ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 107.

religious activities but in their day-to-day activities which were in a state of flux as modern science overturns the classicist notions of eternal truths. Hence the need for the superstructure to accommodate the idea of change and development, and hence the call for a new method for theology.

"Natural Knowledge of God"⁸ is predicated on the premise that there is such a thing as a natural theology, and that the self-transcendence of the person is effected by a total and utter being-in-love. This is a technical restatement of much of chapter 19 of *Insight*, "General Transcendent Knowledge," but at the same time, it is moving towards the universality of being-in-love in an unrestricted manner that much of chapter 4 of *Method in Theology*, "Religion," pivots on. Lonergan's own interpretation of the article is that it suggests that chapter 19 can be removed from *Insight* and put inside of theology. This observation comes with the benefit of hindsight and the added note: "chapter 19 is prior to my concern with the existentialists and so on."⁹

Following that summer's institute on "Transcendental Philosophy and the Study of Religion,"¹⁰ "Theology and Man's Future," the paper from October of 1968, is where Lonergan first speaks of religious studies and its positive influence on theology, listing it alongside history, philosophy, method, and communications.¹¹ He identifies various aspects of religious studies (the phenomenology of religion, the psychology of religion,

⁸ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁹ Bernard Lonergan, "Belief: Today's Issue," *A Second Collection*, 87-99.

¹⁰ Bernard Lonergan, "Natural Knowledge of God," *A Second Collection*, 117-33.

¹¹ Bernard Lonergan, "An Interview with Bernard Lonergan, S.J.," 225.

¹² Unfortunately, nothing from the institute is extant, although, as noted above in Chapter One, it must have been about this time that Lonergan first came upon Eliade and Kitagawa's *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology*. See above, 16ff.

the sociology of religion, the history of religions, the philosophy of religion) not, I believe, as necessary categories or specialities within religious studies but more as terms synonymous with 'religious studies' broadly understood. It is not a conspicuous influence, but important because of "very significant and contemporary trends."¹² Vatican II and the Church's concern with ecumenism, with non-Christian religions, and with the atheist negation of religion; the relations between theology and all human sciences; and the theological doctrine that God grants all men sufficient grace for their salvation. Of this last trend, for his Jesuit audience religious studies become "studies of the manifold ways God's grace comes to men and operates as the seed that falls on rocks or amidst thorns or by the wayside or on good ground to bring forth fruit thirty or sixty or a hundred fold."¹³ The middle trend is methodological and practical: much of the task of relating the role of religion both within a cultural matrix and as an empirical science has been already attempted by religious studies and its pan-disciplinary approach (as phenomenology and psychology and sociology of religion): "[One] will find models exhibiting what can be done and accounts of what has been tried and found unsatisfactory."¹⁴

The first trend, the influence of Vatican II and what that entails, requires a broader perspective for the theologian. There is a reflecting on her own religion not in isolation but in conjunction with others, and an attending to not only differences but also similarities. "To meet such requirements theology will be led into the field of religious

¹¹ Bernard Lonergan, "Theology and Man's Future," 138-39. See chapter one, above, 17-19.

¹² *Ibid.*, 138.

studies and, indeed, while retaining its identity, to conceive itself as a particular type of religious studies."¹⁵

This last suggestion sounds rather extraordinary, given the audience and the speaker, that theology falls or should fall under the general umbrella of religious studies, and not the other way around. But taken with the methodological and practical trend and, more importantly, the doctrine of sufficient grace, theology can only be understood in this way. Theology, in turn, when articulated intelligently, can provide a method for dealing competently, respectfully, and honestly with conflicts of value. Questions of value are integral to any notion of a human science that doesn't reduce itself to what can be reproduced in the lab.

December's "The Future of Christianity,"¹⁶ begins with Heiler's seven features common to the world's religions and locates the Christian notion of grace within them. The thrust of the article is towards retaining and locating what is distinct about the Christian (and the Catholic) within an ecumenical perspective, and the trend towards 'religionless Christianity.' The conflict of classicist and modern culture is again raised, further complicated by the double problematic of the distinctness of superstructure and content and the tension between the ideal form of a community and the only ever partial realisation of that form. But there is hope, and it comes from religious studies.

[There] exist positivist or other reductionist studies of religion, and these engender a notion of religion that a Christian or, indeed, any religious person is not going to accept. If by religion is meant some psychological,

¹³ *Ibid.*, 139.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 139.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 139.

¹⁶ Bernard Lonergan, "The Future of Christianity," *A Second Collection*, 149-63.

sociological, historical, or philosophic interpretation of religion that conceives it as “nothing but this” or “nothing but that,” then of course Christianity should be conceived as religionless. However, I do not believe that the word “religion” should be handed over to mere reductionists. There are many quite different students of religion with a profound understanding of the reality of religion; on their meaning of the word “Christianity” is not religionless; and the importance of their meaning is that it provides the bridge over which Christians may walk towards an understanding of non-Christian religions.¹⁷

And, of course, vice versa. The interest in ecumenism is not a threat to Christianity but appeals to its most fundamental aspect: the gratuitous gift of love to all peoples.

2. Religious Studies and Theology - Dialogue and Dialectic

Thus in 1968 there is a turn from a pessimistic understanding of religious studies to one which can sublate theology itself. This turn can be accounted for almost exclusively through Lonergan’s encounter with the Eliade and Kitagawa anthology (which includes an essay by Cantwell Smith, although never cited by Lonergan), and specifically with Heiler’s essay. There has been substantial criticism of Lonergan’s use of Heiler from George Lindbeck in his *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*.¹⁸ His argument is that, by emphasising the shared features and the common core, the distinctive features of religious expression are difficult if not impossible to ground critically. Philip Boo Riley has argued that this is a misinterpretation of Lonergan’s use of Heiler, but that it “does suggest that Lonergan’s use of Heiler may have been ill-advised in so far as he intended the chapter on religion in *Method* to lay out a generalised theory of religion. For Heiler represents a stage in the

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 158.

development of religious studies that has not sufficiently differentiated – among other methodological issues – theological and non-theological approaches to religion.”¹⁹

The distinction between dialectic and dialogue gradually becomes apparent in the writings of this time. Dialectic is the functional speciality concerned with differences, whether genetic or complementary or truly oppositional. It implies choice and how one stands in relation to the *priora quoad se*. It is, however, not one choice but many. Furthermore, the choosing is not limited to one truly oppositional difference over another: one also chooses from the genetic and from the complementary differences. The choices one makes are not arbitrary: they are deliberate and appropriate to the horizon in which one is operating and in which one chooses to operate. Although choices intend continued progress and the offset of decline, the person operating in a less advanced stage of development would not choose to leap to a higher stage of development.

Operating behind functional specialities and, indeed, behind Lonergan’s entire concept of what purpose the superstructure of a mediating science is to serve to the sphere of human activity it mediates are two key concepts: the shift from a classical consciousness to an historically-minded consciousness, and, for lack of a better term, the philosopher king. The shift from a classical consciousness is well-trodden ground: there is the possibility of continued progress in the ongoing process that constitutes the sciences. Differences in time and place are differences in stages of development: when one begins not with concepts but with data, differences in environment are going to give,

¹⁸ (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984).

¹⁹ Philip Boo Riley, “Religious Studies Methodology: Bernard Lonergan’s Contribution,” *Method*:

if not different answers, then different expressions of those answers and different paths in the development of those answers. Much of the first phase of the functional specialities, then, is the encounter with different modes of expression. The page from February of 1965 gives a 'mediating object' for each speciality in the first phase: for research, the mediating object is the given; for interpretation, meaning; for history, truth; for conversion (dialectic), encounter.²⁰ Differences in time and place are thus important differences and not something that can be relegated to a category of *accidens* as they would in classical consciousness.

The underlying 'philosopher king' concept is perhaps too strong a term for anyone past the arrogance of the masters student, but it comes from that time in Lonergan's own development. An essay from 1933-34, "Essay on Fundamental Sociology," written when Lonergan would have first been in Rome, takes as its epigraph the precise quote from Plato's *Republic* on the necessity of the philosopher king.²¹ What has survived from this essay is a chapter called "Philosophy of History,"²² which roughly corresponds with books VIII and IX of the *Republic*, the books that deal with decline of society.²³ In Lonergan's work there is always a sense of responsibility to the culture.

Journal of Lonergan Studies 12 (1994), 239-49, at 243.

²⁰ Page A472, V/7/1.

²¹ 473D.

²² The conclusive arguments for the inclusion of "Philosophy of History" with the "Essay on Fundamental Sociology" are given in Michael Shute's *The Origins of Lonergan's Notion of the Dialectic of History: A Study of Lonergan's Early Writings on History* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993), 74-75.

²³ If one were to take this parallel seriously, certain peculiarities in "Philosophy of History" could be addressed. The peculiar section on liberalism and bolshevism (114-116 of the MS, which is paginated 95-130) has echoes in the timocratic, oligarchic, democratic, and despotic states of book VIII. Although there are by no means strict parallels, there is a dissertation in comparing "Essay in Fundamental Sociology" with the *Republic* and, through a forensic interpretation, recreating what pages 1-89 might have constituted.

The role of the theologian or the human scientist is not merely to report on what has gone forth but to develop ways of maintaining progress and offsetting decline in future human activity. "To operate on the level of our day is to apply the best available knowledge and the most efficient techniques to coordinated group action."²⁴ The culture to which the human scientist is responsible is her own: where the functional speciality of policies is concerned with attitudes and ends, systematics is concerned with specific plans to make those ends attainable within a specific culture. Thus it is not inauthentic to take as foundational stances choices which are of a lower stage of development: the dialectician is, as it were, making decisions for the culture, and the culture might not be ready for the radical changes that such choices might promote. Differences in foundational stances are inevitable in historically-minded consciousness, and such differences that can not be sorted out in dialectic and foundations can be discussed in dialogue, which properly belongs to the eighth functional speciality, communications. Much of the second phase of the functional specialities, then, is a movement towards the communication that comes in dialogue. Dialogue is the communicative component of integrative activity between two or more distinguishable realms of human activity within a cultural matrix, however broadly that matrix is to be understood. The return to the concrete particularities of one's own culture is the return from the *priora quoad se* which is encountered in dialectic to the *priora quoad nos*.

Such was how Lonergan was envisaging religious studies: not as a forum for dialogue per se, but rather as the science of the various patterns of religious experience,

²⁴ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 367.

preparing general categories and thematising differences in order to more readily facilitate dialogue. The title of Heiler's article, "The History of Religions as a Preparation for the Co-Operation of Religions," became his working definition for the field of religious studies.

1969's "Faith and Beliefs,"²⁵ and 1970's "Religious Commitment,"²⁶ both begin with an almost verbatim abstract from Wilfred Cantwell Smith's January 1968 lecture at the University of Toronto, "Faith and Beliefs, as Seen by a Comparative Religionist."²⁷ "[Much] fruitful energy has been devoted to exploring the religious traditions and reconstructing the history of the overt data of mankind's religious living. Both in detail and in wide compass the observable forms have been observed further and the observations recorded."²⁸ But a further, more important, more difficult (and, in Smith's words but not Lonergan's, "most exciting") question is what makes religion come alive.

To live religiously is not merely to live in the presence of certain symbols but, he urged, it is to be involved with them or through them in a quite special way – a way that may lead far beyond the symbols, that may demand the totality of a person's response, and may affect his relation not only to the symbols but to everything else; to himself, to his neighbor, and

²⁵ Bernard Lonergan, "Faith and Beliefs," a paper given at the meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Baltimore, October 24, 1969. According to Frederick Crowe, there are two extant versions: Lonergan's 23-page autograph and a 13-page single-spaced retyping, probably by William Shea. The latter also has a transcript of the discussion between Lonergan and Smith (pp 13-15). I am working from the single-spaced text, but it is only twelve pages, and is without the transcript. I presume that, given the pagination of the transcription, the Shea version is complete, and there is a miscommunication in Crowe. See his "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994), 147-79, at 151 n. 18.

²⁶ See above, n. 1.

²⁷ Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Faith and Beliefs, as Seen by a Comparative Religionist," Public lecture at the University of Toronto, January 1968 (Harvard Divinity School Faculty Writings File, bMS 13001, Andover-Harvard Theological Library, Harvard Divinity School), 1-40.

²⁸ Bernard Lonergan, "Faith and Beliefs," 1.

to the stars.²⁹

This special involvement was what Smith referred to as 'faith,' and it is distinguishable from the imperatives, rituals, traditions, and beliefs that inspire faith or are inspired by faith. "So conceived, I think, faith would not be the prerogative of some particular church or religion. It would not be merely ecumenical but universalist." An understanding of any and every religion would find this conception of faith relevant in the highest order. "[Unless] one understands what personal involvement in religion is, one can hardly be expected to think or speak very intelligently of religiously committed persons."³⁰ The theological imperative for such an understanding comes from the second Vatican council. "Unhesitatingly [Catholics] grant that God gives each man sufficient grace for salvation. But what this grace is and how it is related to the phenomena set forth in the history of religions seem [*sic*] shrouded in obscurity."³¹ In a manner very similar to "The Future of Christianity," and chapter four of *Method*, Lonergan again uses Heiler and comes to a definition of universalist faith as "the transvaluation of values that results from God's gift of his Love." It is a constant, just as the gift is constant. "It does not presuppose any specific set of historical conditions. It can be bestowed on the members of any culture at any stage in its development. The values that are transvalued may vary, but the process of transvaluation has its constant ground in God's gift of his love."³²

Distinguishing faith and religious belief is different from how a classicist would

²⁹ *Ibid.*, I.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, I.

understand it. In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan defines faith as "knowledge born of religious love."³³ Belief remains the common fund of human knowledge from which habitual insights are drawn,³⁴ but religious belief, although it operates in the same way, now rests on the basis of faith. Just as there is a community of persons who, through time and effort, through collaboration and through outside contact, share a common store of knowledge and insights from which the individual draws for most of the knowledge required for her day-to-day activity and to which she may contribute one or two new insights, there are communities of persons who have similarly (and over time) undergone the same transvaluation of values. "Among the values that faith discerns is the value of believing the word of religion, of accepting the judgments of fact and the judgments of value that the religion proposes."³⁵ The distinction is novel: "We have done so as a consequence of our view that there is a realm in which love precedes knowledge. Also we have done so because this manner of speech facilitates ecumenical discourse."³⁶ Faith is thus understood as a general category, from which categories like imperatives, rituals, traditions, and beliefs may be derived, but it does not demand adherence to a particular tradition. This 'a' is the same article that qualifies Lonergan's definition of theology, that which "mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix."³⁷ A general theory of religion, then, requires the distinction between faith

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

³² *Ibid.*, 8.

³³ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 115.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 41-47. See also *Insight*, 725-740.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 118.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 123.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, xi.

and religious beliefs, and theology must comply with a general theory of religion.

In chapter six of *Method*, "Research," Lonergan hints at a scale of studies.

Let us begin by distinguishing human studies, religious studies, Christian studies, Roman Catholic studies. All four are concerned with man. Each of the four differs from the others inasmuch as it recognizes a broader or narrower field of data as relevant to its research. Now the areas proper to human studies and to religious studies need not occupy us here. (In the final chapter on *Communications* something will be said on the relation of theology to religious studies and to human studies.)³⁸

But sadly, the final chapter speaks of the general applicability of generalised empirical method and the need for ecumenism and dialogue, but nothing specifically about religious studies. 1970's "The Example of Gibson Winter,"³⁹ however, briefly sketches out this scale in a different manner. Prescinding from Max Weber's distinction between social science, which is empirical, and social policy, which proceeds from decisions and which can be motivated by genuine values, Winter inserts between them social ethics.⁴⁰ They are the value judgments from which social science abstains but by which policy should be guided. Next, he identifies four styles in social sciences (the physical, the functional, the voluntarist, and the intentional), and reflection on the divergent styles invites reflection on the possibility of social science, which constitutes the transcendental turn towards a philosophy of social science or social philosophy. It would be possible, from a dialectics of the various styles, to build a foundational framework of fundamental terms and relations, and to understand how the assumptions and procedures of the various styles involve a reinterpretation of the fundamental terms and relations. Ultimately, one

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 150, and n. 1.

³⁹ Bernard Lonergan, "The Example of Gibson Winter," *A Second Collection*, 189-92.

reaches the conclusion that the different styles are appropriate in different areas of investigation and may be used intelligently if the weaknesses revealed are kept in mind. Lastly, the ethical content is not alien to a society but already existent and operative within it.

It is in the light of its own effective morality that the responsible society has to screen the policies, positive and negative, that come to light through the investigations of social science. Specifically, just as the assumptions and procedures of the various styles can conflict with an acceptable social philosophy, so too they can conflict with the moral intentions of a responsible society.⁴⁰

Analogous to the relationship between social science and social policy, then, is the relationship between empirical religious studies and the policies of religious groups. Likewise, between empirical religious studies and the policies of religious groups can be inserted a philosophy of religion and the responsible religious group's effective religious morality. The philosophy of religion would be a philosophy of the transvaluation of values, or faith, and the responsible religious group's effective religious morality would be its theology.

This philosophy of religion is what Lonergan understands as Smith's deeper, more difficult, most exciting question. But it had as of yet not come to any fruition. In "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J.," he was asked about the current state of religious studies. "Well, *de facto*, religious studies are: research, interpretation, history, with a bit of dialectic with the other people who are in the field; but not dialectic worked

⁴⁰ Gibson Winter, *Elements for a Social Ethic: The Role of Social Science in Public Policy* (New York: MacMillan, 1966).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 191.

out in any very systematic fashion. 'So and so has written this book and I think he's a little wrong on that.'"⁴²

In a series of lectures given at Gonzaga University in the fall of 1972 on the relationship between the philosophy of God and systematics, Lonergan was asked how religious conversion could serve as a starting point for a philosophy of God and systematics if conversion is non-conceptual (in that it has no insight).⁴³ The key point, he replied, was that it establishes a new horizon where questions about God are significant. Furthermore, this key point can be had in all sorts of different contexts, and different religious experiences are terrifically varied, so what is common to all of them?

I came across this question in the following manner. Wilfred Smith, about 1969, read a paper at the University of Toronto, saying that the historians of religion have done a terrific job of collecting and observing all observable data connected with religion, but there remains a question: Why is it? What is religious commitment? What is it that makes religion change, transform people's lives? And he thinks that it is a question students of religion have to get after. There you have an example of a student of religion concerned with what is this fundamental thing, religious commitment.

And from there comes my method, the transcendental method: it's intentionality analysis at its root; you're starting from the subject and his operation. You can get a theological method if you have something in the subject that will make that transcendental method into a theological method. And that is again religious experience, religious experience at its finest: God's gift of his love.⁴⁴

A philosophy of God, or a philosophy of religion, works in mutual self-mediation with a systematics: the philosophy grounds the systematics by generating basic terms and relations; the systematics informs the philosophy by articulating one tradition's

⁴² Bernard Lonergan, "An Interview with Bernard Lonergan, S.J.," 217.

⁴³ Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophy of God, and Theology*, 17.

understanding of its own religious experience in the manner of those basic terms and relations.⁴⁵

In 1976 Lonergan gave another three-lecture series, this time on religious studies and theology explicitly, and he once again introduced the notion of the two as "at once distinct and complementary."⁴⁶ Theologies are as diverse as the traditions they express and represent, but religious studies envisage all religions and prefer to describe and understand religions, not arbitrate between them.

Insofar as religious studies have been shifting from detached description to understanding and even empathy, insofar as Friedrich Heiler has ventured to view the history of religions as a preparation for the cooperation of religions, insofar as such cooperation has begun to be realized in ecumenical dialogue, in the clustering of diverse theological schools, in Christian ascetics frequenting Zen monasteries, in that measure there have emerged the signs of the times that invite a methodologist to explore the foundations for an interdisciplinary approach to religious studies and theology.⁴⁷

With humans being symbolic animals, religious studies is the department within human studies that studies the human symbols that commonly purport to refer to what is beyond humanity. It is the purporting that distinguishes religious studies from theology, for religious studies confines its attention to what is within the world, to the things experienced by human living, and to human experiencing itself. But the purporting, if it is not to be without content, forces one to look to what it means, again in Smith's words,

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁴⁶ Bernard Lonergan, "Lectures on Religious Studies and Theology," *A Third Collection*, 113-165, at 113. The three lectures, "Religious Experience," "Religious Knowledge," and "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," were the Donald Mathers Memorial Lectures at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, given on March 2-4, 1976.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 114.

to be involved with these symbols. Thus the question of human authenticity is integral to both Smith's question of religious commitment and to the interpretation of those symbols by the religiously committed person. Although he leaves the question of fact for religious knowledge (whether religious people know anything that non-religious people do not know) to departments of religious studies and/or theology, the question of philosophic possibility (what could be meant by affirming the validity or objectivity of religious knowledge) is addressed.⁴⁸ If one conceives objective truth as simply a naive realism, that what can be known is that which can be seen, then the inner conviction of the truth of faith (which is, it can be argued, merely subjective) and objective truth are at opposite poles. However, if one conceives of objective truth as authentic subjectivity, whereupon one has correctly understood one's own experience, including the experience of religious commitment, of a world mediated by meaning, then "inner conviction is the conviction that the norms of attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, responsibility have been satisfied. And satisfying those norms is the highroad to the objectivity to be attained in the world mediated by meaning and motivated by values."⁴⁹

The declaration is made that theology today denotes "not some well-defined form of thought but rather an aggregate of quite different and often quite nebulous forms. In contrast, religious studies seem to present a more determinate and uniform front," although "one may feel there exist stirrings and strivings that may be all the more

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 144.

significant because they are mainly potential.”⁵⁹ Were one to contrast one type of theology with one direction in religious studies, one would be contrasting statics, but when left to their full generality, one looks at dynamics. When one looks at dynamics, one is looking at a science in its modern sense, in terms of method and field, and methods are not fixed but keep developing as the exigencies of advance may demand.

A modern method, which turns to the authentic subject, is ultimately existential, in that it asks the question, “What are you to do about it?” As such, a modern method has a praxis element in addition to the empirical element. This is contrasted with a classical mindset (common even to idealists like Kant and Hegel) that sought to embrace all human history within speculative reason. This praxis is particularly manifest in religion, where the world is mediated by ultimate meaning and motivated by ultimate value, but these ultimate meanings and values are commonly apprehended symbolically. A theology endeavours to discern the meaning and value behind its own religion, while religious studies envisage the totality of religions through time and throughout the world. A lived religion is already a living praxis, but theology seeks to scrutinise, make explicit and thematic, that praxis. Religious studies, on the other hand, although it presupposes the phenomenon of religious praxis at its most general, begins as an empirical science. What, then, is its praxis element? For Lonergan, it is once more Heiler’s co-operation of religions.

One last paper remains to be discussed, 1978’s “Philosophy and the Religious

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 146.

Phenomenon.”⁵¹ Scholastic philosophy was concerned with ultimate, naturally known truths about the universe, but contemporary philosophy is under the constraint of an empirical principle. Thus philosophy is guided by method, which begins with data. As philosophy is foundational methodology, so philosophy of religion is a foundational methodology of religious studies, and a foundational methodology of religious studies will be able to pronounce on the viability or validity of this or that method of religious studies. Religious studies themselves, however, are not deductions from the method but applications of it. Philosophy as foundational methodology can pronounce only remotely and generically on the validity or viability of the results of religious studies, as the application of the method is the responsibility not of the methodologist but of the student of religion. A foundational methodology for religion can also ask and answer questions of value, which again are both existential and practical. It can undergo a dialectic where it differentiates and chooses one difference over another and makes thematic those differences. A heuristic structure for religious studies, then, would firstly have this dialectic, akin to Ricoeur’s hermeneutic of suspicion and hermeneutic of recovery, which would expand the authentic and reverse the unauthentic, and would secondly order the differences in accordance to the contexts in which they are found, and the differentiations of consciousness present in that context.

Such were Lonergan’s comments on religious studies and its relation to theology.

⁵¹ Bernard Lonergan, “Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994), 125–46. This paper was discovered after his death, and is believed to have been a draft for a conference on “Contemporary Religious Consciousness,” at Carleton University, Ottawa, in October of 1978. See Frederick E. Crowe, “Lonergan’s ‘Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon.’” Editor’s Preface,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994), 121–24.

That a generalised empirical method could be applicable to any science and that the method also allowed for the making of value judgments, which effected a praxis in addition to the merely empirical element, was an absolute. A few other writings of the post-*Method* era are noteworthy for their comments on generalised empirical method, notably "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time,"⁵² and "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion."⁵³ Furthermore, others working in the Lonergan tradition have done work on ecumenism as a theological concern,⁵⁴ religious studies and method,⁵⁵ and generalised empirical method outside of the traditional Lonergan spheres of influence.⁵⁶ But enough has been said to round off this section, and to turn to whether the conclusions that Lonergan has drawn have practical applicability to the actual study of religions.

⁵² Bernard Lonergan, "Prolegomena to the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time," *A Third Collection*, 55-73.

⁵³ Bernard Lonergan, "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion," *A Third Collection*, 202-23.

⁵⁴ See, for example, Vernon Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality, and the Meeting of Religions* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), Frederick E. Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions," in Michael Vertin, ed., *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1989), James Price, "Typologies and the Cross-Cultural Analysis of Mysticism: A Critique," in Timothy P. Fallon and Philip Boo Riley, eds., *Religion and Culture: Essays in Honor of Bernard Lonergan, SJ* (Albany: SUNY, 1987), and Daniel A. Helminiak, *Religion and the Human Sciences: An Approach via Spirituality* (Albany: SUNY, 1998).

⁵⁵ Notably, Michael Vertin, "Transcendental Analysis, and the Objective Study of Religion," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 1/1 (1989) 106-14; Joseph P. Cahill, "Is Theology Necessary to Religious Studies?" *Religious Studies and Theology* 9 (1989) 27-34; and Philip Boo Riley, (who has been the most constant voice in religious studies methodology and Lonergan) "Religious Studies Methodology: Bernard Lonergan's Contribution," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994) 239-49; "Teaching about Religion at the Religiously Affiliated University: Taking the Issue Seriously and Strictly. A Reply to Robert Baird and Robert Minor," *Bulletin of the CSR* December 1983, 145-46, "Theology and/or religious studies: A case study of *Studies in Religion Sciences religieuses*, 1971-1981," *Studies in Religion* 13 (1984), 423-44, and "Theology and/or Religious Studies: Bernard Lonergan's Option," in Fred Lawrence, ed., *Lonergan Workshop Volume IV* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 115-140.

⁵⁶ Notably, Philip McShane has produced several works about functional specialisation and the transcendental method, most recently *A Brief History of Tongue and Economics for Everyone* (both Halifax: Axial Press, 1998).

Chapter Four: Analysis - *The Study of Religion in Canada*

This chapter is an effort to take what Lonergan has said about both functional specialisation and religious studies and to see whether religious studies as it is currently practised in Canada coincides with Lonergan's treatment. The background is the eightfold division of the process from data to results, and the foreground is religious studies as an empirical science that has the possibility of having a praxis element of dialogue between religions. The data to be investigated are culled from the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion's *The Study of Religion in Canada* series.

For the most part, I will be limiting my review of the series to the composition of programs and departments of religious studies at the undergraduate level. I will not be discussing religious studies at theological colleges or bible colleges save for when courses taught at these institutions are available for transfer credit to a university undergraduate program.

It may be considered unsporting to subject undergraduate curricula to the scrutiny of functional specialisation. However, if one understands the undergraduate degree in religion as a transition of the student from a point of virtual illiteracy in any religious tradition to a point of preparedness for further study, then the subject under review becomes not so much the undergraduate programs in religion in Canada but how the reviewers understand and judge the adequacy or inadequacy of programs as a preparation for further academic study. This preparedness, for Lonergan, would include some understanding of the value of a religious studies equivalent to dialectics and foundations.

The personal research interests of faculty, therefore, will not be as important to this chapter as their broader areas of competency, nor will the role of publications and learned societies.

1. The Aims of *The Study of Religion in Canada*

In 1979, in a five-year plan proposed by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), it was observed that “the existing Canadian learned societies seem inactive in reviewing and communicating the state of research in their disciplines.”¹ In response, the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion (CSSR) and the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion (CCSR) decided to sponsor a state-of-the-art review of religious studies in Canada, proceeding on a region by region basis. Spring of 2001 should see the publication of the sixth and last in the series, *Religious Studies in Atlantic Canada*.² Under the general editorship of Harold Coward, the aim of the series was “to present a descriptive and analytical study of courses, programs, and research currently being undertaken in the field of religious studies.”³ The analytical aspect was concerned with “trends and directions of programs, both projected and actual, the relationship of

¹ *A Proposed Five Year Plan for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada* (Ottawa: the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, June 1979), 31.

² Dr. Paul Bowlby, author of the study (with Tom Faulkner) kindly sent me an electronic copy of the as yet unpublished volume, which was at the manuscript preparation stage at the time of this writing. Other volumes in the series (all Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press) are (1) Ronald W. Neufeldt, *Religious Studies in Alberta: A State-of-the-Art Review*, 1983; (2) Louis Rousseau and Michel Despland, *Les sciences religieuses au Québec depuis 1972*, 1988; (3) Harold Remus, William Closson James, and Daniel Fraikin, *Religious Studies in Ontario: A State-of-the-Art Review*, 1992; (4) John M. Badertscher, Gordon Harland, and Roland E. Miller, *Religious Studies in Manitoba and Saskatchewan: A State-of-the-Art Review*, 1993; and (5) Brian J. Fraser, *The Study of Religion in British Columbia: A State-of-the-Art Review*, 1995. All subsequent references will be to SRC followed by the volume number: thus, Fraser will be SRC 5.

programs and courses to the training and research of faculty, the appeal of courses and programs, and the relevance of such courses to larger issues in society."⁴

Without exception, each of the volumes covers both religious studies and theology, making sure to keep them distinct in their analyses. There was originally some objection to the inclusion of theological colleges and Bible colleges, but several reasons warranted their inclusion. First, they are regarded as post-secondary institutions. Second, there are courses from theological colleges recognised by universities as either religious studies courses or, at least, arts courses (especially when theological colleges are affiliated with the university). Third, students from Bible colleges are sometimes given block credit for their courses or are exempted from introductory courses in religious studies. Fourth, it was understood that a confessional stance does not automatically imply lack of academic integrity.⁵ The emphasis of the series, however, is on religious studies, and much effort is spent on differentiating it from theology.

The reasons for embarking on the series, in addition to the SSHRC recommendation, are threefold. Firstly, there is the practical reason of being able to provide ample information outside of that available in university catalogues for use by counsellors and educators. Secondly, there is the historical reason: there had been no thorough study of religious studies up to that point. Thirdly, there is the methodological reason of trying to identify precisely what is meant by the term 'religious studies.'

"The issue of definition arises from the fact that religious studies is

³ SRC 1, ii.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, xi.

properly a field of study rather than a single discipline. However, there is constant pressure from other 'disciplines' in the universities for a clear-cut definition of religious studies, not only in terms of a field of study, but also in terms of a narrowly defined discipline with a particular methodology. ... The question of legitimacy is a result of the burden of the past, that is, the association of the scholarly study of religion with the apologetic interests of religious institutions."⁶

Ultimately, much of a state-of-the-art review will cease to be state-of-the-art in the intervening nineteen years: however, if one can discover general trends and discern whether the recommendations of reviewers in earlier volumes have in the interim been echoed in changes in the study of religion in the regions covered by later volumes, the series may be looked on as a more or less cohesive whole. Although there is a sufficient uniformity of intent to approach each volume in a like manner, there are variations from volume to volume depending on the editorial decisions of the reviewers and the scope of the data under review.

2. *Religious Studies in Alberta* (1982)

Ronald W. Neufeldt's premise, quoted above, that religious studies is a field of study and not a single discipline, is the principle point of contention of religious studies methodology. If religious studies is only a field of study, then religious studies can only be defined by the data it investigates, but the data it investigates can only be limited by some form of common assumption of what is relevant and what is not relevant. The problem with this is that it assumes a fixed system. Contrasting this, Neufeldt has taken as a basic assumption that it should indeed be the case that "religious studies [includes]

⁶ *Ibid.*, xiv.

first-order descriptive studies as well as second-order analytical studies.”⁷ To the criticism that religious studies is properly understood as second-order analytical studies only, he says it is impractical (in that one must make the assumption that students entering religious studies are virtually illiterate concerning any given religious tradition, including their own), and that it leads to bankruptcy (in that a student may learn much about analyses of religious ritual, belief, behaviour, and so forth, but know little about any religious tradition, much like the linguistics student can have little knowledge of any given language). Thus Neufeldt maintains that there must be a grasping of the data prior to embarking on the development of generalisations, theories, and interpretations. The data to be grasped, moreover, are “the details of the history of particular traditions as well as the details of the various phenomena that make up a given religious tradition.”⁸

When establishing categories to analyse teaching programs, Neufeldt found they are “somewhat arbitrary.”⁹ He decided to use traditional categories widely in use, which would cover major religious traditions and traditions of scholarship: thus, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, and Folk Religions are combined with Comparative Religion/Phenomenology, Methodology, and Others. To these are added textual studies, philosophical/theological studies, historical studies, and comparative/phenomenological studies when one confronts the variety of approaches that can be taken to deal with traditions. Lastly, to cover the study of religions in cognate

⁷ *Ibid.*, xii.

⁸ *Ibid.*, xiii.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1. It is unclear whether Neufeldt is using ‘category’ in the same sense as Lonergan uses the word, but it seems unlikely. For Lonergan categories are developed in foundations and applied in systematics: they are not chosen simply because they have been used in the past. See Chapter 5, below.

disciplines, he adds Philosophy of Religion, Psychology of Religion, Sociology of Religion, Anthropology of Religion, Religion and Literature, Religion and Education, and Religion and Art.

For his critique of the various universities in Alberta, Neufeldt contrasts the departments with a normative approach that stems from his two main assumptions: that religious studies is not a discipline, and that first-order descriptive studies are as (if not more) important than second-order analytical studies.

While a variety of subjects and methods is to be expected, the usual approach to programs in religious studies departments is to begin with introductory courses on world religions and the history of the study of religion and then to move to advanced courses on Eastern and Western religious traditions, followed by more advanced courses on specific traditions, texts, themes, and time periods.¹⁰

The University of Alberta, following Neufeldt's analysis, does well in covering religious traditions within its introductory level world religions course and through its subsequent phenomenological/comparative courses, but specific first-order descriptive courses are lacking for non-Western traditions. Although there are few methodology courses, for Neufeldt "it is not at all clear that a relative lack of courses dealing with methodology is a weakness. In this respect one might want to question the wisdom of including a methodological section in the introductory 200-level course."¹¹ Furthermore, although the department understands its mandate to have its strength lie in comparative and phenomenologically oriented courses, Neufeldt identifies this as a potential weakness as it is an emphasis on second-order analysis over first-order description. In a similar

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

vein, there are emphases on philosophical and theological studies of certain traditions over historical studies. Support from cognate disciplines is sorely lacking, based primarily on the suspicion with which the department has been faced since its inception. There is no psychology of religion course, while anthropology, sociology, and education deal primarily with methodological issues, with education adding an emphasis on religion as a system for instilling values.

The University of Calgary has divided its program into three streams: Eastern religions, Western religions, and the nature of religion. Much emphasis has been placed on language studies (Alberta, by contrast, has no language support within the department), with courses in Hebrew, Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Arabic. The nature of religions stream has been developed last, which resulted in successful coverage of religious traditions prior to any overly emphasised analytical studies. The strengths in the approaches to the study of religion are philosophical/theological and textual, at the expense of historical approaches: even in the phenomenological courses the emphasis is on a philosophical approach.

The University of Lethbridge does not have a department of religious studies, although it has offered a major in religious studies for longer than the other two universities through an interdisciplinary approach. In 1978 the program was changed to offer courses designated as religious studies only in addition to cross-listed courses. Neufeldt's problem with the interdisciplinary model is that there is a practical problem for the development of a program with its emphasis on the history of religious traditions

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

when a program is filled with disciplinary perspectives. “[U]sually] such courses tend to deal with specific disciplinary perspectives on religion and simply do not guarantee that a student will know a given tradition well.”¹²

In general, Neufeldt’s main critique is that too much emphasis is on analysis and disciplinary perspectives, overlooking the importance of descriptive studies. This emphasis is furthermore mostly limited to the philosophical/theological as well as textual approaches to the detriment of other approaches (cultural artefacts, literary or oral modes of presentation, patterns of behaviour, rituals, myths, etiquette, and history). This runs counter to Neufeldt’s assertion that it is “generally conceded that the study of religion draws from many disciplines and therefore has not and should not be concerned to develop a single methodology.”¹³ This is true for research and publications as much as it is for teaching: the emphasis on philosophical/theological approaches “underlines the heavy influence of categories and approaches that have been taken over from biblical and Christian studies.”¹⁴ “Surely scholars in religious studies need to be more aware of the fact that religious studies is a field which is interdisciplinary in nature. ... While scholars do pay lip service to religious studies as an area of study with many possible approaches, in practice religious studies is often treated as a discipline with a single distinctive methodology.”¹⁵

It is clear that Neufeldt’s stated insistence that programs are to have first-order descriptive studies and second-order analytical studies has some analogue to Lonergan’s

¹² *Ibid.*, 30.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 37.

general presentation of the *via inventionis* and the *via doctrinae*. No doubt, too, Neufeldt's priority on the grasping of data and reverting to the data to test the validity of any analysis would not only be welcomed but also insisted upon by those working in the Lonergan tradition. But it is equally clear that the detractors against whom he is defending religious studies are presented as "wrong-headedly" insisting upon a single methodology.¹⁶ What is missing in Neufeldt is an explanation for, not simply a description of, the interdisciplinary nature of religious studies. The categories he uses are based on convention. There is a confusion that, because there are various methodologies and disciplinary perspectives available to the student of religion, there is no possibility of an over-arching method, a heuristic method, which could link those different perspectives together. The link, according to Neufeldt, is in the data to be investigated, the field of study. But how does one determine the boundaries of a field of study without some framework of definitions in place?

What is needed is something akin to the fourth and fifth functional specialities, dialectics and foundations, where the basic nest of terms and relations can be determined, and the working out of categories can begin. To eke out the genera "... of religion" (as in anthropology, psychology, sociology of religion) and "religion and..." (as religion and literature, and art, and education), which is akin to developing general categories, would ground both interdisciplinarity and the development of special categories for religious

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 60. Neufeldt contrasts that 'wrongheaded' assumption with the suggestion that "history or English or classics, for example, are disciplines in the sense that they are represented by a single methodology (*Ibid.*, 60)."

studies. This is taken up further in Chapter 5, below.

One last movement appears in Neufeldt, that of the responsibility of religious studies to the community. He points to the interpretive function of those working in the humanities in general and for religious studies in particular, wherein "persons in religious studies have a responsibility to society precisely because they have a particular expertise that relates to a significant aspect of life."¹⁷ The interpretive function in Neufeldt's words seems to be the same as the mediating function in Lonergan's, and that this function is a 'responsible' one has its echoes in the existential and praxis component of Lonergan's method. One hopes one is not reading too much into Neufeldt.

It is unclear whether Neufeldt sets a pattern that the subsequent reviewers follow, but his is one of the more forthright of the reviews. In the following sections less effort will be made to critique the conclusions of the reviewers – that will be left to sections nine and ten. But he raises themes and issues which will be echoed in all the reviews hereafter.

3. *Les sciences religieuses au Québec depuis 1972 (1988)*

Because the state-of-the-art question of any cultural examination is an ongoing process in Quebec, Louis Rousseau and Michel Despland had at their disposal studies which covered the period prior to 1972,¹⁸ and thus elected not to include that history into

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 69. Neufeldt bases some of these conclusions on *The Humanities in American Life: Report of the Commission on the Humanities* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1980).

¹⁸ SRC 2, 12-13. There had two previous reviews of religious studies in Canada, both by Charles Anderson: *Guide to Religious Studies in Canada / Guide pour les études religieuses au Canada* (Canadian Society for the Study of Religion / Société Canadienne pour l'Étude de la Religion, 1969) and *Guide to*

their discussions. As a result, where so much of the other reviews are concerned with history, Rousseau and Despland could begin with analysis. However, like the subsequent volumes on Ontario and Atlantic Canada, the number of universities in Quebec account for a long disquisition, despite the exclusion of this history. With so many programs under consideration, they were presented with the problem of how to synthesise the material into a readable review.

Rather than beginning with programs, Rousseau and Despland chose instead to begin with "la population de ceux qui travaillent dans le vaste champ des sciences religieuses au Québec. Celui-ci n'est rien d'autre que l'espace occupé par les transmetteurs et les créateurs de connaissances savantes."¹⁹ Thus, to avoid limiting themselves to those who held positions in religious studies and theology departments, they include doctoral candidates and doctoral graduates, cégep and university professors whose research covers in part or in whole a facet of religion, and anyone who has published in a religion journal since 1972. This group, crossed with members of the *Regroupement Interuniversitaire pour l'Étude de la Religion* and the Quebec members of seven other learned societies for religion, constitutes a group of over 600. Only then do Rousseau and Despland move to the constitution of programs, again since 1972.

There are eleven programs of religion in Quebec: five for theology and six for religious studies. Theology is offered at Université Laval, Université de Montréal, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR), and Université de Sherbrooke.

Religious Studies in Canada / Guide des Sciences Religieuses au Canada (Corporation for the Publication of Academic Studies in Religion in Canada, 1972). However, Quebec was the only province to also have

Religious Studies is offered at Bishop's University, McGill University, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC), Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), and Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR). Concordia University has both a theology and religious studies department.

Before shifting focus to religious studies, it is interesting to note that Laval, Montréal, and Sherbrooke's theology and McGill's religion are all faculties of their respective universities and not departments within a larger administrative unit. The faculty designation is a feature of the older universities and applies to an administrative unit charged with clerical formation. Such is the case with Laval, Montréal and Sherbrooke, Catholic universities for whom ecclesiastical authority is still formally guaranteed. Such was also the case with the Anglican Bishop's University until 1973, when the Faculty of Theology was disbanded as the department of religious studies was formed. McGill's Faculty of Religion is a development from the Faculty of Divinity, a joint effort of the various affiliated denominational colleges. Departmental organisation, on the other hand, "caractérise les institutions plus récentes et signale une absence de liens formels avec l'institution ecclésiastique."²⁰

Religious studies, in contrast to theology, was first established in Quebec at Sir George Williams University (which later joined with Loyola College to form Concordia University in 1974) in the 1960-61 academic year. Whereas in a theology or divinity program one would take one's BD after earning one's BA, the program in religion

its own histories.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 14.

followed the American model, by which one followed an undergraduate program of courses from a non-confessional stance, with an emphasis on covering the major world religions. It was not until the late 1960s that religious studies appeared in the francophone universities, and one of the first efforts was to find the appropriate terminology: 'de sciences de la religion,' 'de sciences humaines de la religion,' 'de religiologie' were all attempts at naming the new discipline for a new language. The diverse components of the Université du Québec, which granted freedom from ecclesiastical concerns, provided an unprecedented opportunity for the new study to foster in Quebec. The growth of the discipline was demonstrated by the first French MA from UQAM in 1971, and an MA from Sherbrooke in 'sciences humaines de la religion,' offered through the faculty of theology through the aid of invited professors.

At Montréal, the Faculty of Theology moved onto campus in 1967, and l'Institut supérieur de sciences religieuses ceased its activities in 1969. As Montréal students began registering for courses in Catholic theology at the faculty, it also began to offer an undergraduate major and minor in 'sciences de la religion.' This shift in language, from the institute's 'sciences religieuses' to 'sciences de la religion,' reflects a shift in attitude from the assumption that the study of religion is necessarily a religious activity.

The polarisation between religious studies and theology sometimes hides the other polarisation that Rousseau and Despland identify as problematic: do we conceive studies of religion, whether theological (d'un discours sur Dieu et sur les fins ultimes de l'homme) or religious studies (d'un horizon humain, d'un discours qui porte sur l'homme

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 36.

et sur ses productions),²¹ as singular disciplines or interdisciplinary : multidisciplinary projects? Just as theology, having developed the specialisations of foundations, dogmatics, ethics, biblical, practical, and spiritual, has had trouble recovering a sense of unity, so too do the human studies of religion struggle to answer the question of unity. Thus,

On trouve par exemple des universitaires pour nier la nécessité de consacrer à l'étude de la religion les ressources d'un département spécialisé; selon eux l'université moderne rendrait justice à la religion comme objet d'étude en s'intéressant à la sociologie de la religion en sociologie, à la psychologie de la religion en psychologie et ainsi de suite.²²

At UQAM, for example, there is concerted effort in developing along single-disciplinary lines 'religiologie,' while at Concordia there are those who affirm 'without hesitation' that religious studies is, like education and criminology, an interdisciplinary study of a particular facet of human activity.

There is also division between those who feel that the study of religion begins with the cultural context of the professor and her students, which in the case of Quebec is the Christian or Western post-Christian context, and those who feel that an authentic human study arises from different and differing cultures and insist that a faculty or department has the necessary competence to grapple with the study of all world religions. The latter readily invoke Max Müller's aphorism, borrowed from Goethe on language, that one who knows only one religion knows none.

But irrespective of the large divisions in reasoning, whether entrenched

²¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

opposition or nuanced dialectic, there is work being done. One must pay heed that instruction does not always reflect rigorous and perfectly coherent intellectual decisions: balances are established between the interests and intellectual orientations of professors, the needs of society, and the aspirations of the students. It is also to be noted that the array of course offerings most often reflects trends in society.

Much of the remainder of Rousseau and Despland's discussion on undergraduate curricula in Quebec is dedicated to taking note of these trends. Each university's course offerings in 1983 is contrasted with the course offerings of 1972. Fourteen categories are established, with which one can then identify increases, decreases, or negligible changes in the proportion of those courses offered. There was relative stability in religions of antiquity (-0.1%), Islam (no change), and language courses (-0.2%). There were increases in the courses in Judaism (+1.2%), Hinduism (+0.6%), Buddhism (+0.4%), other religions (+0.8%), Ethics (-0.8%),²³ religion and art (+0.5%), teaching methods (Didactique) (+5.1%), and the unclassifiable (+6.0%).²⁴ Lastly, courses in 'Sciences des religions' (-6.1%), Christianity (-5.6%), and exegetical / biblical criticism (-1.9%) decreased over the eleven-year period.

No mention is given concerning how these categories are integrated, if at all, into a larger program of studies, but Rousseau and Despland can find causes for some of the more general shifts. Focussing on the francophone universities, they show that the

²² *Ibid.*, 41-42.

²³ This statistic betrays a numeric increase but a proportionate decrease.

²⁴ "La subite popularité des cours inclassables s'explique en général par le désir de contourner les lenteurs bureaucratiques des institutions. En effet, ces cours sont les plus souvent sans contenu bien précis : ils permettent aux départements et facultés d'ajouter à leur programme à la dernière minute des

decrease in Christianity and biblical courses is attributable to a move away from the traditional *cursus theologicus* by both the theological and the religious studies programs as a response to the need for teachers to teach catholic catechism in the elementary and secondary catholic school system. This accounts both for the rise in teaching methods and for the rise in courses on ethics. The eventual removal of the 'religious culture' course from the last year of secondary school had a profound impact on the universities, not only for the formation of teachers but also for programs in religious studies who were faced with religious illiterates. Lastly, the rise in non-Christian religions (Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and other religions) is not only attributable to a growing world perspective and a growing concern for socially responsible contact with non-European cultures, but is also a result of the rise in 'néo-québécois' allophones coming up through the francophone school systems.

Rousseau and Despland's main concern has not been to justify the existence of an academic study of religion: they take that as read, and defer to others to support the arguments. Rather, the thrust of their argument hinges on the equal footing that the study of religion as found in the francophone universities has with the anglophone universities, that there is a more or less equal distribution of courses among the categories, and that where differences do occur they can be attributed either to a genetic difference or to the role that the Quebec francophone universities have to play for the French-Canadian population at large. Unlike their English counterparts, who can draw students from all over English Canada, they must respond more to the immediate requirements of their

context, where the students brought up through the francophone secondary school system are likewise limited in their options.

4. *Religious Studies in Ontario* (1992)

With twenty-six possible programs, constituted by forty colleges and departments, the reviewers for Ontario were faced with the most daunting task in the series. The longest of the state-of-the-art reviews, Harold Remus, William Closson James, and Daniel Fraikin collaborated on the project not by moving through the material together but by apportioning it into a collection of essays. Thus, each chapter reflects the work of one person. In a departure from the other books in the series, the reviewers also took it upon themselves to interview students for their perceptions of the program. The focus of the study is on religious studies as opposed to theology, but like most universities in Canada, where religious studies grew up in relation with (whether tempestuous or not) theological programs, theology is reviewed for its complementarity.

Almost all of the universities in Ontario founded prior to 1950 owe their origins to Christian denominations. It is only since the Second World War that universities were created *de novo* and the older universities came under provincial control. The old denominational universities reflected the "firmly held conviction among nineteenth-century Canadians"²⁵ that Lower and Upper, French and English Canada was a Christian nation, and that one of the responsibilities of the universities was the teaching of (not about) religion, specifically Christianity. King's College was chartered in 1827 at the

urging of Bishop Strachan as a missionary college, not only to provide formation for clergy but for that formation to reflect the traditions of Europe and not the influence of the United States, whose 'itinerant' preachers were perceived as a potentially hostile influence. However, it was noted that the so-called 'dissenting' (read, non-Anglican Protestant) Christians were in the majority. By 1856 Bishop Strachan "[invited] the 'dissenting sects' to join him in creating a Protestant Ontario."²⁶ Meanwhile, in 1836 the Methodists had established Upper Canada Academy (renamed Victoria College in 1841), and Presbyterians established Queen's College in 1841. In a like manner, Roman Catholics founded Regiopolis in Kingston in 1837, St. Michael's in 1852, and Assumption (now Windsor) in 1857.

The position of King's College, however, was problematic. How does one maintain a *prima inter pares* stance in a society that, although far from what we would now call diverse or multi-denominational, was divided between competing forms of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism? The Baldwin Act of 1849 and the Hincks Act of 1853 disestablished King's College, placed it under government control, renamed it the University of Toronto, and shifted instruction to the new institution of University College and to any College that might choose to affiliate itself with the University. The Federation Act of 1887 brought about actual affiliation for Victoria and St. Michael's and, ultimately, Trinity College (founded in 1851 by Strachan to replace the disestablished King's). A subsequent result of these acts was that the teaching of

²⁵ SRC 3, 7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

theology and the formation of clergy were seen as operations outside the responsibilities of the university. As a report by the commission on education appointed by the House of Assembly in 1839 stated: "it would be wholly subversive of the order of an university, to have within it, chairs for the Professors of different Denominations of Religion."²⁷

Although this was similar to a trend begun earlier in the United States, the Canadian model differs from the American in that the seminaries founded by the churches in Canada often remain affiliated with provincial universities, with theological students and arts undergraduates often sitting in on the same courses.

But religious instruction continued and indeed flourished in the universities despite the apparent secularisation. Even at the 'godless' University College, a significant number of graduates, comparable to the number of graduates from the affiliated colleges, went into the clergy. It was at the Department of Oriental languages at University College where the first trends towards religious studies in Ontario began to take form. With the movement towards specialisation so representative of the German universities making itself felt in North America, Oriental Languages, lead by James F. McCurdy, had shifted in purpose from simply being language preparation for advanced work in biblical studies to an area concerned with understanding "the indebtedness of Western Culture to the ancient Near East, [seeing] 'Orientals' as 'a branch of general culture' and therefore of interest and importance to other students as well."²⁸ There was furthermore an initiative for graduate studies so that interested parties did not have to go

²⁷ Quoted in J.D. Sheraton, W. Caven, F.H. Wallace, and T.C. Street, "Theological Colleges," in W.J. Alexander, ed., *The University of Toronto and Its Colleges, 1827-1906*, Toronto: 1906, 184-200, at 188.

overseas or (worse) to the United States if they wanted to advance. The first humanities doctoral degrees were granted in 1902, but the tension between teaching about religion and the teaching of religion remained.

With a decentralisation of the primacy of religious commitment and religious affiliation over the course of the twentieth century, religious studies has been both the beneficiary (in that the legitimacy of 'objective' or 'secular' studies of religion has been validated) and the victim (in that the relevance of studying a relativistic social phenomenon has been challenged). But extrinsic to external pressures and bolstering, religious studies has developed over the last one hundred years. At the end of the nineteenth century, the study of religion within ostensibly secular universities was affirmed, but "questions of values, interpretation, stance of the professor, and the purpose of courses in religion were glossed over or touched on only briefly."²⁹ This was to change in the twentieth.

Biblical studies remained a significant area on which developments in other disciplines had an impact. The 'higher criticism' evolved not only from critical comparison of texts and sources but from the fresh data and insights from archaeology, anthropology, sociology, and the comparative religion approach. Similarly, the field of History of Christianity (or church history) had shifted from a Christian-centred apologetics to a study of movements and influences of groups of religious adherents, in line with the genus 'history of...' with which one would study other socio-historical

²⁸ SRC 3, 13.

phenomena.

Much debate has been generated, of course, by the question of the relationship between religious studies and theology, which has forced both sides to re-evaluate not only the stance of the observer (the so-called insider-outsider debate) but the phenomenon being observed. It has also, as a result, allowed for the possibility of offering theological courses (or courses much more strongly rooted in theological traditions than they are in *Religionswissenschaft*) within faculties of religious studies.

Comparative religion, by whatever name one calls it, and growing out of the nineteenth century heuristic sciences of anthropology, archaeology, folklore, philology, and ethnography, has, in addition to broadening the scope of the study of religions beyond the 'religions of the book,' provided a new methodological process. Whereas courses offered in Western religions were, in the formative period of post-war religious studies, for the most part taught by those originally theologically trained, the study of non-Western religions has had to devise new techniques and methods which, at the very least, do not presuppose the researcher's familiarity with the tradition under investigation. Notions such as fieldwork, travel, and (later) ritual study supplement the study of text and artefact so common to theology: this in turn has reinvigorated theological study and the study of the religions of the West, and reinforced the perspective that investigation begins with lived traditions.

Recognition of the need for multicultural study came partly from the suggestions of the comparative school, and partly from the real world situation Canada found itself in

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

after the Second World War as a desirable destination for émigrés not only from Western Europe but from all over. There had, of course, been a significant Jewish population in Canada, particularly in the urban centres of Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg, and there were large East Asian communities, but not in the numbers seen in post-war immigration. The new communities both initiated and necessitated a movement for the study of these new (to Canada) traditions within the traditional context of the academy. Lastly, the religious traditions of Native North Americans, which if they had been studied at all were usually done so within departments of anthropology, became recognised as living traditions worthy of the same sort of attention as the other religious traditions of the world.

With all these movements, the recognition of religious studies as a legitimate academic pursuit was affirmed, and found its place at most of Ontario's institutions. Today, only three universities offer no courses in religious studies, Trent, Guelph, and Brock.³⁰ Courses are offered at the church-related colleges affiliated with the University of Western Ontario (Brescia, Huron, and King's Colleges and St. Peter's Seminary),³¹ and at the unaffiliated church-related Redeemer College in Ancaster. Lakehead, York, and the graduate degrees at the University of Toronto are designated as programmes or centres, which, in lieu of having an individual department, instead draw on various departments for a cross-disciplinary approach (the centre at Toronto also draws on the undergraduate department of Religious Studies). The Department of Religious Studies at

³⁰ All three universities have a considerable number of courses in several departments (Politics, Classics, History, Philosophy, English, Sociology, Native Studies) that cover religion to some extent (*Ibid.*, 62-70).

Laurentian is comprised solely from faculty from the three denominational universities with which Laurentian is federated (Huntington, Sudbury, and Thorneloe), while Waterloo's department similarly draws on faculty from its affiliated church-related colleges (Conrad Grebel, Renison, St. Jerome's, St. Paul's) but also from its own Faculty of Arts. The departments at both Queen's and Wilfrid Laurier maintain a connection with their respective affiliated theological colleges, although there is a clear distinction of roles and jurisdiction. The religious studies departments at Carleton, McMaster, Ottawa, Windsor, as well as the undergraduate department at Toronto, have little or no connection to colleges, irrespective of how their universities' origins may or may not reflect the affiliation or federation model: administrative and financial procedures and decisions are wholly separate from the other colleges.

Religious studies is perceived by administrators as, for the most part, being a worthwhile (meaning institutionally viable) allocation of resources. Healthy enrolment is attributed both to good teaching and faculty reputation and to the less flattering reputation some courses have as 'bird' or 'decorative' courses. In the eyes of most administrators, this is a fault not of the course or subject matter per se as it is of the person teaching it: efforts to rectify the situation include the gradual phasing out of these instructors (many of whom are "holdovers from an earlier period when the offerings were still conceived of as 'religion' or 'religious knowledge' rather than religious studies,")³¹ and the limiting of class size to better monitor instruction. But these 'bird' courses were presented as

³¹ King's College has a department of religion and philosophy in its own right.

³² *Ibid.*, 97.

exceptions, and far from unique to the religious studies departments. The meritocracy or professionalisation of the academy, with emphasis placed on individual research and publishing instead of on administrative and teaching duties, has been later in coming to some religious studies departments, perhaps as a result of confusion in the discipline's early days over the role religious commitment should or should not play in the hiring process. Although most university deans were familiar not only with their own departments but with religious studies as an academic field, they did make the observation that many in the university community still did not see the distinction between religious studies and religious education (as inculcation), and that it is still a field of study viewed with suspicion.

This suspicion (and the somewhat belated professionalisation) has led to a further complication of the insider-outsider debate: professors are reticent to betray any personal religious commitment lest they be accused of proselytising, and when they teach a tradition empathetically it is often assumed that they are teaching from that confessional stance.³³ Another factor that affects morale among faculty, in universities where there is a programme or centre in lieu of a department, is the lack of collegiality and infrequent contact between members scattered among the various constitutive departments.

Interestingly enough, large segments of the student population who become interested in religious studies do not enter university with that intent: often, they are 'refugees' from other disciplines for whom the avoidance of 'big questions' in favour of

³³ *Ibid.*, 102-06.

smaller ones by other disciplines fails to satisfy their curiosity.³⁴ This is compounded by a lack of trust in traditional religious institutions: religious studies thrive when religious life is in crisis. This crisis also moves the traditional institutions from a position of awe to an approachable subject for objective reflection. Aside from those taking religious studies courses as a preparation for a future theological programme, most students are aware that religious studies is not necessarily the best preparation for careers outside of the academy, save for the general praise reserved for people holding liberal arts or humanities degrees. However, this does not seem to stop many: for them, the answering of these same 'big questions' is a basic and necessary step prior to a career.

When Donald Fraikin undertook the task of examining undergraduate curricula in Ontario, he approached it from two directions. There are courses offered for the general student population, which reflect the claim of the field to public status and what the faculty thinks the university graduate should know about religion. There are also programmes, in which a few students follow a course of study aiming at recognised competence in the field.³⁵

Since 1972, there have been significant changes in both the numbers and proportions of courses on offer at Ontario universities. There were almost twice as many available credit hours in 1986 as there were then.³⁶ Courses in Christianity have basically

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 122.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 221. Harold Remus was responsible for all the chapters from which the first part of this section has been taken.

³⁶ Fraikin indicates that, because there has been an almost universal move in Ontario away from two-term courses to one-term courses, twice as many courses could be offered without changing the total number of credit hours. Since there has been an increase in the number of available credit hours as well, the figures he cites from 1972 have been doubled to hide the changes that occur merely as a result of an

remained at the same proportionate levels of 43.5%: there was a 6.4% increase in Christian tradition courses, coupled with a 6.2% decrease in courses described as Western thematic (which Fraikin presumes are taught within the Christian framework of the West). Non-Christian Western religions and Eastern religions, coupled with languages other than Hebrew or Greek, have risen only slightly (0.9%): there are increases in the Jewish tradition (4.4%, from 15 to 86 courses, although these new courses were predominately at York and Toronto), a slight increase in Islam (0.1%, from 18 to 35), proportionate losses in Eastern religions (-5.3%, from 113 to 181), and only six new courses (-0.9%) in non-Biblical languages. Fewer than ten courses in the combined categories of Religions of China and Japan, Indigenous Religions of North America or Africa, and New Religions, were offered in Ontario, with even fewer actually offered in any given year. Biblical courses have decreased significantly from 1972, when they occupied 27% of the curriculum, down to just 17.6%.

Two further genera are to be noted: 'Religion and...' and '... of religion.' The dialogical titles of such courses as 'Religion and the Arts' and 'Religion and Politics' not only betray the perception that religion is already present in most spheres of human activity, but also serve the secondary purpose of "attracting students to the study of religion by associating it with better known human realities."³⁷ In a similar vein, the methodological courses such as 'Psychology of Religion' and 'Sociology of Religion' reflect particular approaches to religion from an explanatory rather than a descriptive

administrative shift. Rousseau and Despland avoided this confusion by referring to credit hours only.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 224. Unfortunately, Fraikin does not give numbers to reflect whether this genus is on the rise.

approach. These courses have tripled in number and doubled in proportion (37 to 123, 5.4% to 9.4%) since 1972.

On course offerings in general, Fraikin offers the following conclusion:

What emerges from the survey of course offerings in religious studies departments is a consensus on a number of 'musts' resulting from the demands of the public and the nature of the field. Departments of religious studies must be able to offer something on Christianity, world religions, the Bible, ethics, women, religion in Canada. But the requirements are uneven. At the time of our survey courses on world religions were no longer as much in demand as they were in the 1960s and 1970s and thus the need to offer them came more from a perception of the integrity of the field than from a strong demand on the part of students.³⁸

In terms of programmes of study, all but one department in Ontario offers a first-year, 100-level course. Most have courses of a general nature with (non-threatening) titles such as Religion and Roots, the Drama of Human Life, Problems of Religion and Culture, Ideas of Love (or War), and so forth. They have a propaedeutic intent: most first-year students can be assumed to have no background in academic thinking about religion, and thus, unlike social sciences, literature, or history, religious studies departments have the disadvantage of starting from scratch. Even when introductory courses concern a particular tradition with which an assumption of familiarity can be made (the most glaring example, Christianity), a non-confessional, non-dogmatic, 'objective' approach to it would still most likely be a novelty to the neophyte.

For those wishing to develop a greater level of competence, programmes of study are designed to cover a span of the field sufficient for the student to grasp its breadth. The study of at least one religion other than one's own seems essential to any

understanding of religion, but a course on world religions is a requirement of only four departments. Others require one to take courses in areas of religious studies other than one's own area of concentration, with the implication, albeit not the imposition, that that be a different tradition. Similarly, programs demand a variety of approaches, either by requiring that the student take dialogical or thematic courses, or by requiring the student to take courses from each of the streams or areas offered by the department. "Such groupings result from a blend of the following oppositions: East and West, past (origins) and present, historical and philosophical, Christian and non-Christian."³⁹ Finally, although courses devoted solely to methodology are few, the mandatory methods course requirement for honours or graduate at Ontario universities indicates "a substantial consensus on the necessity of methodological awareness for anyone claiming competence in religious studies, but whether this should take place at the beginning or at the end of the process, at the undergraduate or at the graduate level, is probably the question at the root of the different practices presently observed."⁴⁰ (It is also observed that the lack of language requirements is the most serious handicap of North American students entering graduate studies.)

In conclusion, despite this consensus on the importance of method(s), especially in the face of detractors from outside the discipline (or, perhaps in the case of Donald Wiebe, inside⁴¹), students for the most part want to study religions themselves, in the

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 226-27.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 226.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 229.

⁴¹ See, for example, his articles in *SR*: "Is a Science of Religion Possible?" 7/1 (1978), 5-17; "The Failure of Nerve in the Academic Study of Religion" 13/4 (1984), 401-22; "The 'Academic

particular rather than in the general or 'abstract,' and want to focus on one tradition. When this tradition is their own, or even when this tradition is perceived by the culture of the moment to answer some of the 'big questions' the students have, the suggestion is again made that religious studies is "the walk-in therapy center for the university, [to the neglect of] knowledge and education, hard thinking and good writing – which themselves put the existential concerns of adolescents – whether narcissistic or not – into perspective."⁴² The effort to make religious studies a viable allocation of resources in the eyes of administrators by continuing to attract students is in tension with the effort to maintain academic integrity by insisting upon producing students with a level of competence capable of further study.

5. "Religious Studies in Manitoba" (1993)

The reviewers for "Religious Studies in Manitoba,"⁴³ John M. Badertscher and Gordon Harland, were for the most part concerned with placing the history of religious studies in Manitoba in an historical context. As a result, there is not much in the way of critique or recommendations. However, the history of the three universities points the way to how the departments were conceived.

The University of Manitoba began as a non-teaching degree granting institution whose responsibility was the maintaining of academic standards for a confederation of denominational colleges, the French Catholic St. Boniface, the Anglican St. John's

Naturalization' of Religious Studies: Intent or Pretence?" 15/2 (1986), 197-203.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 295, quoting Ivan Strenski, "Our Very Own 'Contras': A Response to the 'St. Louis Project' Report," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 54/2 (1986), 323-35, at 334.

College, the Presbyterian Manitoba College, and Wesley College. Together with the later formed Manitoba Medical College and the Manitoba College of Pharmacy, the university acted as an examining and degree-conferring body. The denominational colleges also had the power to confer their own theological degrees through the university.

At the turn of the century, however, a movement began to allow the university to begin teaching its own courses outside of the colleges. This was a source of much debate, particularly as Archbishop Taché, the president of St. Boniface since the University's inception, pointed out that there was a discrepancy between the French and English versions of the original University of Manitoba Act of 1877. Where the English read that "There shall be no professorships or other teacherships at present in the University," the French omitted "at present." Much of the push behind the original confederation arrangement was to avoid the denominational infighting seen in the Ontario universities of the time. If the government had not initiated a public university, the denominational colleges would fill that void. "That, in turn, would mean conflict between the denominations for limited resources, and conflict between churches and the province over the control of higher education. The experience of such conflict in Ontario was very much in the minds of many of Manitoba's ecclesiastical and political leaders."⁴⁴ Now, however, those same conflicts were arising, but in combination with the realisation that the rapid advancement in natural sciences which marked the end of the nineteenth century could not be addressed by the resources of the smaller denominational colleges.

⁴³ SRC 4, 5-78.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

Eventually, over Taché's objections, the university, beginning with chairs in the natural sciences but expanding with a liberal arts curriculum, began offering courses of its own. On July 1, 1967, Brandon College, a Baptist college in Brandon, Manitoba, which had been an affiliate of the University of Manitoba since 1938, became the University of Brandon, and United College, which had been a merger of Manitoba College and Wesley College, became the University of Winnipeg. United College had been left in relative isolation in the northeast of Winnipeg after most of the University of Manitoba had been settled into a new site at Fort Garry.

Since their respective inceptions, each of the three universities in Manitoba had managed to define themselves not in opposition to the denominational colleges but in co-operation with them. Teachers from the theological faculties at the University of Manitoba frequently taught courses in the arts program (mostly biblical languages and literature), and a course in religious studies had been offered as early as 1940. The Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, following a circuitous history, began in 1964,⁴⁵ three years prior to the creation of the three universities. With the upheavals of 1967, however, also came the determination that a Department of Religion at the University of Manitoba was warranted, and it was located in neither St. John's nor St. Paul's College (an English Catholic college founded in 1926), but in the Arts complex.

The major premise that belied the department was that a course of studies should focus on two main objectives. "First, courses should be developed which would deal with the classical texts, persons, and movements of the great religious traditions of both

East and West; second, courses should be developed in which these traditions and perspectives could fruitfully engage the intellectual, spiritual, and social issues of the time."⁴⁵ The resources of those teaching in the theology departments and the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies were immediately available to cover the Western traditions, a course in Eastern religions, and the psychology of religion, and within two years new appointments were made in the areas of Hinduism and Religion and Culture. Early in its mandate, therefore, the department was able to provide coverage of major religious traditions, with the noticeable lacunae of indigenous religions and Chinese and Japanese religions. This broad coverage was complemented by the development of another area of concentration, religion and culture.

In a similar fashion, the department of religion at the University of Winnipeg came at a time when one could foresee the cutbacks to the theological faculty. Starting with one appointment in the area of Christian studies (but not from a theological standpoint), the department grew to three with the appointment of an Asian religionist and another in the area of religion and society. In the mid-1970's, two members of the theology department, which had phased out its basic degree program, were transferred to religion, although, when the two positions later opened through retirement, only one replacement was authorised. The department was in three streams: Western or "biblical" traditions (Judaism and Christianity); world (later referred to as non-Western) religions; and one that dealt "with themes in the religious analysis of ethical issues and social

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 25-27.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

change in the contemporary context."⁴⁷

Brandon University likewise drew its first appointment from its theology heritage, and the professor who had taught religious studies through the fifties and sixties was the transitional figure between Brandon College and Brandon University. But following the transition the department dropped the biblical courses (upon this professor's retirement), and the department became comprised of three figures: an historian of religion (Western and world religions), one appointment in Eastern religions and languages, and one appointment in Near Eastern religions. The program aimed at a comprehensive approach and was structured around two themes: Ancient Religions, a history-of-religions approach, and Religion and Modern Western Society, a themes and issues approach. Two other groupings of courses, one in languages (Sanskrit, Hebrew, and Greek), and one called General courses (which not only comprise introductory level courses but also intermediate- and upper-level courses) which are methodological in orientation.

Badertscher and Harland, unfortunately, do not provide much in the way of critique, apart from identifying some gaps in the coverage of various religious traditions. If we take their silence as a tacit assent, however, they seem encouraged by the complementing of historical and descriptive studies with the other streams. Manitoba's Religion and Culture, Winnipeg's Contemporary Problems in Religions and Culture, and Brandon's Religion and Modern Western Society are all comprehensive and analytical in

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 48. According to their web page, "The Religious Studies program at The University of Winnipeg divides the exploration of religion into three areas - the historical background of Western traditions, contemporary problems [in] religion and culture, and non-Western religions." *University of Winnipeg Religious Studies*, available from <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/academic/as/religiousstudies/relstud.html>. Internet, accessed 8 March, 2001.

their approach. By refraining from too much reliance on cross-listed courses or the resources of other departments, the departments have each been able to maintain both descriptive and analytical studies within a unified framework of 'religious studies.' But since Badertscher and Harland make neither observations nor recommendations, it is presumptuous to judge exactly how they would understand the unifying principle or what they would understand it to be.

6. "Religious Studies in Saskatchewan" (1993)

Perhaps there is an advantage to having a single reviewer. Roland E. Miller, the reviewer of "Religious Studies in Saskatchewan,"⁴⁸ has been able to be much more forthright in his criticisms and recommendations of the state of religious studies in Saskatchewan, especially when compared to Badertscher and Harland. It may be the advantage, however, of having two programs, one of which has worked well since its inception, and one of which seemed to get off on such a wrong foot that its history can be turned to as a source of counter-examples.

The University of Regina, formed in 1974 from the Regina Campus of the University of Saskatchewan, had from its outset wanted to include the study of religion as part of its offerings. This proposed study was explicitly understood as necessarily 'secular,' a term later giving way to 'academic,' to contrast it with the Christian-centred tradition of religious studies found at the University of Saskatchewan, which was primarily the function of affiliated divinity schools. After a few aborted efforts,

guidelines were established for a program, the objectives of which were stated in the following terms:

The goal of the program is to offer the student the opportunity to examine critically the realm of the religious as an aspect of human life. The program is therefore not designed to foster personal religious commitment or to evaluate to that end the relative merits of various religious traditions and systems. It is based on the assumption that a critical analysis of religious experience is basic to the study of social and cultural phenomena.⁴⁹

When the university officially separated from the University of Saskatchewan, it entered into an affiliation with two colleges: the Jesuit Campion College and Luther College. There had already been work in religious studies at the colleges, and they supplied the bulk of the teaching faculty for the program for the first ten years. Only one appointment was made at the Faculty of Arts for religious studies, in comparison to three each from the colleges, a point which resulted in resistance for the proposal of departmental status, despite the exponential growth it experienced in its early years. Eventually a second appointment was made through the Faculty of Arts, with the understanding that a third would be a worthwhile goal to pursue, resulting in three from each of the institutions.

The program was designed around three groups: "1. Religions (major living systems and their thinkers; other religions, area and comparative studies); 2. Religious Themes (Concepts; life and practices; issues, interdisciplinary); 3. The Study of Religion

⁴⁸ SRC 4, 79-156.

⁴⁹ *Minutes of the meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Science, University of Regina, May 15, 1974, Appendix. Quoted in SRC 4, 86.*

(introduction; methodology)."⁵⁰ Students would take at least a course in each of the groupings, with 200-level courses concentrating on specific world religions, and 300-level courses would provide one "thought" course for each tradition. Over time, the number of cross-listed courses that were applicable towards a religious studies degree was cut down to reflect the growing resources of the program, and those which remained were more rigorously vetted to fit the methodological approach of the program.

Thus at the University of Regina there was a slow yet careful development of a program which was able to make use of the resources of denominational colleges without either alienating the secular/academic Faculty of Arts or sacrificing the availability of courses to one particular tradition. Miller contrasts this with the University of Saskatchewan, which did not have it so easy.⁵¹

The University of Saskatchewan was begun as a secular provincial institution in 1907, soon after the province's creation in 1905. At that time, Emmanuel College, an Anglican college, moved to the same campus and became an affiliated college, limiting itself to university-level theological degrees, which the new university was not chartered to grant. Over time, Lutheran Theological Seminary and St. Andrew's College (of the United Church) also became affiliated colleges. St. Thomas More, a Roman Catholic college, was incorporated in 1943 on the campus of the University, but it is a federated, not an affiliated, college, which "offers university arts classes on the same footing as the

⁵⁰ SRC 4, 89-90.

⁵¹ It should be noted that Miller was the first full-time chair in religious studies at Regina, was the program co-ordinator from 1980 to 1990, and undertook both the review of 1977 which resulted in the three groups and the call for departmental status, and the review of 1985 which prompted the hiring of the second Arts Faculty position and the recommendation for the third.

College of Arts and Science.⁵² By the 1970's, following the formation of the University of Regina, there was no religious studies offering at Saskatchewan, and there was no sustained pressure within the teaching faculty of the College of Arts and Science to change:

As the university's interest in the study of religion was significantly conditioned by its institutional involvement with theological and religious colleges, it was perhaps inevitable that some members of the university community would interpret religious studies as a form of Christian studies, and that some might go on to make a further deduction that it was Christian studies within a narrow and purposed focus uncongenial to the academic approach of the university.⁵³

There were, at the same time, calls for an ecumenical school of theology which would lead to a post-BA Bachelor of Theology degree, but this proposal fell through when Luther Theological Seminary felt that the school needed the study of religion as opposed to a new structure for theology. However, when the school of theology fell through, a school of religious studies was suggested. This met with rapid approval and a proposal was passed by the Senate. "Without much advance thought or evaluation of the implications, the University of Saskatchewan had now given birth to a *School of Religious Studies*."⁵⁴ The 'school' approach proved somewhat ill-fated, given the reluctance of the faculty in the College of Arts and Science to do little but re-order what resources were already present at the university (the affiliated colleges and the Near Eastern Studies program).

The school was to have "a strictly academic character, quite distinct from

⁵² *Ibid.*, 102.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 103.

vocational training for ministry, priesthood, or rabbinate."⁵⁵ However, without new resources, nothing could be offered outside of Christianity and Judaism. The school's two-year program lead to a Bachelor of Religious Studies degree, and admission was restricted to students who had already completed two years within the College of Arts and Science. Courses from the school were not at first eligible as electives for students within the College of Arts and Science, and the small victories experienced when some courses were slowly made eligible were tempered by the prevailing notion that religious studies was at best an elective discipline, and that those classes for which eligibility was not granted (which constituted the majority) were somehow academically suspect.

When a formal review was initiated after four years of the school's existence, the external reviewer (P.C. Craigie of the University of Calgary) was understandably severe in his criticisms. The anomalous nature of the 'school' for what was a standard arts discipline, the strangeness of the degree it offered, the relative inaccessibility of the program given the two years of arts studies, the lack of coverage of any tradition outside Christianity and Judaism (with Judaism a distant second), and the fact that the program was financially supported virtually solely by the affiliated and federated colleges and not by the College of Arts and Science were all harsh indictments. The recommendation was made that the school be disbanded and a department established with a major and an Honours program leading to a BA.

The recommendation was accepted. Over time, three appointments were made

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 105, with emphasis in the original.

⁵⁵ R. Nostbakken, *Scrapbook #1* (a 'diary' of Professor R. Nostbakken, president of Luther Theological

within the College of Arts and Science (one of which came with the transferring of the last member of the Far Eastern Studies program at the time of that program's end), and, with an additional three from the affiliated and federated colleges who were working solely in religious studies, the department had in total six full-time members of faculty. By 1990, excluding Old Testament classes, there was something of a balance between classes in Christianity and those in other major religious traditions, with strong departmental resources in Buddhism and Hinduism, although little for Judaism, Islam, and primal religions. Students were expected to take a minimum number of classes from each of three streams: Western Religious Traditions (of which there were 17); Eastern Religious Traditions (8 classes); and Themes and Approaches (11 classes). Following periods of apathy and the abortive 'school' system, some equilibrium had come to religious studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

Miller reaches several conclusions from the histories of each university. Among others, the history of the University of Regina's Program in Religion reveals that "[building] a religious studies program around a judicious mix of major traditions, religious themes, and methodological study is a workable format for dealing with 'the labyrinthine complexity of the materials.'"³⁶ But the more muddled history of the University of Saskatchewan leads to, among others, three conclusions pertinent to this discussion:

4. There is a need to differentiate clearly between the study of

Seminary), quoted in SRC 4, 105.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 98-99. Miller is quoting from Eliade's *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York: Meridian, 1963), xvi.

theology and the study of religion, to understand the relationship between the two disciplines, to make the differentiation understandable to the academic world, and to structure the two studies in such a way that confusion and misunderstanding are avoided.

5. There is a need to clarify the methodology for the teaching of religion in the domain of the arts and science college, be it a university college or a federated college, and at the same time to clarify the methodological adjustments theologians must make when they offer instruction in such colleges.
6. Theological educators at any level must strive to understand the nature and approach of the science of religion and avoid a confusion of functions that may arise from protective concerns or the desire to enhance ecclesiastical programs.³⁷

Miller seems to be suggesting that a discipline's method informs its purpose just as its purpose informs its method. By reflecting on one, one might begin to discern the other. These two aspects become even more important for a discipline's survival when thrust into the larger university community, where the territorial imperatives over budget and allocation of resources up the ante on questions of 'legitimacy.'

7. *The Study of Religion in British Columbia (1995)*

When the time came to give his review a title, Brian J. Fraser strayed from the pattern established by the preceding volumes, a variation that was warranted by the approach he took. With only one program in religious studies in the province, in comparison with five theological schools and the University of Victoria's Centre for the Study of Religion and Society, and coming from his own vocational base in theological studies, Fraser chose "to focus on the broader subject indicated by the original

³⁷ SRC 4, 117.

designation of the series as a whole, i.e. the study of religion. A comprehensive, state-of-the-art review of the study of religion in British Columbia, as the series title promises, requires that the appropriate attention be paid to both religious studies and theological studies.⁵⁸

At the University of British Columbia's founding in 1913, two theological colleges, what were to become the United Church's Union College and the Anglican Theological College, were given a 999-year lease on their buildings at the northeast corner of the new campus, on what was to be known as Theological Square. Students at the university who were planning to enter ministry were able to earn credits towards their arts degrees by taking religious knowledge courses from the theological colleges. In 1952 a movement began within the alumni association to make certain courses, with the approval of the Faculty of Arts and Science, open to all students, a movement which became a reality following Senate approval in 1957. The colleges undertook the additional student load willingly, as they were perceived as "a contribution to the establishment of a Department of Religious Studies in the university, a project which now seems close to achievement."⁵⁹ Although the new availability of courses was seen as an improvement, many held the opinion that with the study of religion limited to transfer credits from denominational organisations it was set apart from the regular curriculum, and the courses were stamped with a sectarian image despite the non-sectarian instruction mandated by the Senate.

⁵⁸ SRC 5, viii-ix.

⁵⁹ *The United Church of Canada Year Book, 1959*, 103, quoted in SRC 5, 7.

Even before the plan of 1957 was fully implemented the search began for help in establishing a Department of Religious Studies. In 1961, William Nicholls became the first appointment in Religious Studies. His first task was to initiate a full department, and his report resulted in the lifting of the restriction of a maximum two religious studies courses for arts students and the appointing of an assistant professor in the biblical field (Charles P. Anderson, 1962). Soon a major was introduced, and changes were made to the University Act that removed lingering questions about the legality of religious studies.⁶⁰ With the act amended, the Senate could grant departmental status, and two more appointments were made. The coming of the new department brought about the phasing out of the old system of Religious Knowledge courses. The theological colleges could, under a new plan, offer courses applicable to an arts degree provided they met the same standards of approval for new courses within the department to which they would be cross-listed.

The birth of the new department coincided with the arrival of the “baby boom” generation to the university. The religious studies department underwent exponential growth, from an enrolment of 152 in 1964 to 882 in 1969. Two new appointments were made in 1967 to keep up with the growth. However, throughout the 1970s enrolment declined: although there were nine and a half full-time faculty members by 1975, enrolment was down to 388, and had dropped to 240 by 1980. The introduction of an MA program in religious studies and a PhD program in Buddhism helped to justify the

⁶⁰ Section 99 of the Act originally read, “The University shall be strictly non-sectarian in principle, and no religious creed or dogma shall be taught.” In the amendment, the word “inculcated” was substituted for

size of the faculty, although a shift in interest from Eastern to Western religions in the late 1970s left the Eastern side of the program vulnerable.

When a departmental review was requested by the Dean of Arts in 1983, the committee focussed on three areas: governance, scholarship, and teaching. The department was roundly criticised in all three areas. Nicholls resigned as head of the department upon reading it (the report's section on governance has remained confidential because of the resignation), and the committee recommended that the department be disbanded as soon as possible. Although the Dean did not accept this recommendation, two years later, at a time of financial restraint, it was again suggested that the department cease to be. The argument was put forth that this was the only such department in the province, and that closing it would make British Columbia the only province without one. An effort to drum up support in the larger community was met with lacklustre results: few outside the Faculty of Arts either knew it existed or could distinguish it from the theological schools, while those within Arts, with the same budgetary sword of Damocles, did not want to be seen as supporters, especially of a department whose subject matter was increasingly considered irrelevant. Somehow, the department was able to survive;⁶¹ enrolment went up, publications by faculty won acclaim, and three members of the department were promoted to full professor.

the word "taught."

⁶¹ Fraser is uncharacteristically not forthcoming on this point. "All of the efforts to save the department, however, appeared to have failed when, on 15 May 1985, its members were called into the dean's office and informed that the Department of Religious Studies was to be eliminated that June. All members of the staff were to be dismissed from their teaching positions. Three days later, however, the dean called to inform everyone that a different financial solution had been found and that the department would not be eliminated." SRC 5, 18. No explanation is given to explain the *deus ex machina* that was the 'different

As for the constitution of the faculty, beginning with the strengths of three faculty members working in Judeo-Christian studies, the department's next appointment was a Buddhist scholar, an appointment for which there was much support from the university's Asian Studies program. Although his publishing record did not warrant it, in an effort to maintain a balance between Western and non-Western traditions he was made a tenured full professor. Unfortunately, he was also not particularly interested in teaching undergraduates, so there was pressure for a graduate program before the undergraduate program had been firmly established. Two more Buddhism scholars were hired over the next few years, one to handle the undergraduates and one to assist in the development of a graduate program. All three were Mahayana Buddhism philologists, interested in text translation: thus, despite their presence, Theravada Buddhism had little coverage. Judaism (apart from Old Testament Studies) and Hinduism were covered by junior appointments, and Islam only entered the program when the Old Testament scholar switched research interests. All were tradition specialists: despite the acknowledgement of a need for an appointment in comparative religions or the history of religions, no such appointment was made. Thus students in the majors or honours program were expected to specialise, and nothing was offered in the third or fourth years that spanned more than one tradition.

Fraser maintains that there is inherent in the department a methodological unity and coherence, given that each member is "trained in the historical method and its ancillary disciplines and all [are] textually oriented in their approach to the five major

world religions."⁶² Although "the five" major religious traditions are represented, several areas are not. Nothing is available in the religions of Latin America, and little on new religious movements, cults, sects, and popular religion in North America. Primitive and native religions are covered by Anthropology, and the religions of ancient Greece and Rome are the domain of the Classics department.

The monolithic structure of the department, concerned as it is with tradition specialisation, has, on the one hand, fostered a strong undergraduate program for those wishing to continue in tradition study at the graduate level (ably assisted by the availability outside the department of Sanskrit, Chinese, Japanese, New Testament Greek, medieval Latin, and the scholarly languages of French, German, Spanish and Italian, and Hebrew and Arabic from within the department) and, on the other, left little room for the general interest of those who take religious studies courses as elective, which by and far constitutes the majority.⁶³ These electives, however, because of the emphasis on specialisation, are almost entirely first- and second-year courses, leaving significantly low (from a budgetary approval standpoint) the numbers for third- and fourth-year courses. The methodological unity of the department is a nice rebuff to challenges from detractors that by not focussing on the inculcation of a particular creed the academic study of religion lacks any cohesion. But a text-centred approach of certain traditions at the expense of other approaches and traditions does not lend itself to ultimately making general statements about the religious phenomenon.

⁶² SRC 5, 24.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 42-8.

8. *Religious Studies in Atlantic Canada (2001)*

Paul Bowlby, the reviewer for Atlantic Canada, was put in the unenviable position of synthesising into one work the role of religious studies departments in four provinces who do not see themselves as a homogenous block. This was also the mandate of Tom Faulkner, who worked on the project for ten years until it passed to Bowlby. Perhaps it was the logistic nightmare of maintaining regional identities without having to write individual reviews (as happened with Saskatchewan and Manitoba in *SRC 4*) that has made the project so long in coming.⁶⁴

A central characteristic of religious studies is that it must have as its potential subject the whole spectrum of religious traditions, and this is compounded by the 'obligation' public universities have to reflect the ever diverse multicultural population in its offerings – but no faculty in Canada, let alone Atlantic Canada, has the resources to cover this entire spectrum. Thus, introductory and advanced courses must be offered that reflect the competency of the faculty.

The application of a scientific model to the humanities, which implies that phenomena are open to the controlled experiment, has allowed for the comparison of empirical data, and within this data comparisons and comparative patterns can be found. But, the more the discoveries of feminism and the discoveries of those who challenge Eurocentric perceptions of human knowing influence the field, the less sound are the foundations of both 'empirical' or 'objective' knowing and notions of universal truth.

⁶⁴ William Closson James, in *SRC 3*, notes that in 1984, when the team for that review was being assembled, the Atlantic Canada review was already underway (327).

"[The] arts have become in large measure something like a museum of civilization, capable of displaying the elements of civilizations but puzzled about how to name and interpret those artifacts. Every room in the museum is interesting in itself, but what is its connection to the next room, to the viewer? There simply is no grand synthesis that permits us to situate our knowledge and call it truth."⁶⁵

Switching metaphors, as a library classification system is an ordered structure representing (a Western understanding of) the whole of human knowledge, the university, with its own ordered structure, is a similar representation. However, just as actual libraries are limited in holdings, actual universities are limited in what they can offer, and thus can be only a fragment of what they can potentially teach. What the university can do, however, is provide the resources as best it can to allow for both teaching and study of as broad a representation of human knowing as possible. Thus, although the university is structured into subcategories much like a library, there are themes that cut across these categorisations. It is in this manner that religious studies brings "a multidisciplinary approach for the acquisition of knowledge about how human beings have been, and continue to be, religious."⁶⁶ In as much as it is of the humanities, it approaches religion philosophically, historically, theologically or textually, using literary-critical and historical methods. In as much as it is social-scientific, it employs the methodologies of anthropology, ethnology, archaeology, psychology, or sociology. Religious studies departments are for descriptively and analytically teaching about the breadth of its field and the diverse critical assumptions and methods that have been employed to interpret

⁶⁵ SRC 6, 23. I am working from a version of the book as was sent to the presses, kindly given to me by Dr. Bowlby. As a consequence, pagination between my references and the eventual published version may not coincide.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

human religiosity.

Like elsewhere in Canada, the universities in Atlantic Canada which were founded by churches typically had theology or religion departments which, as the institutions became publicly funded, transmuted into religious studies departments. Although they are certainly inheritors of that tradition, this transmutation coincided with the growth of interest in religious studies as a field of inquiry independent from theology. Deliberate choices concerning curricula formation and faculty hiring have broadened the field from the initial focus on Christianity to the more inclusive multicultural approach that has become standard. Only three universities in the Atlantic provinces were not church-founded: the University of New Brunswick, Dalhousie, and Memorial University of Newfoundland. Of these three, only the University of New Brunswick does not have courses or a department of religious studies, as its charter expressly forbids the teaching of 'religion.' Memorial University has the largest religious studies department in Atlantic Canada, and the only graduate programme (a two-year MA). Despite its secular origins, the demands of the denominational school system in Newfoundland (ended only in 1998) and the subsequent need for teachers resulted in a high concentration of biblical studies and church history.

Bowlby recognises four factors that influence the particular direction of religious studies at a given institution: its founding heritage; the fate of the founding heritage as it came under provincial control; the location of religious studies in the degree requirements; and the evolution of its relation to the state of the international study of

religions.⁶⁷ Following a brief chapter by Tom Faulkner on the relationship between the churches and the universities,⁶⁸ Bowlby tries to address these factors in terms of a detailed approach to the programmes of study and curricula.

Early departments of religious studies, either evolving from theology departments or originating in a university founded by a religious community (with the aforementioned exceptions of Dalhousie and Memorial University), necessitated an understanding of the potential study of religion which exceeded the “theological, quasi-seminary styles of curricula.”⁶⁹ This was a risky venture considering the substantial enrolments within these theological programmes and, with the dropping of the requirements of courses in biblical studies, church history, or Christian theology, the loss of a guarantee that these enrolments would remain high following the transition. As an example, the 1969 uniting of the Catholic St. Dunstan’s University and the (ostensibly if not officially) Protestant Prince of Wales College to form the publicly funded University of Prince Edward Island prompted an ecumenical movement at the new department of religious studies, which in reality was the adding of a Protestant presence to the Roman Catholic clerical faculty. With a retirement, a biblical scholar trained at McMaster (where a minor concentration in an Asian religious tradition is required) was added and the course offerings subsequently

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁶⁸ Although this is not the place for a comprehensive book review per se, I would be remiss in not mentioning the questionable quality of Faulkner’s chapter. The history is in many respects wrong (and does not even coincide with Bowlby’s own historical input), it gives short shrift to some institutions while elaborating on others, and seems to lift whole sections from his previous works which are only tangentially related to the topic at hand. As an example, naming the Corner Brook campus of Memorial University of Newfoundland after “a famous Christian missionary, Sir Wilfrid [sic, although it is spelled this way throughout the volume] Grenfell,” is cited as an example of “the tenacity of the religious tradition in Newfoundland (57),” without any mention of the impact Grenfell’s medical ‘missionising’ had on the history of Labrador and Western Newfoundland.

expanded, as they did again in 1991 when, with another retirement, a person specialising in East Asian religious traditions was hired. There is thus traceable a three-step process: a department working from a given tradition, a shift to an ecumenist perspective in theory if not in practice, and a shift from theory to practice.

With only three faculty members, the strength of the department at the University of Prince Edward Island is seen in its breadth rather than its depth. It is able to cover what a departmental self study in 1989 described as the four broad areas that most religious studies programmes attempt to address: "Biblical Studies; Western Religious Tradition (primarily Christian thought and history); Eastern and/or Comparative Religion; and Religion in Modern Society (usually within a social-scientific framework."⁷⁰ The field of religion is introduced by two courses, "Religion and The Person: An Introduction to the Study of Religions," and "Religions of the World." The further, more detailed introduction to religious studies and an introduction to biblical texts are second-year courses, and in any given year the department might offer introductory courses to Asian religions, Buddhism and the philosophies of Asia, and courses on the traditions of China and Japan, in addition to two biblical studies courses and two Christianity (one theological, one sociological) courses. The course programme can not be geared towards majors precisely because the depth is sacrificed for breadth, and the department is oriented towards the university as a whole with electives open to the larger university community (which, in turn, allows for higher enrolments).

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 63, quoting the unpaginated study.

Majors are required to complete fourteen half-year courses in religious studies, which must include the two first-year introductory courses and at least one of the fourth-year tutorial or seminar courses ("Special Studies," "Practical Theology," or "The Comparative Study of Religion"). Otherwise, majors may design their programme as they choose, although recently changes have been made to ensure distribution requirements among three streams (in addition to a general introduction to religious studies stream): "Biblical Studies and Western History," "Eastern Religions and Comparative Religion," and "Contemporary Religion and Interdisciplinary Studies." Substantial change in a particular department's potential breadth of study can only come with changes in faculty, either by addition or replacement.

Having established the University of Prince Edward Island as following a general pattern, Bowlby discusses case-by-case the various departments of religious studies in Atlantic Canada.⁷¹

When Saint Mary's University came under the province's control in 1970, the theology programme developed by the Society of Jesus was transmuted into a department of religious studies, with three areas of focus: Religion in Western Civilisation, Religion in Contemporary Society, and History of Religions (Comparative Religions). But no

⁷¹ For brevity's sake I will not cover all the universities. Acadia's religious studies department (technically the Department of Comparative Religion) effectively closed in 1995. Credits from Atlantic Baptist University are not transferable to any other university and its degrees are as of yet not recognised by graduate schools. St. Stephen's University's primary focus is on the training of committed Christians for lay and ministerial activities. Université de Moncton has suspended its major and, despite a diverse range of courses offered, has become primarily a 'service' department "providing electives for students in other programs (190)." The University College of Cape Breton has only one member on faculty and relies heavily on cross-listings. (Both Moncton and Cape Breton are not included in Bowlby's chapter on departments and degree programmes, only in his chapter on curricula.)

sooner had the curriculum been established when an administrative decision saw cuts to faculty in general and to the religious studies department in particular: the department saw the loss of four of its eight positions. (As a result of the general cuts, Saint Mary's became the first unionised university in Canada.) Reduced enrolments were cited to justify the cuts to the department, but the reduced enrolments were directly a result of the arts faculty deciding that "religious studies courses would not count at all toward the general Bachelor of Arts requirements for students in their first year. The department's courses could only count as electives in a student's degree program."⁷² Enrolment plummeted, and the cuts began. It was only in 1975, following an external review that affirmed the new curriculum as appropriate for a public university, that religious studies courses were treated on par with other humanities courses. But the department has remained at four, and certain advancements that had been made were moot. In 1970, following the theology department's concerted effort to effect a shift to religious studies, three of the eight positions were held by non-Roman Catholics, including a comparative religionist who had been trained by Mircea Eliade. With the cuts, however, newer, untenured members of faculty were at risk, so that by 1975 there were three holdovers from the theology department and one graduate of a Canadian religious studies graduate programme: the comparative religionist was gone. Although the department continued in its mandate, with minor changes in direction reflecting new interdisciplinary programmes within the faculty of arts, it was not until the mid-1990s that the crises of the 1970s were put to rest.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 68.

At present, the courses offered at Saint Mary's are in three streams: Comparative Religion, Thematic Studies in Religion, and the Christian Tradition. Each stream has its own introductory course (in the case of Christian Tradition, two half-courses on Old and New Testament). There is an even distribution of courses beyond the first year in each of the streams, and there are no prerequisites for courses until the 400-level. 400-level courses are taught conjointly with the 300-level courses but have additional meetings and more advanced assignments. There is also at the 400-level an "Advanced Seminar in Religious Studies," which deals with hermeneutical issues, and plans for a theory and methods course. 400-level courses are reserved for religious studies majors only. The 'double duty' of the conjoint 300- and 400-level courses helps to add depth for the majors without the sacrifice of breadth for the larger community. A major consists of six and a half credits, with two full credits at the 400-level, plus the advanced seminar and the theory and methods course. There is also a distribution requirement whereby students must take courses from each of the three areas. Honour students build on the majors program, taking two additional full-course electives at the 400-level, an honours seminar in which they write an honours paper or thesis, and a classical or Asian language, for a total of ten and a half full-year courses.

Mount Saint Vincent University was founded as an academy by the Sisters of Charity in 1873, and since becoming a provincial university in its present form in 1966 it has continued its original mission as Canada's only university primarily concerned with the education of women. With the change of 1966 the department of theology evolved into the department of religious studies, retaining all three faculty members. Although

the focus of the department remained on the Christian tradition and biblical studies, there was a methodological shift, whereby “diverse methodologies and specialities [were integrated] into a relatively coherent program devoted to the newly maturing study of religion / Christianity.”⁷³ The external reviewers commended the department for maintaining that a religious studies department could have as its sole focus Christianity and personal development in its social context, particularly as it fit with the school’s mission statement to continue the intellectual, moral, spiritual, and physical development of its students. But all three faculty, all of whom were hired when it was still a theology department, retired in the 1990s, and only one has been replaced. With a department of one, in 1995 the religious studies departments of Mount Saint Vincent and Saint Mary’s entered into a co-operative agreement, although there has yet to be any implementation. The new faculty member, Dr. Randi Warne, is trained in religious studies, not theology, and her particular specialisation is gender and the study of religions in Canada. Thus the programme has shifted in content while still contributing to the university’s mandate.

The department offers as introductory, first-year courses half-credit courses on the Old and New Testaments, but, because the Faculty of Arts requires that most student electives be beyond the first-year level, the bulk of the departments courses are at the second-year level. Neither these nor the tertiary level courses have prerequisites: only the courses reserved for majors – selected topics courses, directed studies, and one course entitled “Great Religious Thinkers” – require a prerequisite (or the permission of the instructor). Of the fourteen courses at the second- and third-year level, nine are primarily

⁷³*Ibid.*, 73, quoting from an unpaginated departmental study, n.d.

Christian interpretation of scripture, four are introductions to world religions and women in world religions, and one is "Business Ethics," which is cross-listed with the School of Business and accounts for the highest enrolment in the curriculum. A major for the fifteen-credit degree consists of the equivalent of six credits: of which there must be three introductory half-credit courses on the Old and New Testaments, a half-credit introduction to world religions, and the equivalent of two credits at the 'advanced' 4000-level: the special topics, directed readings, and "Great Religious Thinkers" courses. These courses are taught overload by faculty, to provide some depth of study in a department that has so few courses requiring prerequisites. For the twenty-credit degree, the number of advanced level courses increases from two to three. There is no honours degree at Mount Saint Vincent.

St. Michael's College in Chatham, New Brunswick became St. Thomas College in 1910 when it was taken over by the Basilian order, who did not want it confused with St. Michael's College in Toronto. It became a university in 1934 and was moved to Fredericton in 1964 to share a campus and resources with the University of New Brunswick. The importance of the Roman Catholic tradition has been preserved in the development of the religious studies department, which was still a theology department in 1972. In 1976 the department consisted of four clergy, but two years later there were two lay in place, one of who was a specialist in the religious traditions of Asia. The courses in Roman Catholicism were taught by academic clerical appointments, but from the mid-1980s forward with the shortage of religious, St. Thomas could no longer count on the availability of priests to fill the appointments. The department, in the light of change,

decided to maintain a core of courses that dealt with the Roman Catholic tradition, but their first request to the Senate was the removal of the requirement for Roman Catholic students to take one full credit in religious studies. Although this meant the loss of guaranteed enrolment, it freed the department to expand its mandate to comparative religions, world religions, and themes in the study of religions. Thus, what could have been described as a department in Roman Catholicism with some offerings in religious studies became a department of religious studies with a strong component of Roman Catholicism. The interplay of theology and religious studies is described in a self-study performed by the department prior to an external review: “[scholars] in both theology and the study of religion share a common concern – the need and capacity of human beings, by both rational and trans-rational experiences, to make sense of their lives.”⁷⁴

The first-year introductory course is a thematic, issues-oriented introduction to the study of religions, with themes such as prejudice, sexuality, death and after-death, evil and suffering, and so forth. The second-year courses are identified as ‘tools’ courses, one of which has as its focus text (with courses alternating from year to year between Hebrew Bible and New Testament, with introduction to *Qur’an* available in alternate years), and the other of which has as its focus ritual. Third-year courses are divided into five streams: world religions, ethics, Roman Catholic traditions, Western Christian traditions, and themes and issues. Finally, there is a fourth-year integrative senior seminar, “Religious Studies: Scope and Methods.” The equivalent of six full credits (in St. Thomas’ twenty-credit degree) is required for a religious studies major, including the

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 86, citing the “Religious Studies Self Study,” St. Thomas University, 1994, 7-8.

introductory course, both 'tools' courses, and the senior seminar. The remaining three credits (or equivalent in half-credits) may be taken from any of the five streams, in consultation with a faculty member, allowing students a concentration if they so desire. The honours student is expected to concentrate. In addition to the introduction, tools, and senior seminar courses, she is required to take the honours research and thesis proposal course, the honours workshop, and complete an honours thesis. She must also complete one full credit or equivalent in an area outside her concentration.

Mount Allison, founded in 1839 as the Wesley Academy by the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, has had non-theological courses in religion since the nineteenth century, unlike its Catholic counterparts. Courses such as "Evidences of Christianity" were offered since its inception, and with degree-granting status in 1859 came courses in biblical languages for the edification of lay formation and pre-theological studies. 1960 saw the creation of the Department of Religion, later called the Department of Religious Studies, and with it came shifts similar to that noted at the University of Prince Edward Island: first ecumenism, where Christianity remains the focus but in the broader perspective as one of the world's religions, followed by the development of expertise for the study of world religions. Again, changes in focus and expertise came with new faculty. Of the programme's four streams as developed by the three faculty members in the 1960s, three of them reflect their strengths in the Christian (Methodist) tradition: biblical studies, Christian theology, and the history of Christianity. The fourth, world religions, was the effort to integrate the Christian perspective into the broader comparative religion perspective.

Today, the department introduces religious studies in a two-tiered fashion. At the first-year level students can take introductory courses on Old Testament, New Testament, and Religions of the Near East and Far East. These courses are opened to any student as an elective. The second-year introductions have as their emphasis the connection of the subject matter with contemporary issues. The third and fourth year courses thus evolve into three streams: Eastern (Far Eastern) Religions, Western (Near Eastern) Religions, and Religion and Culture, the latter developing out of the two former. With two faculty retiring in the late 1990s, the two new appointments, one a specialist in Asian religions and one specialising in both biblical studies and Islam, allowed the department to expand its offerings without sacrificing the Christian component deemed so important. A major consists of ten full credits of a twenty-credit degree, of which one is from the first tier of introductory, one from the second, five from the third and fourth year courses, and three "complementary" courses from other disciplines chosen in consultation with a faculty advisor. Mount Allison thus has a commitment to a cross-disciplinary approach without sullyng what it sees as the boundaries of the discipline. An honours degree builds on the major, with an additional course at the third or fourth year level and an honours thesis.

Although courses in Christianity were taught through the affiliated Kings College and the classics department, being one of only two non-denominational universities in Atlantic Canada Dalhousie University did not have a Department of Comparative Religions until 1973. Following an acrimonious debate as to its relevance in the modern university, it began with an auspicious start, with the appointment of Wilfred Cantwell Smith and the (failed) attempt at appointing George Grant. When Cantwell Smith

returned to Harvard in 1978, the department dropped to two members, Ravi Ravindra (who started in the department of physics and developed the department) and Tom Faulkner. Since its inception all courses at Dalhousie have reflected the comparative religionist approach, whether in courses on specific traditions or through thematic courses. This is partly in measure of grounding the department wholly in the academic study of religion in the spirit of the Chicago school, and partly from the lack of need to accommodate an extant denominationally committed administration, faculty, and/or community.

A consequence of this approach is that, unlike most of the other departments in the region, the programme is hierarchical with prerequisites for courses beyond the first year level. A two-tiered introduction begins with one of three half-credit courses: a survey of world religions coupled with a close reading of the texts of two of the traditions studied; an "Introduction to the Study of Religions" which explores both its social-scientific and humanistic methods and what it means to 'understand' religion; and a variation of this latter course meant for a more general audience, aiming at a higher enrolment. The second-year half-credit courses are on specific religious traditions and there is one thematic course on "Religion and War." The thematic courses of the third year assume that the student has taken two of the first year courses and four of the second year, and cover such issues as "Religion in Story," "The Rise of Modern Science," and "Love and Death." The capstone course is a half-credit thematic seminar for majors. Majors require the equivalent of five (for the fifteen-credit degree) or six (for the twenty-credit degree) credits: one full credit at the first year, two full credits at the second (one in

Eastern religions and one in Western religions), and two or three of the thematic courses, which must include the thematic seminar. With only two members of department, there is no honours programme.

Memorial University of Newfoundland, the Atlantic region's other non-denominational university, was founded in a province which, until 1998, had an education system run by the churches. There was thus a need for teachers who were able to teach religion in the schools, and a religion department was deemed necessary for the new university. But the programme was to be run with a non-denominational curriculum and faculty. The department responded to the needs of the general community by establishing early an emphasis on biblical studies and church history, with a subsequent expansion (through new faculty appointments) into Chinese language, religious traditions, contemporary religious movements, and ethics.

Memorial follows a two-tiered introductory system similar to that of Dalhousie and Mount Allison. At the first-year level three introductory courses, "Religion in the Modern World," "Christianity in Western Civilization," and "Myth, Ritual and Religious Experience," are intended as large-enrolment courses for the attraction of religious studies majors. At the second-year level there are twelve courses which serve as foundational introductions to the curriculum's four areas: biblical studies; Christian thought and history; world religions and religion; and ethics and modern culture. Roughly two-fifths of the courses past the introductory levels (twenty-one out of a fifty-one) are in the area of biblical studies, church history, and theological topics. Of the remaining thirty, six cover world religions, five cover ethics, four cover methods in the

study of religion, and there are fifteen cross-listed courses. Thus the needs of the community are met without compromising the integrity or balance of the programme suitable for a non-affiliated school. A major consists of twelve half-credits (for a twenty-credit degree: at Memorial, all courses are one semester), of which five must be at the 3000-level and one at the 4000-level. Because of the inability to guarantee that a sufficient number of courses would be offered in any one year, thus not enabling majors to progress in sequence, the prerequisite system was disestablished in 1997. Majors are expected to consult with an advisor to ensure that they have the breadth of courses in their selections. Where students must complete the six courses at the 3000- and 4000-levels in three of the four departmental areas, it is possible to focus entirely on Western traditions and exclude world religions altogether. The honours degree requires twenty-half credits, including either a comprehensive examination in the student's area of concentration or an honours research paper. Memorial is also the only Atlantic university to offer a Masters programme in religious studies.

There are anomalies from programme to programme which fall outside the aegis of religious studies departments yet profoundly affect the way they are designed. The fifteen-credit degree in Nova Scotia, for example, precludes the student seeking to complete a major from acquiring too much depth, as general degree requirements (Languages and Humanities, Social Sciences, Life Sciences and Physical Science, a writing class, etc.) comprise a significant portion of a student's available credits. When electives can be taken at the first-year, courses beyond the introductory level can be arranged hierarchically and require prerequisites, but when electives must be beyond the

first-year, to keep enrolments up courses must remove prerequisites. The communities in which the universities are located sometime place religious studies departments in a service situation, where they are compelled to offer courses (mainly in Christianity) that create an imbalance in what would ideally constitute a modern academic study of religion. The traditions from which the institutions arose and the presence of mission statements and charters shape departments for good or ill.⁷⁵ Finally, departments can only grow, and frequently shrink, as the importance of religious studies gains or loses ground in an administration's overall understanding of what constitutes a balanced arts curriculum.

But there are similarities in the departments and their programmes. Each requires a certain distribution in their courses, either explicitly with the programme descriptions or implicitly through the recommendation of faculty consultation. Each requires both courses in more than one specific tradition and comparative, cross-cultural, or thematic courses. Each requires some methodological study, either as an introduction or as a capstone course. Each (apart from Dalhousie) has broadened its perspective in that three-step shift evidenced at the University of Prince Edward Island.

Bowlby's review is almost by default the most pessimistic of the series: four departments – Acadia, Université de Moncton, Mount Saint Vincent, University College of Cape Breton – either closed or were effectively closed in the seven years since he took over from Tom Faulkner. However, had all the reviews been written today, Neufeldt

⁷⁵ Or, in a *via negativa*, prevent departments from forming at all, as is the case with the University of New Brunswick, whose nineteenth century charter forbidding the teaching of 'religion' has denied the

would have to account for the closing of the religious studies department at Alberta, and Remus, Fraikin and James would have done likewise for Carleton and Windsor. The recession of the early 1990s was not kind to publicly funded institutions in general, and the economic recovery which followed, propelled as it was by advances in technology and information based systems, did not reinvest in the humanities. Departments that have been able to maintain high numbers have done so by adjusting their curricula, protecting themselves from administrative rancour while making themselves vulnerable to attacks on their academic credibility from the academy at large.

9. Reviewing the Reviewers

Before attempting to synthesise the twelve personalities responsible for the *Study of Religion in Canada* series, it is perhaps best to reflect on the state-of-the-art review and determine where, exactly, it would fit in functional specialisation.

A state-of-the-art review certainly requires research, and there is throughout the series a presentation of data in its rawest form. The reviews for Quebec, Ontario, and Atlantic Canada deal with a substantial number of universities and programs, and thus their data comes mainly in table form: they also include copies of all or part of the questionnaire sent out to faculty, program directors, department heads, and so forth. The other reviews reproduce course listings, course descriptions, and mission statements in their entirety. But this is the special research necessary to ask and answer a question, not

formation of a religious studies department, which has resulted in UNB students enrolling in courses at St. Thomas.

the general research of the index-compiler. Therefore the state-of-the-art review does not fall under the first functional speciality research.

A state-of-the-art review certainly requires interpretation, and by not allowing the data to 'speak for itself' and instead trying to understand the data, there is some form of hermeneutical exercise going forward. In addition to the statistical data in tables and the course descriptions, there are also memos, questionnaires, interviews, electronic correspondences, newspaper reports, parliamentary reports, legislative acts, anecdotal evidence, each of which must be interpreted by the reviewer. But this is not simply determining what x said about y , or even what x said about y at points a , b , and c . Therefore the state-of-the-art review does not fall under the second functional speciality interpretation.

A state-of-the-art review certainly requires the making of decisions, and those decisions do form the foundational stances on which he (for this series) takes a stand. There are times when divergent judgments on what constitute religious studies are made present to the reviewer, and he chooses one over the other. There are moments when the preference is already present in the author but the act of being confronted with divergent opinions only makes his position seem more valid and more articulate. But this is not an exercise devoted to developing positions and reversing counter-positions. Therefore the state-of-the-art review does not fall under the fourth functional speciality dialectic or the fifth functional speciality foundations.

A state-of-the-art review certainly requires the development of policies and plans of action. The decisions he has made inform the approach he will take, the points of

emphasis and the points of minimal relevance, the methodological framework within which he will work. But this is more than an exercise in expressing these decisions, these judgments not only of value but also of fact. Therefore the state-of-the-art review does not fall under the sixth functional speciality policies.

A state-of-the-art review certainly requires the organisation of findings into an intelligible whole. Any academic work has to be expressed and written in a manner so that others may grasp the intelligibility quickly and with little need for interpretation. Each reviewer has divided up the work into a series of interrelated chapters, sections, and sub-sections, and has employed one organising principle or another. But there is more going forward here than effective systems of expression. Therefore the state-of-the-art review does not fall under the seventh functional speciality systematics.

A state-of-the-art review certainly requires the communicating of findings. Each author has written his review in an academic style of language, either in French or English, depending on which one is spoken by the plurality of people in the region under review. The language is not too technical, however, to be beyond the reach of those yet to be members of the religious studies community: high school students and those who are considering religious studies as a vocation, who have been identified as part of the intended audience. The reviews are also accessible to academics in other disciplines. Those whom dialectic would make opposites can instead engage in dialogue. Lastly, the books have been proofread, formatted, published, and distributed under the auspices of the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion and the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion. But this is the special communications necessary to make the answers to the

questions heard, not the general communications of publishers and spokespeople. Therefore the state-of-the-art review does not fall under the eighth functional speciality communications.

When one is doing a state-of-the-art review, one is operating in the third functional speciality, history. The reviewers are trying to establish what was actually going forward in their particular regions over a particular period of time by people who were performing tasks that the reviewers identified as 'studies in religion' or 'religious studies.' As reviewers move from one specific department or programme to another and subsequently to a broader perspective, patterns emerge. The patterns that emerge are not identical: one can identify differences, and these differences may be genetic, may be complementary, or may be dialectically opposed. It is not necessarily the place of the reviewers to choose between patterns. At that point it would cease to be history and would instead become dialectics and foundations. Nevertheless, the reader can glean from the reviews something of the reviewer's preferences, and some have gone as far as to make specific recommendations.

It was noted earlier⁷⁶ that the reviews written by one person betray more of a stance than those written by two. Neufeldt, Miller, Fraser, and Bowlby tended to bring more of themselves to their reviews, as, to a lesser extent, did the reviewers for Ontario (Remus, Fraikin, and James), whose "differences in ... temperaments and writing styles will be evident to readers, withstanding even Harold Remus' editing of the entire

⁷⁶ See above, page 98.

manuscript."⁷⁷ Furthermore, often when recommendations were made they had much more to do with the practical level of running a department or programme in a modern-day Canadian university. Miller, for example, recommends the continuation and further development of co-operation between the Universities of Regina and Saskatchewan, and that co-operatively they work to communicate "the nature and task of religious studies to the general community and [seek] new ways of serving the wider public in the province."⁷⁸ Remus, James and Fraikin (who collaboratively wrote the conclusion to SRC 3) call for the indigenisation of textbooks to better understand the role of religion in Canadian society, and for better communication between anglophone and francophone scholars.⁷⁹ Bowlby lauds the trend towards gender equality and equal representation in faculties, and notes that departments should always be demonstrating not only their relevance but the need for expansion, for when departments are small, a single retirement can justify its closure. But what is being said here can be said for any department within a university whose inexpendability is not, administratively, immediately self-evident. The recommendations we are interested in are those that identify patterns and schemes of recurrence that are constructive and those that are harmful to the study of religion specifically.

Neufeldt, whose background is in eastern religions,⁸⁰ is a strong proponent of

⁷⁷ SRC 3, xv.

⁷⁸ SRC 4, 155.

⁷⁹ SRC 3, 298, 311.

⁸⁰ His other works include *F. Max Müller and the Rg-Veda: a study of its role in his work and thought* (Calcutta: Minerva, 1980); as editor, *Karma and rebirth: post classical developments*, SUNY Series in Religious Studies (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986); and, with Harold Coward and Eva Dargatzis, *Readings in eastern religions* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988).

first-order descriptive studies, and he feels that the push to introduce methodological courses will always come too early and at the expense of learning the tradition and its history. He explicitly calls religious studies “a field of study rather than a single discipline,”⁸¹ and therefore he struggles to find a balance between, on one hand, the growth of departments and course offerings not ad hoc but according to a clear definition, and on the other resisting the temptation to reduce religious studies to a single methodology. Furthermore, departments must resist the pressure to offer the courses that will attract students at the expense of letting important traditions go unstudied.

Rousseau, in addition to work on the history of religion in Quebec,⁸² has consistently written on the state of religious studies in Quebec and on the development of ‘religiology’ at UQAM.⁸³ Despland, in addition to his collaborations with Rousseau, has written extensively on developments in eighteenth and nineteenth century European philosophies of religion and the origins of critical thinking on religion.⁸⁴ They lament the

⁸¹ SRC 1, xiv.

⁸² These include *La predication à Montréal de 1800 à 1830: approche religiologique* (Montréal: Fides, 1976); with Frank W. Remiggi, *Atlas historique des pratiques religieuses: le sud-ouest du Québec au XX^e siècle* (Ottawa: Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1998); and, in conversation with Stéphane Baillargeon, *Entretiens avec Louis Rousseau: religion et modernité au Québec* (Montréal: Liber, 1994).

⁸³ Including “Réponses à Charles Davis,” in SR 5/1 (1975), 63–65; with P. Partikian, *La théologie québécoise contemporaine, 1940-1973: genèse de ses producteurs et transformations de son discours*. Collection Études sur le Québec 8 (Québec: Institut supérieur des sciences humaines, Université Laval, 1977); “La religiologie à l’UQAM: genèse sociale et direction épistémologique,” in P. Stryckman and J.P. Rouleau, eds., *Sciences sociales et Églises. Questions sur l’évolution religieuse du Québec* (Montréal: Bellarmin, 1980), 73–96; and with Jean Delumeau and Michel Despland, *Fabrication et discussion d’une oeuvre d’histoire religieuse* ([Montréal]: Regroupement interuniversitaire pour l’étude de la religion = Interuniversity Centre for the Study of Religion, 1984).

⁸⁴ His books include *Kant on History and Religion: with a Translation of Kant’s “On the Failure of All Attempted Philosophical Theodicies”* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1973); *La religion en Occident: évolution des idées et du vécu* (Montréal: Fides, 1979); *The Education of Desire: Plato and the Philosophy of Religion* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985); *Christianisme, dossier corps* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1987); as editor with Gérard Vallée, *Religion in history: the word, the idea, the reality: La religion dans l’histoire: le mot, l’idée, la réalité*, Editions SR 13 (Waterloo, ON: Published for the

lack of courses in world religions, but not simply within descriptive studies:

Les sciences religieuses sont un des domaines dont la fonction interculturelle est la plus évidente. Elles favorisent directement l'établissement d'un réseau de communications interculturelles plus développé que dans la plupart des autres sciences de l'homme. Elles devraient donc pouvoir participer activement, non seulement au service des traditions religieuses dominantes, mais également au service de la rencontre entre les héritages humains les plus divers qui va de plus en plus constituer le creuset de nos nouvelles sociétés de l'hémisphère nord. Il serait normal et souhaitable que nos programmes de premier cycle reflètent davantage cette vocation à l'avenir.⁸⁵

It would seem, therefore, that religious studies serves, or can serve, a mediating function between the culture and its constituents. This is, I believe, a shift from Neufeldt's position, and a development. All of Neufeldt's points remain valid, and the second-stage analytic studies can not come at the expense of the descriptive studies, but Rousseau and Despland move from saying *that* it should to explaining *why* it should. Furthermore, with a function for religious studies, Neufeldt's 'field of study' and its consequent variety of approaches and methods can become a 'single discipline' replete with a variety of approaches and methods.

Remus, James, and Fraikin come from different points in the Christian studies spectrum. Remus is from the department of Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier and, in addition to continued work on the nature of religious studies,⁸⁶ is an early church

Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion/Corporation canadienne des sciences religieuses by Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1992); *Reading an erased code: Romantic Religion and Literary Aesthetics in France*, University of Toronto Romance Series (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); *Les hiérarchies sont ébranlées: politiques et théologies au XIXe siècle* (Saint-Laurent, Québec: Fides, 1998); and *L'émergence des sciences de la religion: La Monarchie de Juillet: un moment fondateur* (Paris: Harmattan, 1999).

⁸⁵ SRC 2, 135.

⁸⁶ Including "Religious studies in Ontario, 1992 to 1999: State-of-the-art update." SR 28/2 (1999): 197-

historian.⁸⁷ James teaches in the Religious Studies Department at Queen's, and has written extensively on religious perspectives in Canadian literature and nature.⁸⁸ Fraikin is a New Testament professor at Queen's Theological College and is cross-appointed with the Department of Religious Studies at Queen's, specialising in Paul.⁸⁹ Each with a foot planted firmly in both religious studies and theology, they examine the relationships between the two, or, more exactly, the possible role of the theologian within a religious studies department or programme at a secular institution. They contrast the 'doing' of theology, the *via doctrinae*, with the "exposition of, say, Augustine's or Calvin's theology," and permit that the former could pass muster in a religiously pluralistic university setting, provided that the intention to do so and the premises from which the 'doing' would proceed were explicitly announced in the course description, at the beginning of the course, and throughout the run of the course, and that, of course, assent

208; "'Magic', Method, Madness." *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 11/3 (1999): 258-298; and, with Mary Gerhart, "RSR at 25." *Religious Studies Review* 25 (1999): 327-339.

⁸⁷ Recent work includes "'Unknown and yet well-known': the multiform formation of early Christianity," in Benjamin G. Wright III, ed. *A multiform heritage: studies on early Judaism and Christianity in honor of Robert A. Kraft*. Scholars Press Homage Series, 24 (Atlanta: Scholars Pr., 1999): 79-83; "Voluntary association and networks: Aelius Aristides at the Asclepieion in Pergamum," in Kloppenborg, John S., and Stephen G. Wilson, eds. *Voluntary associations in the Graeco-Roman world*. (London: Routledge, 1996): 146-75; and "Outside/inside: Celsus on Jewish and Christian nomoi," in Jacob Neusner, Peder Borgen, Ernest S. Frerichs, and R. Horsley, eds. *Religion, literature, and society in ancient Israel, formative Christianity and Judaism: ancient Israel and Christianity. New Perspectives on Ancient Judaism*, 2 (Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1987): 133-50.

⁸⁸ See his "'You have to discover it in some other way': native symbols as appropriated by Margaret Atwood and Marian Engel," in Jamie S. Scott, ed. *"And the birds began to sing": religion and literature in post-colonial cultures* Cross/cultures: readings in the post/colonial literatures in English, 22 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996): 33-46; *Locations of the sacred: essays on religion, literature, and Canadian culture* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1998); "Nature and the sacred in Canada" *SR* 21/4 (1992): 403-417, and "The canoe trip as religious quest" *SR* 10/2 (1981): 151-166.

⁸⁹ See "The rhetorical function of the Jews in Romans," in Peter Richardson, and David Granskou, eds. *Anti-Judaism in early Christianity, vol 1: Paul and the Gospels*. Studies in Christianity and Judaism, 2. (Waterloo, Ont: Wilfrid Laurier Pr. 1986): 91-105, and "Charismes et ministères ... la lumière de 1 Cor 12-14." *Eglise et Théologie* 9 (1978): 455-463.

to the premises was not a requirement.

Successful completion of the course would require the student's being able to think in a particular theological vein, or to solve theological problems drawing on the premises of a particular theological tradition, whether one with long historical roots or only nascent, for example, a 'meta-theology' or a 'secular theology.' ... It does not seem to us that, in a religious studies setting, doing theology in a particular historical tradition would have to be by an insider to that tradition – to insist on it would still be another variation on the 'zoo' theory. Moreover, in such a setting 'explaining' that leaves open the possibility of 'explaining away' is also legitimate. ... Whether such a theology should be called 'hermeneutics' ... or perhaps more properly be construed as 'philosophy of religion' ... is one of a number of interlocking questions that it is safe to say will remain *sub iudice* for some time to come.⁹⁰

As they compare this theologising to courses in Zen meditation, they present an entry into the theology/religious studies dyad. Any tradition of mediating between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix (Lonergan's definition of a theology) can be approached from either the historical, descriptive way of discovery (expositing on Calvin or Augustine) or by experiencing one doing it in a manner which addresses the concerns of the day. Much in the way Lonergan suggested learning research by apprenticing oneself to a researcher and learning by example,⁹¹ one can learn by example how the *fides quaerens intellectum* progresses. There are practical problems, particularly as those trained in theologising in Western monotheistic traditions are abundant in Canada and, one presumes, those trained in the similar task for other traditions (nascent or long-standing) are practically non-existent (or feel unwelcome, or come from non-academic traditions and thus do not possess the on-paper qualifications to

⁹⁰ SRC 3, 296.

⁹¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 149.

teach at a secular university), thus resulting in the same over-representation of one tradition that is perceived as straining the credibility of the discipline. But the premise is there for religious studies to have a place for foundations, doctrines, and systematics of not one but many traditions in addition to the cross-disciplinary explanatory models of psychology of religion, sociology of religion, anthropology of religion, and so forth.

Both Badertscher and Harland come from a United Church background, and both are historians by avocation: Badertscher focuses on religion in Canada⁹² and Harland on North American Protestantism.⁹³ Both are regular contributors to *Touchstone*, a United Church periodical for which Harland wrote the introductory essay.⁹⁴ Together they present the history of religious studies in Manitoba but, as said above in the section dealing with their review, they do little in the way of recommendations.

Miller is an Islamicist⁹⁵ who, as professor of Islam and World Religions at Luther College at the University of Regina, was instrumental in overseeing the development of a

⁹² See his "As others saw us," in Dennis L. Butcher, Catherine Macdonald, and Margaret E. McPherson, eds. *Prairie spirit: perspectives on the heritage of the United Church of Canada in the West*. (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Pr, 1985): 44-64; "George P. Grant and Jacques Ellul on freedom in technological society," in Larry Schmidt, ed. *George Grant in process: essays and conversations*. (Toronto: House of Anansi, 1978): 79-89; and "Irony and liberation: a study in Canadian history," in Larry L. Rasmussen, ed. *The annual of the Society of Christian Ethics* (1982). (Dallas, Texas: Society of Christian Ethics, 1982) 45-69.

⁹³ See his "American religious heritage and the tragic dimension" *SR* 2 (Spring 1973): 277-288; *Christian faith and society*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1989; *The thought of Reinhold Niebuhr*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1960; and "Theological resources for the political task," in Theodore Runyon, ed. *Theology, politics and peace*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989): 86-92.

⁹⁴ "Editorial: What is *Touchstone*?" *Touchstone* 1/1 (Jan 1983): 3-4 and, in the same issue, "Theology and social action: the contemporary debate," 5-14.

⁹⁵ See his "Dialogue: the context of Hindu-Christian dialogue in Kerala" in Harold G. Coward, ed. *Hindu-Christian dialogue: perspectives and encounters*. Faith Meets Faith Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989): 47-63; "The dynamics of religious coexistence in Kerala: Muslims, Christians, and Hindus," in Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Wadi Z. Haddad, eds. *Christian-Muslim encounters*. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1991): 263-284; and editor of *Islam*, a special issue of *Word & World* 16 (1996): 115-274.

small department that has been able to use the resources of affiliated theological colleges without compromising the integrity of its approach as a religious studies programme.⁹⁶ He contrasts this with the University of Saskatchewan whose 'school' of religious studies derailed the process of developing a proper and integrative programme of religious studies for ten years. The history of the programmes at the two universities is a history of self-definition, establishing contrasts of method and purpose between theology and religious studies. With both programmes barely twenty years old at the time of the review, with only the two universities, with a smaller population, and even by being a younger province, Miller's comments are different only complementarily and genetically from those of Remus, Fraikin, and James who, at first glance, might appear to be arguing differently.

Fraser is a church historian at the Vancouver School of Theology specialising in Presbyterianism in Canada,⁹⁷ and is the only reviewer (with the exception of the cross-appointed Fraikin) from theology and not religious studies.⁹⁸ One of the problems with the British Columbia set-up has been the lack of co-operation amongst the various

⁹⁶ Miller has written on teaching world religions within the Lutheran context, in such articles as "A Lutheran college approach to the study and teaching of religion," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 19 (Fall 1992): 29-41, and "Religion and religions: central ideas of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, North American primal religions," in Frank W. Flos, C. Lynn Nakamura, and Daniel F. Martensen, eds., *Lutherans and the challenge of religious pluralism* (Minneapolis: Augsburg-Fortress, 1990): 1-68.

⁹⁷ "The public pieties of Canadian Presbyterians," in Robert E. VanderVennen, ed., *Church and Canadian culture* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991): 87-104; "For the uplift of the world: the mission thought of James A MacDonald, 1890s-1915," in John S. Moir and C. Thomas McIntire, eds., *Canadian Protestant and Catholic missions, 1820s-1960s: historical essays in honour of John Webster Grant* (Toronto Studies in Religion, 3 (New York: Peter Lang, 1988): 191-219; and "Peacemaking among Presbyterians in Canada: 1900-1945," in Fraser and Thomas D. Parker, eds., *Peace, war and God's justice* (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1989), 125-143.

⁹⁸ Fraser inherited the project with the sudden passing Keith Clifford, who in turn had taken it on when

theological colleges and schools and between them and the religious studies department at the University of British Columbia. Thus a history of 'religious studies' would be a history of only UBC. Therefore, while other reviews turned to theology departments to discern what could be called religious studies within a theological curriculum, Fraser looks at theology departments as active participants in the study of religion. He is in the unenviable position of writing a review from what looks like the perspective of someone who either sees no distinction between religious studies and theology (when it is clear that he does) or sees the previous reviews as too narrow in focus and not in proper adherence with the mandate of 'the study of religion' by their concentration on religious studies (which he may in fact believe⁹⁹). But he does allude to the "striking irony" that, in Canada's most secular province, and one of its most multicultural, the study of religion "is structured in the most traditional ways and dominated by theological studies."¹⁰⁰

There is furthermore an institutional isolationism that precludes any of the collaboration which Fraser sees as necessary for either the further development of the study of religion in British Columbia or the positioning of the study of religion (both religious studies and theology) in the public sphere as a demonstrably relevant participant in the collaborative

Charles Anderson's health was failing.

⁹⁹ "In the other volumes in the Canadian Corporation for the Study of Religion (CCSR) series on the study of religion in Canada, the focus has been on religious studies in the secular university, with minimal attention being paid to various approaches of theological studies. Indeed, the titles of the volumes have clearly indicated that their subject is the field of religious studies. Partly because of the nature of the study of religion in British Columbia, and partly because of my own vocational base in theological studies, I have chosen to focus on the broader subject indicated by the original designation of the series as a whole, i.e., the study of religion. A comprehensive, state-of-the-art review of the study of religion in British Columbia, as the series title promises, requires that appropriate attention be paid to both religious studies and theological studies." *Ibid.*, ix. However, the series description states that "The aim is to present a descriptive and analytical study of courses, programs and research currently being undertaken in the *field of religious studies* in Canada." (*Ibid.*, ii, [emphasis added] and on that page in each of the volumes).

academic project of reflection on culture. Fraser's review, therefore, is not able to be pushing in the same direction as the ones previous when the study of religion in British Columbia (at the time of its writing) is still in a period of self-definition and territorial imperatives.

Paul Bowlby's main area of interest is Hinduism and he is a comparative religionist of the McMaster model.¹⁰¹ As the last in the series, his is the first review to really witness the trajectory of an entire generation of religious studies departments, programmes, and scholars. If one dates from 1970, an arbitrary date between Charles Anderson's two general surveys of religious studies in Canada,¹⁰² the latter of which each of the reviewers uses as a benchmark, it has been thirty-plus years since the departments which were going to make the switch from theology to religious studies have made the switch and since the universities which were going to initiate departments or programmes of religious studies have initiated them, and in that thirty years the faculty who were there in the beginning have retired. Bowlby is optimistic about the state of programmes in Atlantic Canada, albeit in despair over the number of closures. Those in denominational universities have for the most part become true religious studies departments not by rejecting their founding traditions but by placing their traditions in a broader religious context. The successful ones have thus maintained relevance to the communities and the traditions in which they function while arriving at an integrity of programme. The

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 105.

¹⁰¹ See "Kings without authority: the obligation of the ruler to gamble in the Mahabharata" SR 20/1 (1991): 3-17; "Tradition in the Bhagavadgita," SR 17/2 (1988): 159-168; and, with Allen Eugene Combs, "Tolerance and tradition," SR 4/4 (1974/75): 315-334.

¹⁰² See above, n. 18.

unsuccessful ones have, somehow, not met the expectations of the administration and not been able to exploit and promote their relevance in the academic community. When departments remain small, retirement of even one person can shut down a department. Departments that do not grow do so because of the scepticism within the university community which still remains concerning the relevance (and, increasingly, the economic viability) of the study of religion: this is compounded when a department continues to have an over-representation of Christian and Western Religions courses while maintaining a claim to a world religions orientation. If retirements are not replaced despite when those who are retiring are the cause of the imbalance, programmes do not have the opportunity to fix themselves, and their relevance becomes even harder to prove.

This 'relevance' is perhaps the theme that resonates most strongly throughout the series. What is obvious, despite differences in emphasis and approach, is that the work being done in religious studies programmes (and, for that matter, theology programmes) is a significant contribution to the broader task of systematic reflection on the culture that is the role of the academy. Placing it in this framework, what can functional specialisation and Lonergan's generalised empirical method contribute to the way religious studies are practised in Canada?

10. Addressing the Reviewers: The Possible Contributions of Lonergan's Methodology

All of the reviewers hold that there are two general approaches to religious studies. There are historical studies or first-order descriptive studies, which, following a stage of data accumulation and a stage of interpretation (an interpretation that need not

focus on texts but which has a tendency to do so), establishes the history of a tradition, its development, its system of beliefs, its narrative structure, its origins, its offshoots, its consequences, and its interactions with other historical phenomena. There are thematic or second-order analytic studies, which, following from the establishment of categories, proceeds to determine how the phenomenon of 'religion' interacts either with other analytical phenomena (psychology, anthropology, sociology, science, literature, philosophy, etc.) or with thematic phenomena (birth, death, sexuality, war, economics, gender, justice, aesthetics, ethics, etc.).

Both orders are understood as necessary elements in the study of religion. Furthermore, there are as many possible descriptive studies as there are traditions (living or extinct, micro or macro), and there are as many possible analytic studies as there are elements in the human condition to which 'religion' is relevant (thematic or phenomenological, narrow or broad). There is broad consent that a programme in religious studies should have a sufficient and representative selection of courses (or experts under whom a student can do research) in as many traditions as possible, even if a programme's depth is sacrificed for its breadth. There is general consent that a programme in religious studies should not limit itself to only one analytical approach, and should offer a selection of thematic courses.

Consensus also seems to indicate that, because descriptive studies come formally prior to analytic and thematic studies, if a programme must be limited, cuts tend to come from the analytical or thematic side to maintain as much of the descriptive side as possible. A programme can therefore legitimately limit itself to one methodological

approach (as is the case at the University of British Columbia). However, as analytic and thematic courses are movements towards communications with other disciplines, programmes often include a number of second-order studies because foreknowledge of specific traditions are not seen as necessary prerequisites and therefore they can be open to a broader audience (that is to say, they get higher enrolments).

In functional specialisation, Lonergan was able to make the eightfold division by introducing the two movements of learning, the *via inventionis* and the *via doctrinae*.¹⁰³ The former begins with data; the latter begins with terms and relations. But, from *Insight*, most of what we know we know by belief, for "Our senses are limited to an extremely narrow strip of space-time, and unless we are ready to rely on the senses of others, we must leave blank all other places and times or, as is more likely, fill them with our conjectures and then explain our conjectures with myths."¹⁰⁴ In other words, we are taught, and we learn not only by the formally first experiencing of data but from the clarity of expression of an authority.

To put it another way, when a student is new to a science it is communicated to her in a manner which presupposes both that there is an authority doing the communicating and that that which is being communicated is accepted as true, almost as an *a priori*. The authority may be the textbook or the teacher on the micro-level, or, on the macro-level, the accumulated weight of the history of the science itself. The presupposition of the '*a priori*' truth of what is being communicated acts in conjunction

¹⁰³ See pp. 35-37, above.

¹⁰⁴ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, 726.

with the presupposition of authority purely for the pedagogical necessity of allowing for a period of immersion prior to the long task of sifting between truth and falsehood. Only subsequently does the student investigate the science and try to make clear for herself what is actually true and what is only apparently true. Finally, there comes a point where the student makes decisions based on what is to her true and moves from examining what *x* said about *y* to what she herself says.¹⁰⁵

Thus introductory courses in programmes of religious studies usually do not start with the history of one tradition, but rather with a survey of religions organised around a theme. Religious studies introduces a collection of categories with which the student, when eventually turning to descriptive studies, can anticipate patterns in her discoveries. A return to analytic, thematic, methodological courses seems to be the cornerstone of the fourth year of programmes (although some delay this until graduate studies), wherein these categories can be affirmed, modified, or denied in the wake of the student's own encounter with a tradition.

The central question, however, is coincident with the development of curricula. How does one address Neufeldt's conundrum, i.e. how does one rectify the notion that religious studies is a field of studies and not a single discipline with the necessity of a clear vision of what religious studies is to be? What links the descriptive with the analytic?

The question, boiled down to its essence, is what is religion? To be more precise,

¹⁰⁵ For a similar account of this process from within Lonergan scholarship, see Frederick E. Crowe, *Old Things and New: A Strategy for Education*, Supplementary Issue of *Lonergan Workshop 5* (Atlanta:

what question is it that all the traditions studied in first-order descriptive studies are trying to answer that is relevant to all the themes and analytical approaches studied in second-order analytic studies? For Lonergan, drawing from Heiler, the question is that which is answered by love, more particularly that transformative love that effects in the human person the need to shift from concerns for the self to concerns for the other. The religious question is one of meaning and purpose, with particular reference to the problem of evil. It is a question about ultimate value.

First-order descriptive studies are comprised of research, interpretation, and history. Second-order analytic studies are comprised of policies, systematics, and communications. First-order studies intend what second-order studies assume: categories. Categories are grounded in a process of authentic decision making, of choosing one over another.

Without the generation of categories, without something approaching dialectics and foundations, unity in religious studies tends to disappear. In the practical world of universities, departments can collapse. First-order studies can be subsumed into different historical departments (Classics, Near Eastern Studies, Asian Studies, European History), and second-order studies can be subsumed into different analytical departments (Sociology, Anthropology, Philosophy, Psychology). The centre can not hold. Without an identification of what 'religion' is, religion becomes an aspect of human history and human behaviour that can be studied as a phenomenon only in how it bleeds through into other phenomena. But by developing both general and special categories, by identifying

what the study of religion shares with the other studies and, more importantly, what is unique to the study of religion, religious studies can be grounded not in the data it investigates and not in the manner in which it chooses to communicate its findings but in its question: what is the role and significance of 'religion,' of the asking of questions of ultimate value, within a cultural matrix? With this, we move to the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Towards a Conclusion, in Five Questions

The previous chapter was lengthy, and the absorption of historical data may have made the absorption of the argument difficult. This chapter will endeavour to present the conclusions in a progressive, systematic way. This will be done in a series of five questions drawn from the discussion of functional specialisation in chapter two, the answers to which are drawn from Lonergan's conclusions on the function of religious studies in chapter three and the historical data on the actual practice of the study of religion in Canada drawn from chapter four. However, more attention should be paid to the sort of answers these questions are pushing towards than my own attempts at answering them.

1. Is Religious Studies a Field Specialisation?

Religious studies can draw from a vast array of data. Traditionally, religious studies departments or programmes have felt it necessary to cover as large a spectrum of the world's traditions as possible. These traditions have often been studied via their sacred texts and the texts that constitute that tradition's history of self-reflection. An Islamicist could study the *Qur'an*, or the poetry of Rumi, whereas a Christianity scholar might study the Pauline corpus or the works of Martin Luther, or the encyclicals of twentieth century pontiffs. As new elements within a tradition are apprehended, there is more opportunity to specialise. The compound task of studying 'religion' can thus be broken down into the tasks of studying specific religions, which in turn can be broken

into studying specific eras or themes within a specific tradition, and so forth. Furthermore, although religious studies departments have traditionally been dominated by a narrow definition of 'text,' it can be expanded to encompass not only writings but also artefacts, coins, pictures, statues, and other objects of material culture, rituals, performances, oral narratives, anything upon which the hermeneutical exercise of exegesis can be performed. Finally, just as religious studies departments often have had a narrow definition of text, they have also had a narrow definition of 'tradition,' limiting themselves to traditions which have texts narrowly defined. There has in the past twenty years been an expansion of the understanding of 'text' to include any relevant set of data. So, the ritual actions of groups, the history of movements and so forth have been consciously included as data for investigation.

Moreover, the number of field specialisations is not fixed: as the ongoing process continues, new fields are encountered and investigated. New discoveries are made (the Rosetta Stone deciphered, the Dead Sea Scrolls found) and new data are made available. Methodological discoveries and new voices in complementary disciplines bring to the fore data previously overlooked (Said's *Orientalism*, feminism and the role of women) and biases are overturned. Religious studies engages the data in a manner that is particular to religious studies, which is different from saying that religious studies engages particular data. Therefore, although there are certainly field specialisations within religious studies, religious studies is not a field specialisation in and of itself.

2. Does Religious Studies Serve a Mediating Function?

Each of the reviewers has spoken of a relationship that religious studies has with the community at large outside of the academy, in addition to the interdisciplinary communication of differing subject specialisations within the academy. Sometimes this has come in the form of the necessity to communicate the discipline to the general public for the practical effect of demonstrating the ongoing relevance of religious studies in particular and the humanities in general. Sometimes this has come in the reciprocal direction by religious groups and community groups turning to academics to address the questions that they find themselves unable to answer. When the critique comes that there is a risk of turning the discipline into a faddish response, the 'walk-in therapy center' of the academy, there is the reminder that universities in general are responses to and anticipations of the needs of the community in which they are situated. These responses and anticipations are concerned with the long term and not with the fancies of the moment. Balance can be struck between a tendency to hide in the ivory tower (which leads to stagnation and classicist notions that one is engaged in a permanent achievement) and a tendency to move with the marketplace. Conceiving a discipline as an ongoing process allows for both development and continuity.

Each of the reviewers asserts that the study of religion is and has been identified as being of fundamental importance to any study which purports to reflect on the sphere of human activity. Paul Bowlby expresses it well, beginning with a comment by Martha Nussbaum, who identifies the overarching task of higher education as one of educating

women and men for citizenship in a multicultural setting.¹

The real task is to situate religious studies in the debate about what it means to be a citizen in a multicultural society like Canada. The topic unites religious studies with all other university disciplines in the concern for literacy among students and in their concern for teaching that requires students to learn to read critically and to think rationally. Most especially it unites religious studies with research projects involving scholars in many different disciplines and subject areas. In such projects religious studies scholars can contribute an analysis of the role of religious traditions in society.

Religious studies can make a compelling case, with its research and teaching focused on the diversity of religious traditions and the nature of religious loyalties, [that] it has an important and unique contribution to make to the understanding of the meaning of citizenship in a multicultural setting. Such a contribution requires an empirical component that identifies and interprets the way in which the religious communities of Canada participate in the social and political landscape. It requires an extensive knowledge of the history of religious traditions both in their places of origin and in the Canadian context. It requires a skilled interpretation of the ways by which religious traditions shape human beings socially and ethically and define for them the various facets of their loyalty. It requires a subtle analysis of how and why loyalties differ and can ultimate conflict and how the same loyalties can define humanity in ways that permit sharing in projects which address common needs and aspirations. It requires a pedagogy that enables students to discover what the religions are in their society and how, imaginatively, it is possible to enter into the lived experience of religious people with whom they must live and function in all aspects of life in Canada.²

Bowlby is presenting arguments for the continued relevance of religious studies in the modern university at a time when so many programmes in the Atlantic region are folding. One can assume he would argue that religious studies is also relevant in non-multicultural settings, that an interpretation of the way traditions shape human beings and an analysis of loyalties which differ and conflict or co-operate are not only between

¹ Martha Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997). Bowlby does not give a page reference.

religious traditions but also between a religious tradition and another tradition (capitalism, liberalism, scientism) within a culture.

But it would be false to assume that the arguments of a practical rationale for religious studies are not contiguous with the arguments of a theoretical rationale. To reiterate what was said in chapter three, a modern method is ultimately existential, in that it asks the question, "What are you to do about it?" As such, a modern method has a praxis element in addition to the empirical element. This praxis orientation is particularly manifest in religion, where the world is mediated by ultimate meaning and motivated by ultimate value, but these ultimate meanings and values are commonly apprehended symbolically. A theology endeavours to discern the meaning and value behind its own religion, while religious studies envisages the totality of religions through time and throughout the world. A lived religion is already a living praxis, but theology seeks to scrutinise, make explicit and thematic, that praxis. Religious studies, on the other hand, although it presupposes the phenomenon of religious praxis at its most general, begins as an empirical science.

Therefore, whereas a theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix, religious studies mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of religion within that matrix. With humans being symbolic animals, religious studies is the department within human studies that studies the human symbols that commonly purport to refer to what is beyond humanity. It is the purporting that distinguishes religious studies from theology, for religious studies

² SRC 6, 321-22.

confines its attention to what is within the world, to the things experienced by human living, and to human experiencing itself.³ But the purporting, if it is not to be without content, forces one to look to what it means to be involved with these symbols.

3. Does Religious Studies Have Special Categories?

The transcendental notions (be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible) make questions and answers possible: categories make them determinate. Categories are either general or special: general categories regard objects that come within the purview of other disciplines as well as one's own; special categories regard the objects proper to one's own discipline. Categories are to be understood as models, which stand to the human sciences much as mathematics stands to the natural sciences.⁴

For models purport to be, not descriptions of reality, not hypotheses about reality, but simply interlocking sets of terms and relations. Such sets, in fact, turn out to be useful in guiding investigations, in framing hypotheses, and in writing descriptions. Thus, a model will direct the attention of an investigator in a determinate direction with either of two results: it may provide him with a basic sketch of what he finds to be the case; or it may prove largely irrelevant, yet the discovery of this irrelevance may be the occasion of uncovering clues that otherwise might be overlooked. Again, when one possesses models, the task of framing an hypothesis is reduced to the simpler matter of tailoring a model to suit a given object or area. Finally, the utility of the model may arise when it comes to describing a known reality. For known realities can be exceedingly complicated, and an adequate language to describe them hard to come by. So the formulation of models and their general acceptance of models can

³ There is an ambiguity to the word 'experience': that which is the common sense meaning of the word, synonymous with 'knowledge,' and the more technical meaning of the word, the attentiveness to data through the senses. The data, particularly in regards to the study of religious experience, is the aggregate of human experiencing, understanding, judging, deciding, acting. See Bernard Lonergan, "Religious Experience," *A Third Collection*, 115-28, particularly section 1, "The Ambiguity of Experience," 116-19.

⁴ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 284.

facilitate enormously both description and communication.⁵

In the natural sciences, categories are concerned with quantifiable phenomena: the basic set of terms and relations are the models by which one can describe quantifiable phenomena. The periodic table of elements is one such example: elements are arranged in rows according to their atomic number and also in columns of recurrent properties. By arranging them thus, gaps in the table had anticipated results, anticipations which were borne out when missing elements were discovered.

The axioms and equations of physics are another example. The basic terms (mass, distance, time, etc.) and relations (velocity, acceleration, force, etc.) have developed in the tradition to anticipate how quantifiable phenomena in motion behave. As new experiments were performed, the terms and relations held out. As new questions were asked and new discoveries were made, the set expanded to include new terms and relations, but much of what was discovered conformed to the models and could have been anticipated had the technology existed earlier to perform the experiments.

As time progressed and technology advanced, the problem arose concerning the properties of light. The speed of light had been measured, but no experiment, no matter how fast the source of the light was moving, could yield a different result. Einstein discovered that the speed of light was a constant: therefore, with the relation of speed to distance and time, space and time had to shrink or expand to accommodate a universal constant. Special relativity concerns the movement of light, for which there is no acceleration: general relativity concerns the movement of all objects in a universe where

⁵ *Ibid.*, 284-85.

there is the special circumstance of light's constant velocity, where accelerations are indistinguishable from and thereby equivalent to gravitational fields.

Human sciences, however, do not principally deal with quantifiable phenomena: they deal with what is constituted by the world mediated by meaning. As such the categories are concerned with meaning, which "is embodied or carried in human intersubjectivity, in art, in symbols, in language, and in the lives and deeds of persons."⁶

In Lonergan's dissertation, *Gratia Operans*,⁷ the first chapter was a methods chapter. An exercise in discovering what Aquinas had to say about operative grace and the development of that thought through his writings is an historical inquiry. Previous commentators on Aquinas had professed that he 'must' have meant such and such, but – barring a careless use of the word 'must,' which denotes necessity – "they are claiming to demonstrate in a science that does not proceed by demonstration."⁸ To demonstrate an interpretation positively, all possible interpretations must be enumerated, that enumeration must be shown to be exhaustive (which is the tricky part), and all interpretations must be shown to be incorrect save for one. While one can proceed with certitude in negative conclusions, for positive conclusions one must be content with probability. But the degree of probability attained will appear from the structure of the induction to be made.

As it is an historical inquiry it is inductive, and although it can not presuppose an a priori structure like current systematic theology, it also can not deny "the exigence of

⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁷ Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas*, 151-

the human mind for some scheme or matrix within which data are assembled and given their initial correlation."⁹ A middle course is thus proposed.

That middle course consists in constructing an a priori scheme that is capable of synthesizing any possible set of historical data irrespective of their place and time, just as the science of mathematics constructs a generic scheme capable of synthesizing any possible set of quantitative phenomena. ...

The quantitative sciences are objective simply because they are given by mathematics an a priori scheme of such generality that that there can be no tendency to do violence to the data for the sake of maintaining the scheme. But the same benefit is obtained for the history of speculative theology by an analysis of the data in its development, for the analysis does yield a general scheme but it does so, not from a consideration of particular historical facts, but solely from a consideration of the nature of human speculation on a given subject.¹⁰

There must be the process of assimilation in order for the human mind to grasp the truth and make it at once an effective spring and a higher form of action: distinguishing, correlating and organising; drawing out implications; discovering mutual coherence; constructing instances into groups, groups into species, species under genera, until an ultimate unity is attained. With unity comes the communicability of the content of speculation not though the slow apprehension of the specialist but logically through ideas that are defined, arguments that can be tested, and conclusions that need only be verified. Thus one can identify theorems, which are the scientific elaboration of a common notion, and terms, which are the denotation of aspects of reality that have precise meanings.

But of what relation are the general categories to the special?

450.
⁹ *Ibid.*, 157.

Lonergan mentions the 'methodological position' of the sciences, wherein scientists maintain incompatible theories simultaneously. The example given is again the properties of light: "because of general phenomena, light has to be an undulation; because of special problems, it is an emission of particles. The basis of this position is that at present the scientist is ignorant of the truth but in the future, as far removed as you please, he will possess the complete explanation of all phenomena."¹¹

Lest the reader think there is a strict correlation between the general and the special in the sciences and the general and the special in theology, the theologian, unlike the scientist, can not proceed with resolution pending. The principle of perfect intelligibility precludes the theologian from holding two opposites simultaneously: they can not contradict, therefore they do not. Furthermore, there is a distinction to be made between the unknown and the unknowable: scientists are faced with the as-yet-unknown higher synthesis that will eradicate the contradiction. The theologian, while certainly faced with the as-yet-unknown, is also faced with the unknowable,¹² for theology deals with transcendent mystery. The first four functional specialities (shifting to later Lonergan terms) move the theologian "*from an initial position in which the mystery is not distinguished from adjacent merely philosophic problems and the connection between the different mysteries is not defined, towards a final position in which the pure element*

⁹ *Ibid.*, 157.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 156-57.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 166.

¹² 'Unknowable' to us, not (theologically) to God. Furthermore, we are not taking into consideration the knowledge that comes from the beatific vision.

of mystery stands in isolation from all else."¹³ But theology does not explain mysteries: it must be content to only describe them in a manner commensurate with the narrative reality of a faith community.

Two more points need be emphasised. First, the models, the categories, the basic terms and relations that the human sciences develop, are models of emergent probability because they are products of induction.¹⁴ Much of what can be eliminated as demonstrably incorrect has been eliminated, and as techniques advance and new data arise, more can be eliminated. But certitude is reserved for those who can enumerate exhaustively all possible interpretations, and, since human living continues even while human scientists reflect on its history, such exhaustive enumeration is illusory.

Second, the scientist, the theologian, the scholar, lives and works within a tradition. Einstein's discovery would have been nothing had Ernest Mach not insisted on the non-existence of absolute space. Categories of antecedent scholarship, provided that they both be taken only as models and take into consideration historical consciousness, can be returned to if they have been tested and not found wanting. Just as the horizon shift of religious conversion does not necessitate the subject to start a faith afresh but locate herself within a specific community, so too the derivation of categories in foundations need not be from scratch.¹⁵

¹³ *Ibid.*, 168.

¹⁴ Emergent probability concerns the likelihood of previously successful schematic solutions to problems proving to be successful in the future. On emergent probability, see Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, 144-51, 234-37, 487; Kenneth R. Melchin, *History, Ethics and Emergent Probability: Ethics, Society and History in the Work of Bernard Lonergan* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987); Philip McShane, *Randomness, Statistics and Emergence* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1970).

¹⁵ A footnote of Lonergan's on this matter illustrates this point in a manner now amusing with the

Religious conversion, as Lonergan described it, is a general principle, which generates categories common to all sciences that understand that there is an orientation towards a sense of the transcendent.¹⁶ It sublates moral conversion (which is the shift from satisfactions to values) and intellectual conversion (which is the end of understanding knowing as 'taking a good look'). It generates general theological categories when it is considered operative, and the fact that it is operative in the world's religions provides a transcultural basis for the possibility of communication and dialogue across denominations and faiths. It only generates special theological categories when it comes to be understood as commensurate with the narrative reality of a faith community.

The question hinges on a paragraph from *Method in Theology*:

While the transcendental notions make questions and answers possible, categories make them determinate. Theological categories are either general or special. General categories regard objects that come within the purview of other disciplines as well as theology. Special categories regard the objects proper to theology. The task of working out general and special categories pertains, not to the methodologist, but to the theologian engaged in this fifth functional speciality. The methodologist's task is the preliminary one of indicating what qualities are desirable in theological categories, what measure of validity is to be demanded of them, and how categories with the desired qualities and validity are to be obtained.¹⁷

What is unclear at this point is the generality of generalized empirical method:

passing of time and the shift in his own thought to a more ecumenical tolerance. "It is not infrequently implied that theological speculation is a particularly odious vice peculiar to Catholics. What must be meant is not that Catholics speculate while non-Catholics refrain, but that Catholic speculation is systematic work and the result of centuries of collaboration, while the non-Catholic, as he is his own prophet and pope, thinks it a slight matter to be his own theologian as well. Anyone who reflects on religious doctrine enters the field of theological speculation: the question of the child, the difficulties of the adult, the flood of books and articles on the 'religious problem' – all are essentially speculative. Reflection and speculation are irrepresible in man. Non-Catholics, so far from attempting to repress these natural tendencies, allow them the free play of tropical vegetation." Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom*, 167 n. 6.

¹⁶ On the use of 'sense' here, see Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, 555-58.

whether when writing this paragraph Lonergan was a theological methodologist or a methodologist writing for a theological audience. Do all disciplines have 'objects proper?' Do we interpret "Theological categories are either general or special" to mean "Theology, *like* other disciplines, has general and special categories," or "Theology, *unlike* other disciplines, has general and special categories"?

If the former is the case, that all disciplines have both general and special categories, then we are presented with an option wherein the areas of concentration for a discipline become the objects proper, and the general categories become a *lingua franca* for communications between various disciplines. Special categories become to general categories what species are to genera.

It is a tempting proposition. But theological categories are not special because they are simply particular to theology: they are special because (i) they are concerned with mystery which is not merely an unknown for the time being but ultimately unknowable; (ii) despite being unknowable they are ultimately intelligible; (iii) they condition general categories because ultimate intelligibility does not allow for contradiction. That would be Lonergan's position from *Gratia Operans* expressed in later language: he certainly would not have changed his mind about the unknowableness of mystery in the intervening thirty years.

However, we can turn to *Insight*, where the designations 'general' and 'special' are again used, in chapters nineteen and twenty respectively, this time in relation to transcendent knowledge. General transcendent knowledge concerns the existence of God

¹⁷ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 282.

or, more exactly, the existence of transcendent being: it is "concerned with the knowledge of God that, according to St Thomas Aquinas, consists in knowing that he is but not what he is."¹⁸ Special transcendent knowledge concerns the concrete fact of evil, and "what God is or has been doing about the fact of evil."¹⁹

If we bring these distinctions to *Method's* talk of categories, general categories regard the 'that he is' knowledge: through history people have had religious experiences. Special categories regard the 'what he is' knowledge: the narrative content of those religious experiences. Again, a distinction is made where we should read "the objects proper to theology" as "the objects proper to *a* theology." The objects proper to a theology are the narrative reality of a religion as it asks questions concerning special transcendent knowledge.

We can now identify three meanings of 'special:' (a) special theological categories are special because they regard mystery; (b) special theological categories are special because they regard a particular tradition; (c) special theological categories are special because they regard objects proper. The first statement is theological: it hinges on the ultimate unknowableness of God. It derives from an instance of religious conversion in a tradition with a wholly transcendent other. It is a statement from within that faith tradition, and informs how theology is performed within that tradition. The second statement is performative: it is the methodological exercise applied to theology. Theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion

¹⁸ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, 657.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 709.

within that matrix. The third is a statement of maximum generality: it has as its basis generalised empirical method. *X* mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of *y* within that matrix. The second and the third are thus related as the particular to the general. The first is related to the second as content to the structure.

With a structure in place, whereby we can say that it is a methodological statement that mediating disciplines have special categories, we can say that religious studies has special categories if indeed it serves a mediating function. In the previous section we determined that it does. However, we turn now to one last point, concerning 'objects proper.'

The objects proper to an investigation are determined not by the science but by the scientist. That a tradition of scientists has grown and developed is a consequent of similar people investigating similar phenomena in a cumulative and ever-increasing expansion of knowledge concerning their objects proper. Those who study the role of the psyche have the science of psychology, with its accumulation of insights and (incipient) set of terms and relations. Similarly, those who study exchange have at their disposal the accumulated tradition of economics. In like fashion, the accumulated insights of religious studies are available to the person who chooses to study religion. As sciences grow, categories, both general and special, become more defined. Working within a tradition, the scientist adopts the categories as models to describe the realities under investigation, and the science advances as the tests either reaffirm the models or rejects them partially or wholesale as insufficient to adequately act as descriptive agents of known reality. These models are not only useful in the last three functional specialities:

they are anticipated within the first four. The first four occasion a movement from an initial position to a final position of greater clarification concerning the known reality.

4. Is Religious Studies a Subject Specialisation?

Students of religion publish and work in a wide spectrum of venues. In addition to a general religious studies journal like *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses*, in which all of the reviewers have at one time published, there have been publications in works on literature, scripture, theology, sociology, history, philosophy. Furthermore, each of the reviewers have indicated that most departments of religious studies have a cross-listed component, and universities which offer programmes or centres for the study of religion without having an actual department by definition draw across disciplines. The genus 'religion and ...' can be understood as the manifestation of the relationship between the special categories of religious studies (which are the subject of the next section) with the general categories which all of the human sciences share, while the genus '... of religion' can be understood as the mediated relationship between the special categories of religious studies and the special categories of another human science (anthropology, sociology, and so forth).²⁰

²⁰ A brief proviso should be made here. First of all, since the categories of religious studies are still in the process of being worked out, the distinction between the genera 'religion and ...' and '... of religion' may prove to be false. However, as they appear to be taught in Canadian universities, the distinction appears to be the difference between a preliminary study of the relationship between religion and another significant facet of a culture (its art, its practice of social justice, the family) using general categories and the special categories of religion as its models, and a higher order study of the same cultural interaction, only this time engaging in a dialogue with another mediating (and relevant) discipline, using both general categories and the special categories of each mediating discipline. Again, although the distinction may prove itself false, it has been found pedagogically useful. Furthermore, the preliminary / higher order distinction bears itself out: within Canadian universities, one normally finds the former at second or third

Of the latter, a clarification needs to be made. This genus has usually been understood as employing the methodology and premises of another discipline to analyse religion. If one can speak of '... of religion', then can one speak of 'religion of...' or 'religious studies of...'? If one can, it would seem that one is placed in the position of saying that there was one methodology to religious studies which can be employed in the same way that the methodology of psychology can be employed to examine religion in 'psychology of religion' courses. However, even those who have not gone so far as to suggest that religious studies is exclusively interdisciplinary have maintained that there is an interdisciplinary element to the study of religion, and that there is no one method employed by religious studies.

There is a distinction to be made between foundations and methods. Foundations inform how one looks at the world. They are judgments of fact, which are known to be true, and judgments of value, which are known to be effective. They are grounded in the converted subject and categories. They are concerned with attitudes and ends. They are what inform methods. They are a particular tradition's policy on the special and general categories. Methods in the second phase are the practical ways that foundations become communicated effectively. Methods in the first phase are the practical ways that foundations come to be affirmable (or deniable). A second-phase method is a particular way to achieve a particular articulation for a particular audience of a particular tradition's understanding of its foundations. A first-phase method is a particular way of experiencing data and developing hypotheses and proving hypotheses to test the validity

of the affirmation (or denial) of a foundation.²¹

If one considers a discipline as one which serves a mediating function between the cultural matrix and the role and significance of its special categories within that matrix, one articulates the special categories in terms of a basic set of terms and relations which express the *priora quoad se*. However, the premises of a tradition, its policies, are the beginning of a return to the *priora quoad nos*. The genetic and complementary differences which were identified in dialectics return to the fore (now that the dialectically opposed differences have been weeded out) when one speaks of policies. Traditions with complementary or genetic differences will have different methods. If the special categories for psychology regard the psyche, various traditions within psychology (Freudian, Jungian, Skinnerian) will employ different methods.²² Furthermore, traditions within a discipline will vary in method according to not only the premises but also both the audience (the segment, broad or small, of the cultural matrix) and the field of data undergoing the analysis.

To speak of *any* human science having 'a' method, then, would seem a fallacy. There are often, of course, general patterns and schemes of recurrence among methods within a discipline, which could be attributable to a discipline predominately focussing on one particular field of data or of few traditions within the discipline, whose similarities

²¹ To avoid confusion, a heuristic method, like Lonergan's, is the structure that all methods share. Since it is grounded in the operations of intentional consciousness, generalised empirical method is always relevant and provides the basis for any claim for unity or internal consistency.

²² Of course, if traditions within a discipline have fundamental differences, differences which are dialectically opposed, then traditions will also employ different methods: rather than have a synthesis in foundations, they will have dialogue in communications. A 'meta-psychology,' one that seeks to encompass all psychologies, would integrate 'psyche' to its most general term.

could be understood as the discipline's one method (albeit only when understood in general terms). However, as disciplines develop, and the field of data expands, and more traditions arise, new methods develop. It could be that, since religious studies has its origins in a variety of disciplines (both analytical and denominational), the natural period in which a general pattern is predominant never occurred, and that the crisis of the 'multiversity' with which the academy is currently faced is one that religious studies has faced all along.

To return to the question: Is there (or could there be) such a thing as the genus 'Religious studies of...?' The implication that this would entail 'one' religious studies method has been shown to be false, just as 'psychology of religion' does not entail a specific psychological method. There is a history of psychological analyses of religion, and courses follow the methods of those traditions within psychology that have done these analyses, but the noting of a general pattern or a trend is not the same as limiting to one. Thus, if there were a course in 'religious studies of the psyche,' it would be a study of how the special categories of religious studies relate to the special categories regarding the psyche in a manner that begins with 'religion.' 'Psychology of religion' begins with psyche. The two are complementary but have different emphases of priority.

If what constitutes a subject is the communication of results, with different emphases, the same scholar working on the same data can communicate results in a variety of subjects. Michel Despland, for example, co-author of *SRC 2*, publishes in

religion,²³ history,²⁴ philosophy,²⁵ theology,²⁶ and literature.²⁷ The diversity of subjects is a consequent of both the mediation of the role and significance of religion to the cultural matrix and the diversity of emphases of priority within that cultural matrix.

Although there are certainly subject specialities within religious studies, it has never been suggested that religious studies is a subject specialisation, unlike the common suggestion that it is a field specialisation. But the full implications of being neither need to be worked out to a greater systematic fashion than has been done thus far.

5. What Are the Special Categories in Religious Studies?

This question need not be answered here. The role of working out general and special categories is not for methodologists; it is for those operating in the fifth functional speciality, foundations. However, the preliminary tasks of indicating a few features of what qualities are desirable in special categories for religious studies is the methodologist's.

If religious studies is conceived as a meta-theology, as some have described it,²⁸ then the special categories of religious studies would be an attempt at a set of terms and relations which include all that is shared by the religious traditions of the world and

²³ "The heterosexual body as metaphor in Plato's religious city," *Religion* 21 (1991): 31-50.

²⁴ "Two Types of Scholarship: The Contrast between Anquetil-Duperron and Champollion," *Historical Reflections* 20 (1994): 413-433.

²⁵ *The education of desire: Plato and the philosophy of religion*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.

²⁶ "Can conscience be hypocritical: the contrasting analyses of Kant and Hegel." *Harvard Theological Review* 68 (1975): 357-370.

²⁷ "To interpose a little ease: Chateaubriand on Christianity and the modern world." *Religion and Literature* 21 (1989): 19-44.

²⁸ *SRC* 3, 296.

exclude all that is unique.

But religious studies is not a meta-theology. Theology presumes a position consequent of religious conversion (in the last four specialities). Religious studies does not. Religious studies does not require one to take a position on special transcendent knowledge of a tradition or even general transcendent knowledge. The fact of religious experience constitutes the objects proper of religious studies, not the reality to which that experience purports to refer.

Moreover, although theology has to account for plurality of expression and plurality of religious language, theology aims at internal consistency. As theology treats one tradition, there is the assumption that the faith stance, however it be expressed, is uniform. This faith stance adds no new data but adds context, affirming that there is an unknown which is intelligible albeit unknowable.²⁹ Religious studies, although as a science it aims at internal consistency, does not make the assumption that the same foundational stance belies the varieties of religious experience. Variations are not only attributable to stages of development, differentiations of consciousness, distances in space and time, presence or absence of intellectual or moral or religious conversion. There are among the world's religious traditions counter-positions, where the fundamental stance is different by being dialectically opposed. For religious studies, counter-positions are not (necessarily) attributable to not being attentive, not being intelligent, not being reasonable, not being responsible: they just are.

With Lonergan and Heiler one can hold that the feature common to all religious

traditions is being in love in an unrestricted manner, which is common ground for co-operation among the world's religions. A meta-theology might have a set of terms and relations regarding solely this being in love. But the categories, the models for religious studies are going to have to take into account radical, dialectical differences and communicate those differences in a manner that is both commensurate with the traditions involved while allowing for the communication across traditions that comes in dialogue.

Earlier, Neufeldt's use of the word category was questioned in the light of Lonergan's method.³⁰ But the categories currently in use (covering major religious traditions and traditions of scholarship: Christianity; Judaism; Islam; Hinduism; Buddhism; Confucianism; Taoism; Shinto; Folk Religions; Comparative Religion/Phenomenology; Methodology; and terms such as ritual, myth, etc.) can serve as anticipated models as one progresses from an initial position to a final position of greater clarification. Moreover, future categories would dispense with both makeshift categories that assist in transitional stages of development³¹ and categories of convenience that only advert to the *priora quoad nos* (Folk Religions).

²⁹ *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 1, a. 1.

³⁰ See above, 69, n. 9.

³¹ Paul Bowlby alludes to the questionable closure of the Mount Saint Vincent Religious Studies Department by transferring the lone member to the Department of Women's Studies: "In this instance, there was among the decision-makers at Mount Saint Vincent University a commitment to the existence of [a] women's studies department rather than support for the now much more respected model which argues that analysis of gender must be an integral part of *all* disciplines (SRC 6, 301)." To wit, women's studies provides a transition from an absence of a consideration of the role of gender through a phase of provision of an alternate voice to an anticipated full integration of the marginalized voice. Furthermore, the distinction between 'religion and...' and 'religion of...' (see above, n. 20) may prove to be merely transitional.

Conclusion

Religious studies is a discipline still in the process of working out its self-definition. Although it has been around for over a century in some form or another, it has only been fifty years since the post-war shift to publicly run institutions and the concurrent suggestion that religion could be legitimately studied non-dogmatically. It does not exist much outside of the North American continent. There remains a perception that religion is an activity exclusively in the private realm and that any attempt to study it is an exercise in inculcation and not education. Religious studies expends much energy defending itself on two fronts: against those who dismiss it as 'theology lite' or theology in all but name; against those who turn to it when their own traditions fail to provide them with answers to 'big questions.'

Bernard Lonergan was not a student of religious studies: it was not until his sixtieth year that he lived in an academic climate where the study of religions was seen as a discipline in its own right. Although he was exposed to the German historical school through his students in Rome, the 'impossible conditions' of the teaching of theology and the writing of manuals prevented him from working with it in any more than a cursory fashion. But his encounters with the scholarship of the study of religion can be traced from the galley stages of *Insight* to his return to North America and on to his post-*Method* papers.

Chapters one and three are efforts at tracing that history. They bracket a chapter describing functional specialisation which, following an encounter with Friedrich

Heiler's "The History of Religions as a Preparation for the Co-operation of Religions," is also understood by Lonergan as applicable both to any religious tradition's systematic self-reflection and ultimately to any self-reflective human science.

Chapter four is a lengthy investigation concerning how religion is actually studied in Canada, whether functional specialisation is already present in a nascent manner, how reviewers identify lacunae in programs, how future trends are understood, and so forth. I argue that Lonergan's functional specialisation can frame work being done in religious studies in Canada: nothing would necessarily change concerning the work currently being done, save for a new understanding of how that work fits into a broader perspective of the nature of religious studies.

Chapter five posits five questions but, although I provide my own answers, they are meant to be open-ended. The first four are questions for reflection, the last a question of understanding. Combined they try to point towards the sort of questions that students of religion need ask themselves if some semblance of self-definition is ever to be attained.

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