THE SACRED IN ART: AN INTERPRETATIVE STUDY OF BERNARD LONERGAN'S THEORY OF ART

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AN INTERPRETATIVE STUDY OF BERNARD LONERGAN'S THEORY OF ART

by

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For Mom and Dad

"What then is needed is a qualitative change in me, a shift in the center of my existing from the concern expressed in the *bavardage quotidien* towards the participated yet never in this life completely established eternity that is tasted in aesthetic apprehension."

Bernard Lonergan, Review of B. Xiberta. *El Yo de Jesucristo, Gregorianum* 36

Abstract

This thesis interprets the work of Bernard Lonergan. The objective of the thesis is to explore what it is Lonergan has to say about art and its relation to religious meaning. By examining works in which he writes about the aesthetic realm, we are able to come to understand the importance of art for Lonergan and its significance in both religion and in our day-to-day living. The three main texts interpreted are, in chronological order: *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (1957), *Topics in Education* (1959) and *Method in Theology* (1972). These are the foundational works on which the thesis stands. After interpreting these texts we then move on to the concluding chapter in which the religious dimension is brought forth through a brief biography of Lonergan himself. By reflecting on the impact art had on his life and his religious perspective, we are able to further illuminate our understanding of the important connection between the aesthetic and the religious.

Acknowledgments

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Michael Shute for his insightful guidance throughout the writing of this thesis. It was a long process that proved patience and perseverance prevail!

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Thanks (and congratulations!) to my sister, Jennifer, who was also working on her thesis and thankfully understood the woes and wonders contained within its writing. Yet another experience that I'm so glad we were able to share together.

A special thanks to my closest friends Janna, Marianne, Carol and Owen all of whom throughout the process were advising, guiding, e-mailing, climbing and laughing me through to the finish line. Especially warm appreciation and love to Janna whose advice and attention seemed to emerge at the most needed moments. Many thanks to Ian as well, whose attention to detail was much appreciated.

Finally, I want to thank my best friend, my inspiration, my guide and my future husband Adam whose love and encouragement made and makes what seems the impossible more than just a possibility. His strength and support, humour and wit and wealth of wisdom were crucial to the completion of this thesis.

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Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to shed light on artistic expression as a carrier of religious meaning. The means by which this is explored is through an inquiry into the work of the Canadian philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan. Lonergan is a significant twentieth century religious philosopher and therefore what he has to say about religion is worth investigating in its own right. What is perhaps less well known is that his theology includes a coherent aesthetic philosophy or theory of art. The challenge of this thesis is to bring forth that unified view.

In the first three chapters this is done in a cumulative fashion, through an examination of his written works in the order in which they were written. In the fourth chapter we move from this analytic method to an integral existential method, that is, a biographical consideration of Lonergan's religious and aesthetic orientation. No one part of his life can be thematized in isolation. Both his religious and his aesthetic orientation were part of the same building. The fourth chapter focuses on this fact and serves to place a roof, if you will, on the walls of the previous chapters. The symbolism of three walls is appropriate in different ways. It indicates an incompleteness: do houses not usually have four walls? What about the fourth wall? Given the importance of the Trinity in Lonergan's theology and as a central piece of Christian theology, we might well ask: is Lonergan's aesthetic Trinitarian? To deal with this question would lead us into a fifth chapter and into a consideration of theological matters. A positive answer to that question would give a lift to the symbolism of three walls. Lonergan's aesthetic

perspective is, as it were, held up by his commitment to a Trinitarian God. A more refined aesthetic would develop in this context the analogy of the Trinitarian processions: the artistic Deed being a Word calling forth Aesthetic Joy. To develop this idea would require a whole other thesis. In this thesis we keep to the preliminary task of establishing the integral nature of the aesthetic and the religious in Lonergan's life and work.

So, it is best to simply give an indication of the content of the three analytic steps and the fourth complementing existential component.

In chapter one, we begin the analysis with the book *Insight*.[1] In his discussion of common sense understanding Lonergan introduces the notion of patterns of experience. It is here that Lonergan identifies aesthetic experience as a distinct pattern of experience and comments on its general features.[2] The rest of the chapter links the notion of the pattern of experience (primarily the aesthetic) with the account of the cognitional structure which Lonergan developed most fully in *Insight.*

In chapter two, we examine *Topics in Education*[3] where Lonergan develops a theory of art rooted in his account of the aesthetic experience discussed in *Insight.* His main concern in these lectures is to figure out the function of art and then establish its purpose in education. In his account, art is at the imaginative and appreciative level. Without the imagination, questions, and as a result insights, would have no foundation on which to exist. Phantasms, as Aristotle discovered, are needed for an insight to happen:

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[1] Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* ([1957] New York: Philosophical Library, 1970) (hereafter *Insight*).

[2] Ibid., 184-85.

[3] Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 10 (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1993) (hereafter *Topics in Education*).

without the image brought forth by the imagination, no insight is possible.[4] Art is not conceptual in Lonergan's view, but elemental. Aesthetic meaning, then, is an incipient cultivation of imagining. An influential person in Lonergan's discussion of the aesthetic experience is Susanne K. Langer. In her book, *Feeling and Form*, Langer offers a definition of art: "Art is the creation of forms symbolic of human feeling."[5] Although Lonergan does not use this precise definition, he does give credit to Langer when he writes that she conceives of "art as an objectification of a purely experiential pattern."[6] This definition opens up the possibility of a deeper appreciation of the intrinsic function of art and provides a basis for an appreciation of its relevance to concrete living.

In chapter three we examine *Method in Theology*,[7] where Lonergan presents his fullest account of human meaning through an analysis of its elements, functions, realms and stages. Meaning, for Lonergan, "is embodied or carried in human intersubjectivity, in art, in symbols, in language and in the lives and deeds of persons" and a discussion of these topics "will yield some insight into the diversity of the expressions of religious experience."[8] In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan develops the elements previously introduced in *Insight* and *Topics in Education* in the context of a theory of human meaning. Of significance in this work is the development of functional specialization, which re-contextualizes his theory of art.

Finally, after the analytical chapters, comes chapter four. It is in this chapter that we begin to discuss Lonergan's biography. It is within this framework that the proof of

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[4] Aristotle, *De Anima* (New York: Random House, 1947), III, 7, 431b 2.
[5] Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953), 40.
[6] *Topics in Education*, 211.
[7] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1972).

his view is expressed through an integration of his religious and aesthetic life, one that he both practiced and preached but – as will be revealed in this final chapter – he often hid from his audience. Through further research and as a result of this rediscovery, it became apparent that the thesis had to include the stages of Lonergan's religious and aesthetic evolution in order to understand the context of his written works. However, despite the fact that his perspective is sometimes intentionally hidden, it is blaringly apparent through his life and his writings that Lonergan held strong views and convictions about the way in which art carries religious meaning in our day-to-day living.

Because Lonergan's theology is developed as a unified viewpoint, art, aesthetics, and religion are each parts of a whole.[9] His account of religious meaning includes an aesthetic component and his theory of aesthetics includes a religious component. My specific concern was to establish what Lonergan said about the connection between religion and art: it is only through a consideration of biographical elements that this unity can be truly grasped. The personal growth gained by me was gratefully recognizing the divine beauty in its living.

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[8] Ibid., 57.
[9] *Insight,* xii.

Chapter 1: Patterns and Cognition

As stated in the introduction, the task of the first three chapters of this thesis is to introduce and interpret the primary materials published during Lonergan's lifetime relevant to an understanding of his notion of art as a carrier of religious meaning. There are three relevant blocks of material under consideration. First, there is the discussion of the aesthetic pattern of experience in chapter six of *Insight*, first published in 1957. Second, there is the lecture on art found in *Topics in Education*, a series of lectures on *Insight* which was delivered in 1959. Third, there is the discussion of artistic meaning in *Method in Theology*, published in 1972. We begin in this chapter with the material on the aesthetic pattern of experience. To put his discussion of the aesthetic pattern in context we must consider briefly the over-all design and objective of *Insight*. This will provide a context for locating Lonergan's presentation of his notion of patterns of experience in general, and of the aesthetic pattern of experience in particular, in *Insight*.

1.1 Contextualising Insight

The first mention Lonergan makes of art in his published writings is in *Verbum*.[1] In a brief footnote to a discussion of Aquinas's usage of a series of Latin terms related to the notion of form, specifically *quod quid est*, *quod quid erat esse,* and *quidditas*, Lonergan asks the reader to "recall that the artist's idea is an inner word that has been

[1] Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas,* ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 2 (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1997) (hereafter *Verbum*). Originally

thought out and is not strictly a form."[2] He then directs the reader to the part of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, which deals with *poiêsis*, or doing.[3] This reference tells us that in the mid-1940's, Lonergan had already developed a notion of the meaning of art informed by a reading of Aristotle and Aquinas.[4] However, Lonergan does not discuss the aesthetic realm at any length in his published work until he writes *Insight.*

Insight, Lonergan's best known philosophical work, builds on the understanding of cognitional process, first presented in full in the *Verbum* articles. In *Insight*, Lonergan updates the core and implicit cognitional position of Aquinas by taking into account the advances of the scientific revolution and the breakthrough to historical mindedness of the modern era.[5] On the basis of this recovery of Aquinas' implicit understanding of the cognitional process, Lonergan develops in *Insight* a philosophy of science and common sense, an epistemology, a metaphysics, an account of the foundations for ethics, a philosophy of religion and a philosophy of history. As we would expect, given the link that holds between art and *poiêsis*, the treatment of aesthetics occurs in his discussion of commonsense understanding.

Lonergan began writing *Insight* in 1949 after he finished the *Verbum* articles. His initial intention was to write a book on theological method. However, in 1952 Lonergan

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appeared as a series of articles in *Theological Studies*, 1946-49.

[2] Ibid., 35.

[3] *Metaphysics* xxx. In *Topics of Education* Lonergan writes that artistic form "is the abstraction of a form, not conceptually, but by doing, poiêsis" (219, n. 23).

[4] As we shall see in the discussion of the material from *Topics in Education* in the next chapter, it is significant that links align artistic insight with poiêsis, for in Lonergan's view art is relevant to concrete living.

[5] See Bernard Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 169-183.

was informed that he would start teaching at the Gregorian University in Rome the next year. As a result, he had to change his ambitious plans for the book. He later wrote: "I ... decided to round off what I had done and publish it under the title, *Insight, A Study of Human Understanding*."[6] His original intention truncated, Lonergan began to re-define his task from "an exploration of methods generally in preparation for a study of the method of theology."[7] He restricted himself to a discussion of the philosophical foundation, which might ground any future consideration of the theological method. Therefore, the project of writing about method in theology was delayed until he wrote *Method in Theology*.

Lonergan wrote *Insight* from the perspective of a moving viewpoint. As he explains in the preface of *Insight*: "For the single book may be written from a moving viewpoint, and then it will contain, not a single coherent set of statements, but a sequence of related sets of coherent statements."[8] This context is important to keep in mind when we consider Lonergan's account of the aesthetic pattern of experience. A primary aim for Lonergan in writing *Insight* was to aid the development in the reader of a self-appreciation of human understanding and judgment in all its forms. Thus, as Lonergan relates it, the first eight chapters of the book "... are a series of five-finger exercises inviting the reader to discover in himself and for himself just what happens when he understands. My aim is to help people experience themselves understanding, advert to

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[6] Bernard Lonergan, "*Insight* Revisited," *A Second Collection,* ed. William F. J. Ryan, S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), 263-278, at 268.

[7] Ibid., 268.

[8] *Insight*, xxiii.

the experience, distinguish it from other experiences, name and identify it, and recognize it when it recurs."[9] Thus, the account of the aesthetic pattern is primarily an invitation by Lonergan to the reader to move towards a self-appreciation of understanding as it occurs in the aesthetic zone of human experience. Lonergan locates this discussion in chapter six, before he has completed his account of human understanding and drawn its implication for the various zones of human inquiry.

Lonergan divides the book *Insight* into two parts: Part One, chapters one to ten, deals with insight as an activity, while Part Two, chapters eleven to twenty, deals with insight as knowledge. The focus of the first part is on the self-appropriation of the various components of human knowledge, while the second part lays out the implications of this account for the various departments of human inquiry.

Part One of *Insight* begins with an examination of the activity of human understanding in mathematics and the lower sciences: this account takes up the first five chapters. In chapter one he first introduces the notion of insight using examples of mathematical insight. Mathematical insight is the obvious place to start because instances of mathematical insight can be relatively easily grasped and precisely indicated. Pure mathematical insights bracket the demand for empirical verification as required in the empirical sciences and the exigence for a practical implementation required of common sense understanding. In chapters two through five Lonergan explores understanding in the empirical sciences. His examples are drawn mainly from physics,

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[9] "*Insight* Revisited," 269.

although the discussion of emergent probability in chapter four points towards issues in philosophy of biology. The second chapter contrasts insight as it occurs in mathematics and physics and explores the ongoing structures of discovery in the sciences. In chapter three Lonergan introduces the canons of empirical method. Chapter four explores the complementarity of classical and statistical heuristic structures. Chapter five is a clarification of the meaning of special and general relativity.

Lonergan then moves to a discussion of human understanding in the more complex zone of common sense in chapters six and seven. This is where his discussion of aesthetics is to be found. With the first seven chapters he completes his account of "human intelligence insofar as it unifies data by setting up intelligible correlations,"[10] correlations whether in the realm of common sense or the realm of theory. In chapter eight he introduces the notion of a thing. This paves the way for an entirely different kind of insight in which one grasps a concrete unity-identity-whole in the data. It is only in chapters nine and ten that he discusses human judgment. Chapter nine introduces the notion of judgment. Chapter ten expands the discussion to include an account of the ground of judgment in the act of reflective insight and a discussion of the different kinds of judgment. It is in this chapter that Lonergan expands his treatment of common sense to include common sense judgment. With his account of judgement, Lonergan completes his account of insight as activity. He now shifts attention to the implications of his understanding of understanding for human knowledge.

Part Two begins by asking the reader to affirm for themselves the occurrence of

acts of judgment. Self-affirmation of the knower is crucial to the entire argument of the book, for self-affirmation provides the method of verification for the proceeding account and the crucial turning point in establishing the account of being and objectivity to follow. In chapter twelve, Lonergan discusses the implication of his theory of cognition for the notion of being. Chapter thirteen explores a key epistemological question, that is, the meaning of objectivity. At this point Lonergan has completed a primary aim of the book: to establish, by way of an account of the activity of human knowing, the objectivity of human knowing. In a later reflection on the achievement of *Insight* Lonergan writes, "... with chapter thirteen the book could end. The first eight chapters explore human understanding. The next five reveal how correct understanding can be discerned and incorrect rejected. However, I felt that if I went no further, my work would be regarded as just psychological theory incapable of grounding a metaphysics."[11]

Lonergan then proceeds, in chapters fourteen to seventeen, to develop a notion of a genetic or developmental metaphysics based on the cognitional foundations he has already established. In chapter eighteen he extends the discussion to consider the foundations of ethics. It is here that he finally introduces the elements of deliberation, which in *Method in Theology* are treated as a separate fourth level of human consciousness.[12] It is not until chapters nineteen and twenty that Lonergan begins to write

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[10] Ibid., 272.

[11] Ibid., 275.

[12] We note here that the following account of the elements of cognition to follow is derived from a diagram Lonergan used in Dublin in 1961, in which he spoke in terms of five levels: experience, understanding, judging, planning and deciding. However, in *Method in Theology*, Lonergan, refers consistently to the four levels of conscious intentionality. It is this usage we refer to at this point. On the Dublin diagram see Bernard Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic: The Boston College Lectures on*

a full philosophy of religion and history. Keeping in mind the order of developing ideas in *Insight* we can appreciate the increased level of complexity dealt with as we move through the book. In terms of the cognitional structure to be discussed immediately below, the first eight chapters of *Insight* treat the first two levels of conscious intentionality, experience and understanding. It is only with chapter 11 that Lonergan completes his account of the third level of conscious intentionality, judgment. With the expansion to include an epistemology and a metaphysics, Lonergan is able to introduce the notion of human development into his account. This is the subject matter of chapter fifteen. In chapter eighteen Lonergan introduces the elements of deliberation. In the final two chapters of *Insight* Lonergan relates human understanding, judgment and deliberation to the higher zone of religion.

Two significant issues in this thesis arise out of this brief discussion of the structure of *Insight*. First, it is important to note that the discussion of the aesthetic pattern of experience occurs in chapter six, prior to his treatment of judgment and deliberation. Consequently, the account does not include an account of the aesthetic thing (or object), aesthetic or artistic judgment, or the role of deliberation in the making of art. Likewise, while our interest is in the relationship of art to religion, Lonergan does not take up the question of religion until chapters nineteen and twenty of the book. Consequently, he does not include any mention of the relationship of art and religion. Moreover, his account of religion is restricted. While he does take up the question of the

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Mathematical Logic and Existentialism, ed. Philip McShane, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 18 (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2001) (hereafter *Phenomenology and Logic*), appendix A.

existence of God (chapter 19) and the supernatural solution to the problem of evil (chapter 20), he avoids any examination of religious experience, religious belief or religious faith.

Because he needed to round off the book quickly he likely did not have the time or inclination to extend the method of self-appropriation to his discussion of religion. Moreover, *Insight* sharply avoided the theological context, which any discussion of faith entailed. Clearly, he wanted *Insight* to be taken seriously as philosophy by philosophers, so there is an 'apologetic' agenda in the work. In any case, an account of the aesthetic pattern of experience written from the final viewpoint of chapter twenty would include these missing elements. Finally, *Insight* by its design brackets a discussion of the theological elements of Lonergan's understanding of art and aesthetics. This does not mean that there is not a theological component of his view of art – quite the contrary. At the time Lonergan began writing *Insight* had been teaching theology for eight years. An account of the aesthetic pattern of experience that incorporated Lonergan's thought on religious experience, understanding, judgment and practice, found in other works at this time would be even richer. However, for the time being, in keeping with our efforts to stick to an interpretation of the texts as presented, we will avoid comment in this chapter on the theological component of Lonergan's theory of art.

With this, I turn to the somewhat daunting task of summarizing Lonergan's intention in *Insight*, that is, explaining his systematic understanding of the cognitional structure.

1.2 Lonergan's Theory of the Cognitional Structure

Insight is designed to cajole the ready and perceptive reader into a task of self-discovery. What is to be discovered is the very process by which we think, that is, cognitional process. It is the elements in Lonergan's account of cognitional process that will provide the foundational categories for his subsequent accounts of epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, philosophy of religion and philosophy of history in *Insight*, and the general categories for theology presented in *Method in Theology*. There is no good reason to suppose that they do not also provide foundation categories for his aesthetics. As we shall see below in section 3, his brief account of the aesthetic pattern of experience is embedded in an account of common sense understanding and includes reference to key elements of his cognitional theory: experience, wonder, the exercise of intelligence, insight, and idea. Again, as he would later make explicit in his Cincinnati Lectures on education[13] and in *Method in Theology*, art is a carrier of meaning and therefore its meaning is a product of human sensibility, creativity, judgment, and deliberation. Given the foundational nature of cognitional theory to Lonergan's account of aesthetics and the centrality of that account to the argument of *Insight*, any effort to interpret the section on the aesthetic pattern of experience subject must include some account of these foundations. We turn now to this task.

How do we know knowing? It is to meet this issue that Lonergan developed a method, which he calls self-appropriation, for extricating and examining the elements of knowing. Self-appropriation is a method of self-knowledge. Its aim is to identify and

relate the elements of cognition by heightening our awareness of the acts that occur when we are knowing. For example, when we experience we can distinguish both what is seen and the act of seeing. Self-appropriation would have us notice the seen (the object) and the seeing (the act of the subject that makes the seen actual to the one who sees). The move is very significant as it expands the available data to include both the data of sense and the data of consciousness. This makes possible a scientific verification of the account. Lonergan offers, then, not only a philosophy of knowledge but also a method by which his readers can verify his claims.

As we have indicated, Lonergan's discussion of the structure of human cognition takes up ten chapters of *Insight*. This is a wealth of material that defies easy summary. Nonetheless, Lonergan did provide us a set of two diagrams that neatly holds together all the relevant terms and relations of his account to the structure. By going over the specifics of these diagrams we can present, in a concise manner, the relevant elements.

The first diagram (Figure 1.1) presents the structure of the process of human knowing. Because Lonergan's intention was to develop a *theory* of knowing we can assume that its general features hold for all human beings. In Lonergan's view, there is an invariant structure to the process of knowing. Regardless of the differences within humanity's vast canvas of culture, history and self-appropriation, we are all given the same tools for knowing. Moreover, his notion of knowing as structure implies that there is a whole with parts. Not only are these parts related to the whole, but also the parts are

[13] See *Topics in Education*, 208-232.

themselves interrelated as parts and to the whole.[14]

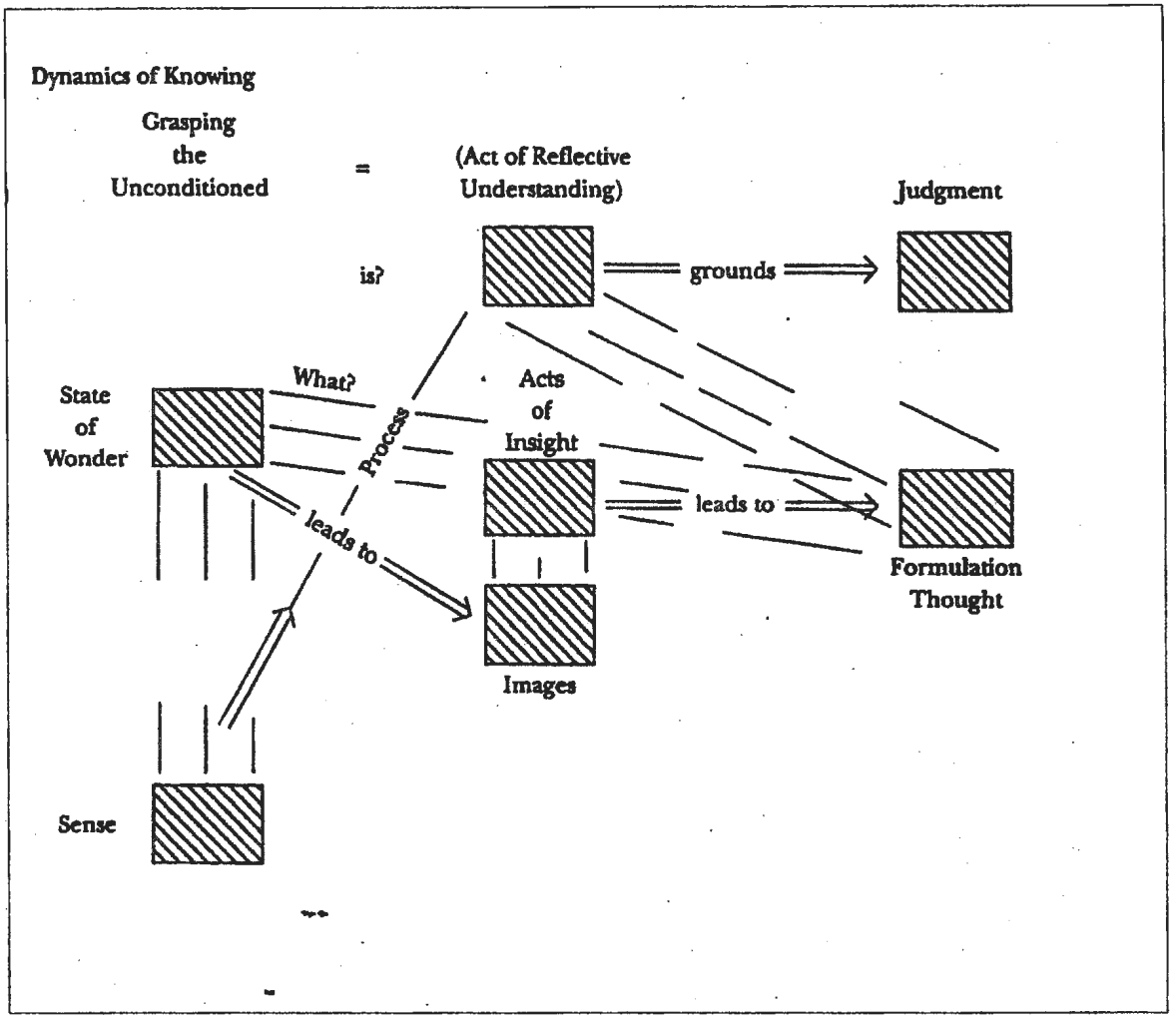

Figure 1.1 The Structure of Knowing. According to Lonergan, the structure of knowing consists of seven distinct acts on three levels of consciousness.[15]

For Lonergan, knowing is an activity that occurs by way of a series of acts that occurs on

[14] Not every whole is a structure. One might have an image or idea in mind when thinking of what a whole might be – from a pint of ice cream to the more highly organized examples of nature or art. If we think of nature or art, the set of internal relations is of tremendous significance. Each part is what it is in direct correlation to how it functions with the other parts; no one particular part is without import to or determined by the other parts. As a result the whole has a certain inevitability within its unity: to remove a part would create the whole's destruction and an addition to the whole would be ludicrous.

[15] Figure taken from *Phenomenology and Logic*, 323. See above, note 12.

three distinct levels. These levels are experience, understanding and judgment. The first diagram presents the basic elements of the process of knowing as it occurs on the first three levels. With respect to the first level of experience, Lonergan identifies one element, sense. Following Aristotle, Lonergan holds that knowledge begins in the senses. Without sense there would be no data. Without data there would be nothing about which to inquire. The meaning of the element label 'sense' here is, of course, richly developed in *Insight* and of special significance for our understanding of the aesthetic pattern of experience. What is symbolised by the term 'sense' is in fact a pattern of inter-relationship between the sense data itself and the acts of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling that make the data available. We note in particular the intentional quality of these acts. There is a potential attentiveness and control to human sensing that to some degree selects what is sensed, depending upon the pattern of experience in which one is engaged. It will follow in the next section that the patterns of experience that we will discuss direct us towards different goals. The pattern in which one is engaged is what mediates the experience that one is having. The experience created by the sensory data begins to provoke questions in the subject. Questions about the data leads us to the next level of consciousness, understanding. The understanding phase begins with the wonder and questioning of sense-experience.

This questioning brings us to the next level, which is identified in the diagram as a 'state of wonder.' It is impossible to wonder or inquire without something to wonder or inquire about. Sensations, perceptions, and images provide the necessary conditions for wonder and inquiry. The act of wondering is then connected to experience as it gives

wonder an object within which to inquire. This wondering propels us beyond the senses allowing the subject to shift from sensing to understanding. When we are trying to understand, we ask questions about the object or idea. This puzzling over the data revealed often brings us to "what" questions like, "what is it?" or "what's happening?" These "what" questions in turn lead us to direct insight. Direct insight is an act of discovery that relates previously unrelated data through a new understanding of the data. Direct insight transforms 'what-questions' and sense-experience by considering sense-experience in a new way. The 'what-questions' are what lead us to direct insights. So, this state of wonder brings us to acts of insight. Lonergan believes "in the famous statement on insight in the *De Anima* that forms are grasped by mind in images."[16] These direct insights, guided by our newly forming understanding, lead us to form thoughts on the ideas and questions we raise. What is expressed wordlessly in insight demands expression in a concept.

This new understanding and conception begets yet another level of consciousness, that of judgment. The data of sense provokes inquiry, inquiry leads to understanding and without the effort to understand and its conflicting results we would have no occasion to judge. In judging we reflect upon the answer or idea that has emerged; this reflection formed through wonder asks the question "Is it so?" or "Is this a fact?" Once we ask the question, the three possible outcomes are either discovering that it *is* so, that it is *not* so or that we are unsure. If it is *not* so, then we must go through the process again: to ask more

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[16] *Insight*, 677.

questions and to re-examine the data to find out what we may have overlooked or to reveal new data we may not have found. Reflective insight is the mental activity that mediates between 'is questions' and judgments of fact. As such, reflective insight is an answer to a question, a solution to a problem about whether or not a formulation is correct. Reflective insight results in grounding judgments of fact. Knowledge is correctly understood experience and this process establishes the base to form this knowledge. When the process of knowing the facts is concluded we have established, through judging the data, that it *is* so – but what now? This is the very question one might ask after a conscious judgment has been made. It leads us to deliberation.

The diagram we have been looking at deals with a basic structure of thinking. It reveals, as stated in its title, the dynamics of knowing. It constitutes the elements of theoretical reasoning. The second diagram with which we will concern ourselves involves the dynamics of doing. Its focus is on the elements of practical reasoning and therefore deals with deliberation. It is through the deliberation process that we are moved to action. We now turn to how elements of practical reasoning relate to each other and to the elements of theoretical reasoning.

The second diagram (Figure 1.2) also begins with sense. It is immediately apparent that this discussion is almost a repeat of the first diagram. Its construction is based on the first diagram but with a shift of attention to human action. When we shift to deliberation, our sensory data is mediated by the prior judgments we have reflected on and discovered to be facts. The question then moves from one of correct interpretation to one of worthwhile action: that is, given the situation we have identified, we want to know

what are we going to do about it.

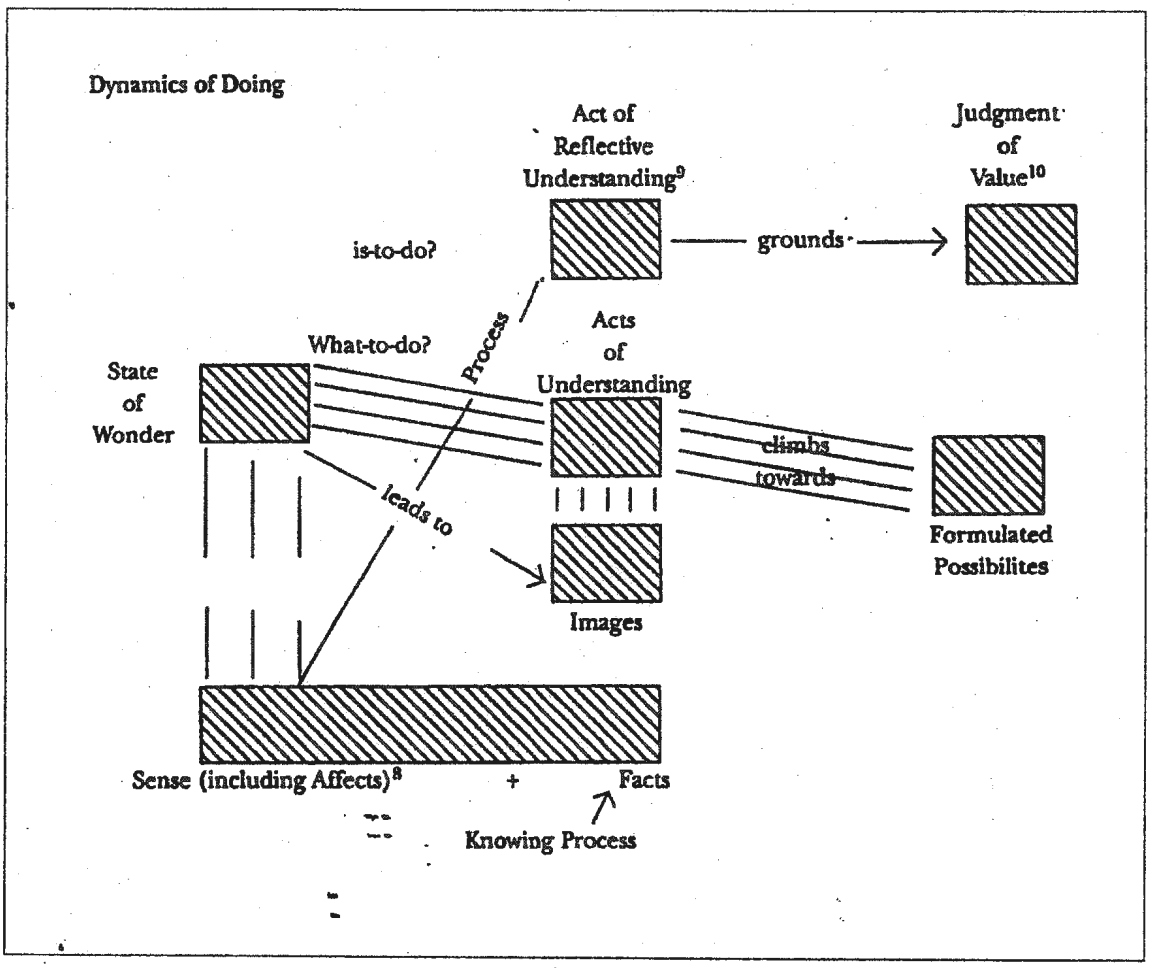

Figure 1.2 The Structure of Doing. The structure of doing incorporates thirteen distinct acts (including the seven from the structure of knowing) at three levels of consciousness.[17]

In Lonergan's account of cognitional process there are a total of thirteen acts. In theoretical reasoning there are seven elements:

1. Data of sense and/or consciousness
2. The 'what question'
3. Direct insight
4. Formulation or concept
5. The 'is question'
6. Reflective insight

[17] Diagram taken from *Phenomenology and Logic*, 324. See above, notes 12 and 15.

7. Judgment of fact

In practical reasoning, we assume the results of the first seven elements above and add six elements:

8. What-is-to-be-done questions
9. Direct Insight
10. Formulation of possible courses of actions (plans)
11. Is-it-to-be-done questions
12. Reflective Insight
13. Judgment of value.

We will now look at the connections and differences that balance the elements of theoretical and practical reasoning. By summarising some of the key points we have made and expanding on others, we will gain a better understanding of not only how they relate to each other but also how they are an important segue to a discussion of patterns of experience.

Both diagrams begin with sense as their primary element. However, the treatment of sense differs between the two diagrams. Theoretical reasoning deals with sense on the level of experiencing solely through the senses, but in practical reasoning the senses are not the only element to consider. While the senses are again brought into question, this time they are mediated by the accumulated judgments of fact, affects and knowledge gained from the previous theoretical reasoning process. We note, as well, that in practical reasoning, sense expands to include affects.

There are two types of insight – direct and reflective. Both types exist within theoretical and practical reasoning. Theoretical and practical reasoning both seek knowledge but while theoretical reasoning seeks knowledge for knowledge's sake, practical reasoning is concerned with what to do with the knowledge one acquires.

Insight is the activity that finds answers to questions and creates potential solutions to problems. Critical reflection occurs in both types of reasoning. While attempting to find possible solutions in both the theoretical and practical realm, there are two distinct orientations to be noted. Direct insight in theoretical reasoning is parallel to practical insight in practical reasoning. This is to say that both direct and practical insight are oriented to understanding potential relations in the data. While direct insight wonders whether possible answers are true or false, practical insight wonders whether or not the proposed courses of action are appropriate to doing in a particular situation.

In Lonergan's theory, the key activity in theoretical reasoning is direct insight. Direct insight in theoretical reasoning occurs after wonder and is represented by a person asking what-questions that demand some definition, explanation or interpretation. Direct insights are not to be confused with mere perceptions; they are the result of interrogating one's sense-perceptions. Direct insights are not definitions or interpretations. Rather, they are the mental activities that definitions and interpretations are based on. Therefore, it is fair to say that this type of insight is pre-conceptual. Direct insight is the build-up to a definition.

In practical reasoning, however, the crucial activity is practical insight. Similar to theoretical reasoning, an individual involved in practical reasoning wonders, asks questions, has insights and formulates them. However, the person engaged in practical reasoning not only wonders about sensible presentations, imaginations and so on, but also about particular situations and circumstances. The 'what-is-it?' question of theoretical reasoning turns into a 'what-is-to-be-done?' question in the realm of practical reasoning.

This, in turn, leads to insights into the unity of proposed courses of action rather than the unity in data.

Reflective insight is the mental activity that mediates between is-questions and judgments of fact and judgments of value. In theoretical reasoning, direct insight is tested by reflective insight and, in practical reasoning, practical insight is evaluated by practical reflective insight. Reflective insight leads to a judgment of fact and practical reflective insight leads to a judgment of value concerning whether a proposed course of action is good or sufficiently appropriate.

It is obvious that theoretical and practical reasoning are related to each other in a number of ways. Theoretical reasoning is concerned with interpreting situations while practical reasoning is concerned with what to do in a situation. Practical reasoning completes the pattern of cognitive operations insofar as it includes and goes beyond knowing, resulting in action; theoretical reasoning grounds practical reasoning inasmuch as you must *know* in order to do. We can say, then, that theoretical reasoning provides us with the factual data that practical reasoning needs to take into account. Once it is taken into account we make a decision, a separate mental operation that ends practical reasoning. But how are these courses of action organized? To answer the question we must go back to the first level – sensory data. What mediates this level is the pattern of experience in which we are engaged.

In the following section we will be looking at Lonergan's treatment of the patterns of experience. With an understanding of Lonergan's cognitional structure as our foundation, we are able to understand how each pattern is directed toward very different

goals.

1.3 Patterns of Experience

In his discussion of common sense understanding in chapter six of *Insight*, Lonergan introduces the notion of patterns of experience. Initially he contrasts a scientific and a common sense accumulation of insight: "Where the scientist seeks the relations of things to one another, common sense is concerned with the relations of things to us."[18] As we have already discussed, cognitional structure is concerned with the process of how we know. Lonergan notes that we experience our experiencing, understanding, and judging every time we experience, understand or judge. The elements of knowing are conscious when one is experiencing (when one is seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, smelling), understanding, and judging, but as such they are neither understood nor known. Our attention spontaneously tends to focus on the object as opposed to our cognitive operations. In contrast, self-appropriation shifts the focus to cognitional activities that occur whenever an object is seen, understood, and judged.

However, as common sense concerns itself with the relation of things to us, we must also take into account the subjective field of common sense. It is here that Lonergan identifies the biological, the aesthetic, the intellectual and the dramatic as distinct patterns of experience. The aesthetic experience, as reflected in *Insight*, is one part of the whole account of the patterns of experience.

Lonergan treats the patterns of experience by beginning with the biological, moving on to the aesthetic, then the intellectual, and finishing with the dramatic.

However, we will begin the discussion of the patterns of experience by introducing the biological, the intellectual and the dramatic patterns. Then, we will move on to a discussion on the aesthetic pattern of experience. In treating the aesthetic last we will link it to the other patterns discussed and show how each carries its own meaning and significance.

1.3.1 The Biological Pattern of Experience

Lonergan remarks on how abstract it is to speak of mere sensation:

> No doubt, we are all familiar with acts of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling. Still, such acts never occur in isolation both from one another and from all other events. On the contrary, they have a bodily basis; they are functionally related to bodily movements; and they occur in some dynamic context that somehow unifies a manifold of sensed contents and of acts of sensing.[19]

His account of patterns shows how experience is mediated or organized differently depending on the pattern we are in. Lonergan begins his discussion on patterns of experience with the biological pattern. Every living thing has a biological drive or purpose. Outer senses are our biological tools and offer information about opportunity and danger. Memory is the file of surplus information. Imagination is the projection of possible courses of action. Conation and emotion are the harbored pressure of elemental purposiveness, and finally, "the complex sequence of delicately coordinated bodily movements is at once the consequence of striving and a cause of the continuous

[18] *Insight*, 181.
[19] Ibid.

shift of sensible presentations."[20] In the biological pattern, because the main concern is survival, consciousness has an extroverted orientation.

Lonergan further clarifies the notion of the biological pattern by comparing animals and plants. Both plants and animals are infused with an array of vital processes that act without conscious control; it is only when something is upset within the animal's biological framework that the unconscious becomes conscious. That is to say, conscious behaviour is an intermittent part of daily living, especially when we consider the obvious fact that animals need to sleep. Consciousness affords us the opportunity to meet problems of malfunctioning, to deal effectively and rapidly with external situations where sustenance is to be gained and reproduction is to be done. This indicates that in terms of elementary experience, the animal is concerned with external opportunities and conditions. Therefore, as Lonergan states: "Within the full pattern of living, there is a partial, intermittent, extroverted pattern of conscious living."[21] This extroversion of function is the foundation of the confrontational element of consciousness itself. Instinct, emotion and bodily movements are a way animals respond to stimuli. However, the stimulus is against the response: it is a presentation through sense, memory and imagination of not only what is responded to but also of what is to be dealt with. If and when the object fails or ceases to stimulate, the subject becomes indifferent and, "when non-conscious vital process has no need of outer objects, the subject dozes and falls

[20] Ibid., 183.
[21] Ibid., 184.

asleep." [22]

It is the combination of all these illustrations that creates a link between the biological pattern of experience and what we ascribe as our own flow of experience. The pattern is, as Lonergan describes:

> ... a set of intelligible relations that link together sequences of sensations, memories, images, conations, emotions, and bodily movements; and to name the patterns biological is simply to affirm that the sequences converge upon terminal activities of intussusception or reproduction or, when negative in scope, self-preservation.[23]

1.3.2 The Intellectual Pattern of Experience

While the biological pattern has an extroverted orientation, the intellectual pattern of experience is oriented by the pure desire to know. Neither concerned with primitive biological functions nor practical issues of day-to-day living, the intellectual pattern of experience pursues inquiry for inquiry's sake. The energy this pattern generates is difficult to harness, especially for the young so full of lively and vivacious exuberance. To be successful in this pattern one has to develop a refined ability to be selectively alert in order to enable intellectual subtleties and refined classifications their proper space. Lonergan notes that "even with talent, knowledge makes a slow, if not a bloody, entrance. To learn thoroughly is a vast undertaking that calls for relentless perseverance."[24] In the intellectual pattern, sensitivity must adapt to the demands of pure inquiry; it co-operates with inquiry by adopting the necessary attitude and by throwing up appropriate memories

[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid., 186.

and images. The outer senses are directed towards the significant details, memory seeks the counter-example, and imagination is ready to suggest contrary possibilities. This fine-tuning of sense retrieval is for reasons other than survival where, in contrast, the senses are used to warn of danger or find sustenance. A professor in his study or a scientist in his lab exemplifies the intellectual pattern.

1.3.3 The Dramatic Pattern of Experience

The last pattern of experience described by Lonergan in chapter six of *Insight* is the dramatic pattern. The dramatic pattern of experience is essentially the way in which each of us blends the other three patterns that thereby constitute and characterise our lifestyle. It is the way we play our role, skilfully or not, in the drama of life. Its aims are practical. This pattern is then highly influenced by the presence of other people in our lives and conditions our particular style as we live our lives. Lonergan describes man as "an animal for whom mere animality is indecent."[25] Even in the way we formalise meals we move away from the purely biological need to eat. Our dining rooms are set with ornate detail and our minds filled with proper etiquette. We learn how to act in varying environments and also bring our own individual attitudes and tastes to the table. Again, even clothing plays a role in lifting us up in our daily living beyond the merely biological. Clothes are not merely worn to keep warm. They are an extension of our personalities and can hide and cover just as much (or little) as the wearer chooses to reveal. Lonergan

[25] Ibid., 187.

also makes the important point to note that man's "first work of art is his own living."[26] The characteristics of beauty and admiration are found within humans in both body and action before they are given a freer realisation in the realm of the aesthetic. While our biology cannot be ignored it can certainly be transformed.

1.3.4 The Aesthetic Pattern of Experience

We end our discussion of the patterns of experience by examining the aesthetic. Lonergan begins by acknowledging that there is an exuberance in man that goes far beyond the biological. Exuberance is the joy in conscious living that is manifested in authentic spontaneity, which we witness in everything from the untiring play of children to the swing in a melody. While such exuberance is not exclusively human it is not simply biological either. As with the intellectual and dramatic patterns, the aesthetic pattern of experience moves beyond the biological pattern of experience. The aesthetic concerns itself with experience for experience sake. The aesthetic pattern "can slip beyond the confines of serious-minded biological purpose, and this very liberation is a spontaneous, self-justifying joy."[27] We are not only given the joy of conscious living but also the joy of free intellectual creation. This shift provides the artist with the freedom for new ways to express both the contents and acts of aesthetic experience. As Lonergan describes, art has a twofold freedom: it not only liberates our experience from biological purposiveness but also moves intelligence away from the tiring boundaries that come

[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 184.

from verification of scientific queries, the methodical process of mathematical proofs and the tediousness of habitual commonsense factualness. Creating ideas to be expressed in artistic insight differs from scientific and mathematical insight in that it does not evolve or grow through proof or verification but by adeptly creating ideas in colours and shapes, in sounds and movements and in the unfolding situations of fiction. Finally, because artistic creation is a *poesis* it ends in concrete expression; the song must be sung, the dance must be danced.

The aesthetic and artistic move comfortably in the realm of the symbolic. Characteristic of free experience and free creation is the fact that they tend to justify themselves by a more remote purpose or significance. Through these ulterior motives, art becomes symbolic. Just as the aesthetic moves us away from the purely biological purposes of everyday living, so too does it reveal itself as:

> an expression of the human subject outside the limits of adequate intellectual formulation or appraisal. It seeks to mean, to convey, to impart something that is to be reached, not through science or philosophy, but through a participation and, in some fashion, a re-enactment of the artist's inspiration and intention.[28]

This creates a clear distinction between the intellectual and biological realm of experience, on the one hand, and the aesthetic, on the other. It is important to recognise that it is the deed – the action that leads to the product of artistic expression – which gives validity to the artistic idea.

Art is also prior to both science and philosophy. Art may strain for truth and value, but it does so without defining them. It is post-biological in that "it may reflect the

psychological depths yet, by that very fact, it will go beyond them."[29]

Art's obscurity is potentially its most generic meaning. Before the 'science' of questioning, where intellectual and systematic formulaic queries develop, there was a more primitive sense of awe and wonder. Just as wonder begins the process of questioning contained within the cognitional structure, so too is it at the root of artistic creation and imagination. Lonergan, at this point, draws a distinction between humans and animals. Man's artistry is a testament to his freedom. The existential does not exist in the purely biological realm of the animal. Humans, however, have the ability to question their very nature and existence and these questions, asked for better or worse, often reveal themselves in the mood, tone or subject of artistic creation.

It seems no mistake that Lonergan nestles the aesthetic between the biological and the intellectual. The aesthetic is a liberation from both the biological and intellectual. It is art's very obscurity that offers a bridge between the purposiveness of the biological realm and the demands of the intellectual realm. The liberation that the aesthetic provides does not merely push us beyond a simply biological apprehension of existence, it also creates a certain flexibility within the realm of experience that is conducive to the spirit of inquiry. Both the intellectual and the aesthetic pull the subject away from the practical exigencies of everyday life, but the aesthetic realm is not concerned with exact formulations and precise equations. Obscurity in the intellectual realm is frustrating, whereas, obscurity in the aesthetic realm is not only accepted, but also desired.

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[28] Ibid., 185.

In *Insight,* Lonergan does not integrate religious experience into his discussion of the patterns of experience. He only begins to discuss the topic at any length much later in the book. Lonergan's analysis of the unknown in chapter seventeen discusses the importance of mystery, not only in literature and religion but as a component of contemporary metaphysics. It is in this context that we can connect religious experience, shrouded in all its mystery, with the aesthetic experience's reach for the paradoxical category of the 'known unknown.' No matter what particular pattern we are engaged in, we have as a focus the pure desire to know. However, "our questions outnumber our answers, so that we know of an unknown through our unanswered questions."[30] It is the exuberance within the unknown that both the aesthetic and religious patterns of experience embrace. Both the religious and aesthetic accept their obscurities, but these connections are just a hint towards the discussions to come in the following chapters.

Finally, it is significant to note the importance of the aesthetic in our daily lives. We set out in this chapter to give the context in which *Insight* was written. This allowed us to both set the foundation and understand the framework in which Lonergan identifies the aesthetic pattern of experience. Through understanding and locating where Lonergan first writes of the aesthetic, we are able to set the stage for a more complete understanding of how his theory of art is a carrier of religious meaning and how the aesthetic and religious patterns of experience interrelate and overlap within our day-to-day living.

Cognitional structure provides us with the necessary tools to understand how we

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[29] Ibid.

think. It identifies the need within the attentive subject to ask questions. These questions stem from our pure desire to know. The theoretical dynamics of knowing move the subject toward the practical dynamics of doing and it is in this way that the aesthetic is connected to the cognitional structure. Our knowledge moves us to action and for Lonergan "the validation of the artistic idea is the artistic deed."[31] Art is the illustration of the idea moving from the confines of our mind into action and proved in its clay, canvas, and contours. But the ideas expressed and captured in the art object are beyond the sensory boundaries in which they are contained. The questions they raise move us towards deeper and more significant questions about our existence. Art is a carrier of religious meaning in that its horizons are beyond any definitive answers we might have to the many questions we ask.

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[30] Ibid., 532.
[31] Ibid., 185.

Chapter 2: A Theory of Art Emerges

In this chapter we focus on the significance of art for Lonergan. We begin by contextualising *Topics in Education* and in doing so discover how he came to dedicate an entire chapter to art in a lecture series on education. We follow this section with Lonergan's definition of art, interpreted word for word. It is important for our purposes to begin the process by presenting his view on art. In identifying this we are then able to draw out the religious reach involved in all its aspects and in all its types.

2.1 Contextualising Topics in Education

Topics in Education is based on a compilation of talks Lonergan gave at Xavier University in Cincinnati on education. While teaching in Rome, he formulated the details of the proposal. The subject of the lectures was to be the philosophy of education. Significantly influenced by Susanne Langer, a well-known art theorist, Lonergan dedicates an entire chapter to a discussion on art. However, one feels compelled to ask the question – why is it that Lonergan chooses to address the topic of art in a book compiled from a series of lectures based on education? What is its function? Of what relevance is it to our purposes of finding art as a carrier of religious meaning?

It is clear that the topic of art was to be a significant point within the lecture series.[1] His dedication to the lectures is evident considering the amount of time he spent

[1] In Lonergan's preparative notes for the lecture he writes: "On education course: plan to integrate stuff on existentialists with theory of Art in S.K. Langer (Feeling and Form), follower of Cassirer; eke out with Insight for intellectualist, scientific side; throw in a bit of theol[ogy]" *Topics in Education*, xii-xiii.

preparing for them.[2] What is even more telling of the amount of work that went into the lectures are Lonergan's own lecture notes found after his death.[3] In the lecture series, Lonergan emphasises the importance of art, not only in education but for practical living as well. The outline of the cognitional structure in chapter one provides a framework for understanding how an interpretation of Lonergan's chronological works on art paves the way to understanding how art becomes a carrier of religious meaning and a necessity to our daily living. Lonergan's cognitional theory at its most rudimentary level describes human conscious living as a combination of experience, understanding, judgment and decision. The entirety of human behaviour, which is not simply reflex, can be understood as a result of the combination of experience or lack thereof, of understanding or the absence of understanding, judgment or the inability to judge, planning or the inability to plan, of decision or refusal to decide. The experiential level provides us with empirical data with which we sense, perceive, imagine, feel, speak and move.

It is in *Topics in Education*, rooted in his account of aesthetic experience from *Insight*, that Lonergan develops a theory of art and an attempt to figure out the function of art in order establish its purpose in education.

2.2 Defining Art

Lonergan begins by defining art as "an objectification of a purely experiential

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[2] In *Caring About Meaning, Patterns in the Life of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Pierrot Lambert, Charlotte Tansey, and Cathleen Going (Montreal: Thomas Moore Institute Papers, 1982), an edited transcript of conversations with Lonergan, he reveals that he "spent a lot of time preparing [the lectures]" (18).

[3] *Topics in Education*, xiii.

pattern."[4] He credits the definition to Susanne Langer even though these precise words do not occur in her work. What he has actually done is reworked into his own words what he learned from reading Langer's *Feeling and Form*. Lonergan organises several sections of his lecture by explicating each word in the definition.

In his exposition he builds up the definition by examining the meaning of each term, indicating how it contributes to the whole definition. His approach here is a quite deliberate working backwards through the terms. He starts with the word *pattern*: art is an objectification of a purely experiential *pattern*. Lonergan uses the example of a musical score. A musical score is an abstract pattern. We can see that the notes on the staff have been consciously thought out and planned. It is only when the music is actually played that the pattern is concretely being realised. This is a fine example of how the artistic idea expressed in the score differs from the artistic deed (the music actually being played). It is by playing, or rather the deed, that the validation of its artistic merit is discovered. Music, as Lonergan describes, is not a single note by itself. The single note is followed by other notes that relate through its internal relations and unite to form a work of art. Although the work may have an external relation as well (it may be representative) the point we must attend to is that of its internal relations. What we must understand is the pattern within these internal relations is there whether or not the art is representative. It is on this foundation that we, like Lonergan, build on our understanding of what art is and how it can actuate into and form concrete potentiality.

Lonergan next turns to the word *experiential*: art is an objectification of an

[4] Ibid., 211.

experiential pattern. As we have seen, art is a concrete pattern of internal relations. Our experiences are patterned because being conscious of something involves, as Lonergan puts it, "a patterning of what is perceived and a pattern of the feelings that flow out of and are connected with the perceiving. The perceiving is not by itself, not without a pattern."[5] We pattern our experiences so that we are able to understand, organise and remember. We can now see how patterns – both organic and otherwise – are basic to art. Once our consciousness recognises what is happening or what is meant to be grasped, through one or a combination of the senses we begin to understand, or at the very least organise ourselves, in a way that helps to remember or recognise the pattern exists. Patterns are mediated by our sensory experiences. They are what help us to organise data with an aim at understanding or at least wondering and questioning what is currently heard, felt, seen and so on. We instinctively attempt to order our environments. The order that we create, however, is constantly changing. With each and every new experience our perspective shifts. Our ideas about the world around us are validated, challenged, or deconstructed by new people, places, and patterns that we discover.

But how does this pattern change when we think of art as an *experiential* pattern? To begin with, patterning is essential to consciousness. A top-forty song may remain trapped in our minds for weeks. The music stays in our mind because it has a melody – a discernible pattern to imitate. Compare the sounds of a melodious tune to the sounds of street noises – you may hear the latter, but without those distinct patterns you cannot reproduce them with any ease. The pattern of a tune or melody makes it more

[5] Ibid., 212.

perceptible. Our consciousness purposefully chooses a pattern to be conscious of. Like sound patterns, verse also makes words memorable. Lonergan uses the example: 'Thirty days has September, April, June, and November,' to show that patterns enable us to remember ideas, sing melodies and even make surfaces more visible. With respect to surface, we can see curtains more readily than a wall if the curtains are patterned. Even nature's spontaneity – roots, trunks, branches, leaves, flowers – has a pattern.

What does he mean by *pure* pattern? Art is an objectification of a *purely* experiential pattern. Lonergan explores the term from two angles – first, insofar as it modifies the term 'pattern' and likewise as it modifies the term 'experiential.' By *pure*, Lonergan means the exclusion of alien patterns that instrumentalise experience. There are four ways in which art is instrumentalised.

Firstly, the senses can be used as a device to give and receive information. When we come to a red light we stop the car and when it turns green we let our foot off the brake and proceed to drive again. As a result, our senses become compartmentalised as a way of connecting the colours we see with the movement of the cars on the road. The result is that our sensitive living becomes a sensory apparatus in a mechanical process. As Lonergan states: "It is not the subject coming to life in his dream and in his awakening. It is not the sort of pattern that arises out of the subject. It is rather an instrumentalization of man's sensory power."[6] We can contrast the instrumentalization of our senses with an artistic sense-ability by identifying how the senses operate depending on the situation. For example, colour is relevant to both practical and artistic

[6] Ibid., 213.

purposes. Titian would paint his canvas a deep crimson before he would even begin working on the actual painting – its intent was to produce a darker gestalt to the overall painting and as a result a different, and perhaps more sombre tone and mood. The intent was to create a certain emotive theme throughout his work. A traffic light, however, is purely utilitarian. Its use is to indicate whether we stop or go and has no inherently purposeful or intentional emotive tones.

Besides the practical, our senses can also be at the service of scientific intelligence. An artist and a scientist see a flower differently. A botanist might see a flower in an entirely different way than someone who knows nothing about flowers. An entomologist grasps more by looking at a bug than someone who has no expertise in the field. They do not only grasp more, but they grasp differently. The scientist's apprehension of the flower or the bug is instrumental, meaning that the experience is for the sake of something else, in this case scientific understanding. There is nothing inherently wrong with this: it is required if the scientist is to understand the object of inquiry.

Thirdly, one's sensitive experience can be reshaped by a psychological or epistemological theory. A theorist combines the notion of objectivity with the notion of sense data and can thereby apprehend according to the dictates of a theory. This "can instrumentalize the experiences one would have, eliminate the spontaneous experiences one would have, or reshape them according to the dictates of the theory."[7] If someone believes that impressions are objective and that the patterning of the impressions is

[7] Ibid., 214.

subjective then they are introducing a philosophic motif and devaluing the pattern.

Finally, Lonergan ends this 'definition through exemption' by stating that experience can be patterned by one's motives. If someone always wonders in any given situation what they can get out of it, then they are putting their motives ahead of the artistic intent of the work. Sensitive living is, then, at the disposal of a utilitarian motive.

The artistic pattern excludes all these forms of instrumentalization. Art is the objectification of a *purely* experiential pattern. By pure he means the seen as seen, the felt as felt and so on. It is experience for the sake of experience. The spontaneous and natural associations, affects, emotions, incipient tendencies of our experience are the material of the artist. The work of art that results from an exploration of the possibilities of our concrete experience may provide a lesson in life. However, although the result can be didactic and a lesson can arise out of it, these things must not arise as a result from outside the subject in the manner of didacticism, moralism, or social realism. As Lonergan illustrates, "The Russian art that attempts to inculcate communist doctrine is not purely experiential."[8] Just as at the intellectual level where the operator is wonder (the beginning stage in the pure desire to know), so too on the sensitive level is there a corresponding operator. Feelings associated with this particular operator include awe and fascination that develop an openness to the world where adventure, greatness, goodness and majesty dominate.

Lonergan now turns to the most crucial element. Art is a *release*. When experience is in a purely experiential pattern it allows for a full spectrum of emotion and

[8] Ibid., 214.

feeling. Wordsworth had two different definitions of poetry. One of these definitions was 'emotion recollected in tranquillity,' which as we shall see points to the need for a poet to develop a psychic distance. But it is Wordsworth's second definition that plays a relevant part here. Poetry, as he describes it, is 'a spontaneous overflow of powerful emotion' that conveys the unleashed emotive quality of the purely experiential pattern: it stresses the emotion behind poetry rather than the process of writing a poem itself. It is this 'spontaneous overflow of powerful emotion' that a person has when they are experiencing for experience's sake. Unregulated by the world of science, inquiry, information or theories of what experience should be, it is present as a self-justifying joy. It is unconditionally non-utilitarian. Its patterning has its own proper rhythm, just like breathing. Breathing is a two-fold process: inhaling cannot exist without exhaling. After a long and strenuous a run, a person's breathing pattern consists of deep inhalations followed by deep exhalations. The unity within a symphony however, is also a delicate balance that adds variation and complexity. There follows an *inevitability of form.* Singing one note does not lend any implication as to where the next note should be. However, if several notes follow the note, an *inevitability of form* takes over. The talent behind a brilliant composition is in the ability to balance the *inevitability of form* with fresh musical ideas.

2.3 Elemental Meaning

The purely experiential pattern has an elemental meaning. But what is elemental meaning? Simply stated, it is the initial stage of meaning. Aristotle first formulated the

conviction that knowledge is primarily by identity between the knowing and the known. As Aristotle puts it, sense in act is the sensible in act, and intellect in act is the intelligible in act.[9] However, a full theory of knowledge cannot be formed on that basis alone. Lonergan refers to the initial sensitive stage as the stage of elemental meaning, prior to the distinction between a meaning and a meant. Elemental meaning is a release from and potential transformation of one's everyday world. When we are afforded the luxury or opportunity to experience for experience's sake, we are outside of the confines of everyday living. Experience is for its own sake unhindered by the demands of one's job, one's task or even one's function in society. In the everyday world:

> One's experience is a component in one's apprehension of reality. And this quite different type of experience that corresponds to the release of the purely experiential pattern is a transformation of the world. To put it another way, it is an opening of the horizon.[10]

In discussions on art, some people say that art is an illusion while others believe it exposes a more profound reality. However, the artistic experience itself is never involved in a discussion of the issue. Being of experience for experience's sake, it offers a context in which to express something outside the realm of everyday living. We become transported by the pure aesthetic experience. Whether it is a song, dance or painting, the object or idea experienced moves us outside the world of practical activity. Each of the art forms has their own primary illusion. When we listen to music, for example, we begin to sense time, as Langer describes, as 'virtual.' This 'virtual time' is totally different from the abstract clock time by which we measure our lives. As Langer

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[9] *De anima*, 4, 430a 3.
[10] *Topics in Education*, 216.

suggests, aesthetic quality is a "setting forth of pure quality, or semblance, [it] creates a new dimension, apart from the familiar world. That is its office."[11] All the tensions, rests, movements and resolutions that musicians create allow the listener to enter this virtual world.

Moving into the purely experiential pattern is not only a transformative experience for the object, but also for the subject. On the level of elemental meaning, the subject in act is the object in act. "The subject is liberated from being a replaceable part adjusted to and integrated in a ready-made world."[12] He is no longer a cog in the wheel. His ideas into and experience of the subject are liberation and in his own way he is his own originating freedom. He no longer has to concern himself with the ready-made world, its demands or its exactitudes. As a result, he is liberated by the purely experiential pattern in which he is engaged.

There is a cognitive component to art. Its exploration of concrete living involves thought, judgment and deliberation. However, while art "can be described and explained ... words and thoughts will not reproduce it, just as thermodynamic equations do not make us feel warmer or cooler. Art is another case of a withdrawal for return."[13] The mathematician delves into the realm of speculation and so too does the artist withdraw from the ready-made world. The artist explores the potential and possibilities of fuller living in a richer world. The difference between the mathematician and the artist lies in the fact that the mathematician explores what possibilities exists within physics, whereas

[11] Langer, *Feeling and Form*, 50.
[12] *Topics in Education*, 217.
[13] Ibid.

the artist explores what transformative possibilities exist in life and ordinary living and how to move beyond them. It is important to recall that the dramatic pattern of experience reminds us of the artistic element in all conscious living. "All living involves artistry, is dramatic, but art focuses in its objectification of purely experiential patterns a possibility of fuller living, more integral meaning."[14] We will treat the objectification of art in the following section.

It is at this point in the chapter that Lonergan hints at his belief that art is a carrier of religious meaning. By revealing his view that all conscious living has an artistic element, Lonergan sets the stage to reveal even more about his views on the subject: "But in fact the life that we are living is a product of artistic creation. We ourselves are products of artistic creation in our concrete living, and art is an exploration of potentiality."[15] We are, according to Lonergan, walking, breathing, and living art. Just as the artist builds on his canvas, we create and the creativity within us strives to know more about who or what this creator is. Religion, like art, has a vertical orientation that drives its ideas and questions. Religious experience also has the potential to transform concrete living, through both thought and feeling. "There is an axial demand for liberation not only on the level of mind but on the level, too, of feeling."[16] We will further explore this vertical horizon in chapter four where we begin to discuss religious meaning and experience.

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[14] Philip McShane, *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations: Self-Axis of the Great Ascent* (Hicksville, N.Y.: Exposition Press, 1975), 81.

[15] Ibid., 217.

[16] McShane, *Wealth of Self*, 84.

Finally, art is an *objectification* of a purely experiential pattern. Art, as we have been shown, is the expression of the purely experiential pattern. Artistic experience has a cognitional component, but its meaning is elemental. The task of the artist is to express this elemental meaning in a work of art. This is a process of objectification. Lonergan parallels the process of artistic objectification with the process that moves from the act of understanding to the definition: "The definition is the inner word, an expression, an unfolding of what one has got hold of in the insight. Similarly, the purely experiential pattern becomes objectified, expressed, in a work of art."[17] This objectification requires 'psychic distance.' As Wordsworth wrote, poetry is 'emotion recollected in tranquility.' The psychic distance between the artist and his work enables him to properly express the elemental meaning.

Art is not the intense feeling: it is the intensity of feeling contained but not exhaustively in the aesthetic realm of existence. Art becomes art when the artist harnesses the ability to deliberately express a purely experiential pattern. As Lonergan states: "Art is not simply spontaneous manifestation of feeling."[18] The process of objectification is essential to art in order to mediate and relay the pure experience.

The other important component involved in the process of objectification, aside from psychic distance, is the idealisation of the purely experiential pattern.

> Art is not autobiography; it is not going to confession or telling one's tale to a psychiatrist. It is grasping what is or seems significant, of moment, of concern, of import to man in the experience. In a sense, it is truer than the

[17] *Topics in Education*, 218.
[18] Ibid.

experience, leaner, more effective, more to the point.[19]

Art removes the clutter of daily living. The result is a richer and more unified experience than actual experience itself. As the film director Alfred Hitchcock once put it, "art is life with the dull bits taken out."

Art is the abstraction of a form. The form is what art abstracts and as a result the form becomes idealised by the abstraction. The form is not conceptual. Art then, is "the abstraction of a form, not conceptually, but by doing, *poiêsis*."[20] The form is the pattern of internal relations that relate in the colours, in the tones and in the spaces of art. The work of art is in direct correlation with this idealised pattern of experience. When this idealisation is also related to something else, the art becomes representative. However, the point to be made, or rather the connection to be grasped, is that there is a similarity between the pattern in the work and the pattern of the free experience. The pattern is:

> Intelligibility in a more concrete form than is got hold of on the conceptual level- just as, for example, the intelligibility of the simple harmonic oscillator of the planetary system is an intelligibility of a more concrete type than the intelligibility of a scientific synthesis.[21]

The expression of the artistic meaning is on a more concrete level than the conceptual. The symbolic meaning of the work of art is immediate. It is an invitation to participate and to see it for oneself. The symbolic objectifies, reveals and communicates consciousness. The symbol concerns itself with multiple meanings: its importance in art is evident in art's obscurity. The artist is not concerned with the many different interpretations and meanings that one gives his work. There is no proof in symbol and no

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[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid., 219, n. 23.
[21] Ibid., 219.

definitive answers in art. To expound his point that art has no means of negation and must therefore pile up positives that it then overcomes, Lonergan uses a passage from St. Paul to the Romans to illustrate symbolic communication:

> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.[22]

St. Paul's over-exuberance is evidenced by his repetitious use of negations. This over exuberance is also characteristic of the symbol, and in the symbol the properties of the normal artistry of everyday life come out.

Thus far, we have been dealing with art on an analytical level. This approach has allowed us to connect Lonergan's theory of knowledge with his discussion on art. But the concern for Lonergan clearly remains that of the subject coming to be himself. The focus, then, is a self-appropriated approach to living. We live on an artistic and symbolic level. Therefore, discovering the artistic is ultimately a quest of self-discovery. This therefore points to the importance Lonergan places on artistic interiority. Art, whether through illusion or fiction, presents us with more than just beauty; it draws attention to a divine presence unseen but present: not only in art, but in our daily lives. Art does more than simply view this world. It challenges us to think about the something more that the world can reveal. As Lonergan states:

> In other words, there is to art, an interpretative significance as a possibility. Not all art has it, but when art is without this ulterior significance, which is not formulated, but lived, it becomes play, it is separating objects from the ready-made world by way of exuberance, like the exuberance of a child, or by way of distraction. Or it becomes

[22] Rom. 8.38-39

aestheticism, just the enjoyment of the pattern.[23]

Art hones our skills of appreciation. It exercises our ability to appreciate, and without this appreciation, art simply becomes technique. And, while this technique may draw an audience in, it is still missing a vital component, the sense of an ulterior *presence*.[24] What we need to extract from all of this, and to "make what we have said a little more concrete, and also tie in with the basic point... namely, art is an exploration of potentialities for human living."[25] That potentiality is explored differently depending on the art form. We now turn to a consideration of this.

2.4 Forms of Art

Each art has its own way of expressing elemental meaning. Lonergan explores this relying primarily on Susanne Langer's theory of art types. It is in this account that Lonergan's debt to Langer is most obvious.

Lonergan begins his analysis of the various art forms by describing the picture. It is a form that removes the need to concern oneself with kinaesthetic elements. The knowledge of space can no longer be revealed by sounds receding and approaching. Our knowledge of space is limited, but the picture compensates for these omissions. The picture reveals ideas and images to us, in a way, that despite the absence of kinaesthetic and auditory tells, space actually becomes visible.

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[23] *Topics in Education*, 222.

[24] In the editors' notes for *Topics in Education*, it is observed that the word 'presence' is underlined in the lecture notes (222, nn. 29, 30). This is a significant point to address. Lonergan has already pointed to the religious component in art and seems to be emphasizing this point yet again in his lecture notes. Also, considering the mainly religious audience, it would stand to reason that this would be a significant point to not only address but highlight during the lecture.

[25] *Topics in Education*, 222.

The space of the picture is not the space we are used to in our daily living. We use all the senses to understand the world around us and discover that if we do not watch where we are going we can easily bump into the things we should avoid. If we think inside this realm of ordinary living, the picture is simply a two-dimensional flat canvas. However, it is the virtual space of the canvas that is significant here. When one enters this virtual space, one steps outside the boundaries of everyday living. The flat canvas becomes a world of illusion in which the willing participant (the viewer/ subject) recognises the virtual space that emerges for sight. The picture is irrelevant to practical or theoretical instrumentalisation. As a result, it imposes a purely experiential pattern of experience in its purely visual frame. By stepping outside the regular confines of ordinary living one is experiencing a withdrawal from the practical world. This interruption or pause opens up for us a new way to appreciate ourselves and the world around us. As Lonergan writes: "That interruption, the pulling out from the ready-made world, is a release of potentiality."[26] It gives us a hint, but never an answer, as to the potential each of us possess to live a fuller and richer life. Thus, the virtual space that the picture puts us in is a space to be seen, different from that of the ready-made world. Langer suggests the idea of thinking of this virtual space as a pool of water in which various objects are sunk at varying distances in order to establish depth and make the space visible. The many forms vary in proportion based on the laws of perspective in which the proportion varies to yield perspective and reveal space. The balancing of these proportions and their placement on the canvas creates the pattern of the piece. There is

[26] Ibid., 224.

therefore a unity within the composition as the contrasts and balances and tensions and resolutions reveal themselves in the intentional patterning of the work. Its 'logic' is found within the pattern of experience where the pattern is seeing.

There is an event that occurs in the subject that allows us to perceive life with a picture. Indeed, the work is no more alive than a rock or a battery but the perception we have allows us to feel a life, vital within an artist's work. The work 'comes to life' through the person perceiving, but most astonishingly the perceiver himself comes to life through the perception of the work of art. It is here that Lonergan explicitly draws connections between artistic creation and religious meaning:

> But the fundamental meaning important to us in art is that, just as the pure desire to know heads on to the beatific vision, so too the break from the ready-made world heads on to God. Man is nature's priest, and nature is God's silent communing with man. The artistic moment simply breaks away from ordinary living and is, as it were, an opening, a moment of new potentiality.[27]

This stated connection is crucial to the argument of my thesis. It is here that Lonergan reveals his thoughts on art as a carrier of religious meaning. When we break from the confines of ordinary daily living we are given a glimpse into the divine. Because this activity occurs within us, we are also given a clue to not only the divine presence that exists within the world, but also the divine presence that resides in each of us. Both art and religion work on a vertical axis of meaning in that their goals are focused towards what we might call a transcendent 'x' factor. As art's obscurity is its most generic meaning, so too does religious meaning develop through an acceptance and an appreciation of the unknown. Through art, this unknown, if only for a very brief glimmer

of time, is given a means of expression and can be felt[28] by the attentive and willing subject.

We now turn to what Lonergan has to say about the statue. In this section, Lonergan refers to Merleau-Ponty as an important source for the meaning of the statue. Merleau-Ponty emphasises that we are spatial creatures. If you question what your body is, you will soon deduce that it is not only a piece of space, but a piece of space that *feels*. Our bodies then, are 'feelers' in the active sense. The statue is a representation of this feeling space. When we think of ourselves as objects, we can consider ourselves organisms that are meant to see and feel. The statue makes the subject visible. The statue, then, becomes a mirror for us to reflect on our own religious and artful presence. The statue occupying space needs a place. The placing of the statue is integral to its form – placing a massive statue in a small room is as incongruous as placing a small statue in a huge room. Some statues need an entire open forum in which to be seen. The result is our presence, viewing the interpretation of presence.

We understand space not in terms of what is simply there, but what is there in relation to us. The idea of understanding the world around us through our own experiences is crucial. It has and will continue to surface repeatedly throughout this thesis. This self-appropriation (as seen in the cognitional structure) is the central axis upon which the thesis lies. By recognising ourselves as living art we can also see how we, along with other artistic forms, are carriers of religious meaning.

Architecture is "objectified space." It is an expression of the center of one's

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[27] Ibid., 224-25.

world. As Dorothy puts it in *The Wizard of Oz*: "there's no place like home." Lonergan puts it this way: "Home is the first objective orientation in space about which all other objects are organised."[29] Architecture is not only functional. Besides the intimacy of home there is the public special organisation such as public squares, government buildings, places and work and so forth. The architectural orientation need not be a fixed place. It could be anything from an army campsite to the physical organisation of life on a ship. Architecture is also relevant to the religious orientation. There are churches, mosques, temples and totems. Architecture has the potential "to place a wall between man and raw nature, a field in which mutual operations and relations intersect, a base from which a people reaches to heaven or is closed in under a sullen dome."[30] Such is one of the intended effects in the design of the cathedral or mosque.

Art concerns itself with not only space, but also time. Music is the image of experienced time. It is not movement on a spatial level but movement within the music itself, from one note to the next. Physically, the higher note creates a more rapid vibration. However, if the notes leading up to a long higher note are shorter, then the higher note becomes a point of rest. We have already discussed music through Langer's vision of 'virtual time' in the previous sections and it is in this that Lonergan gains much of his insight into the musical arts. This illusion of time in music creates a non-spatial shape. This shape corresponds to the way in which feelings multiply and change. The

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[28] Refer to note 24 above on ulterior presence.
[29] *Topics in Education*, 226.
[30] Ibid., 227.

feelings stirred by musical time and movement correspond to the life of feeling of the subject – an objectification in which the subject is able to see how to live.

It seems peculiar that Lonergan has no discussion of dance in his presentation. Why then is there no discussion? It seems that it is merely an oversight during the lecture. His notes indicate that he had intended to speak on the topic: "Dance: art of stone age … war dance, rain dance, harvest dance/ swirling dervish, holy rollers (big appeal to Xtian Ojibways)."[31] Perhaps Lonergan had in mind here something along the lines of Langer's observation that dance reached "the zenith of its development in the primitive stage of a culture when other arts are just dawning on its ethnic horizon."[32] For this reason there may be special significance in the massive developments in dance arts that has occurred in the last 100 years. Is the emergence of new dance forms in the 20th century an intimation of a new stage in human development first apprehended elementally in the meaning of the dance?

Poetry is an important section within Lonergan's discussion of forms of art. We will be dealing with poetry even more extensively in chapter four. Words are powerful tools for conveying emotion and expressing ideas. We can describe the same situation two different ways and have two very different emotive results. Words not only have their proper meaning but also resonate in our consciousness. The retinue of associations they have may be visual, auditory, vocal, kinaesthetic, and so on. The significance that words hold for each of us not only pertains to the moulding of our consciousness but to the entire process of our education. Scientific words, for example, simply have meaning:

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[31] Ibid., 228, n. 52.

they have no resonance. As products of the intellectual pattern of experience they are detached. Their concern lies not in their relations to us, but in the relations of things to one another. However, poetry is concerned with more than just meaning. It too, like the other forms of art we have discussed, introduces us to the world of human potentiality. It reveals the many dimensions of experience as experienced by the subject. We need only to think of one of William Wordsworth's poems to become entirely enraptured by the dimensions of experience within a poetic work. In "Lines Written in Early Spring," these dimensions are illustrated:

> I heard a thousand blended notes,
> While in a grove I sate reclined,
> In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
> Bring sad thoughts to the mind.
>
> To her fair works did Nature link
> The human soul that through me ran;
> And much it grieved my heart to think
> What man has made of man
>
> Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
> The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
> And 'tis my faith that every flower
> Enjoys the air it breathes.
>
> The birds around me hopped and played,
> Their thoughts I cannot measure: –
> But the least motion which they made,
> It seemed a thrill of pleasure.
>
> The budding twigs spread out their fan,
> To catch the breezy air;
> And I must think, do all I can,
> That there was pleasure there.
> If this belief from heaven be sent,
> If such be nature's holy plan, Have I not reason to lament

[32] Langer, *Feeling and Form*, ix.

What man has made of man?[33]

Poetry can and does "exhibit the concrete manner in which men apprehend their history, their destiny, and the meaning of their lives."[34]

The narrative tells a story and possesses a common vehicle of meaning that resides in common language, values and ways of doing and understanding things. Traditional history informs, explains, delights and instructs through the medium of narrative and story. It is simultaneously factual, explanatory, aesthetic, pedagogical and moral. A tradition is needed in order for people to be able to work and live together. That tradition is above all the possibility and the vehicle of meaning. The language of these traditions is not a scientific language. It is a set of meanings that brings to life the potentialities of the individual. Popular tradition, whether it be in the form of poetry, fiction, or history, is essential to human living. It becomes an aesthetic apprehension of a group's origin. The origin or story of a people becomes operative whenever the group debates, judges, decides or acts. In essence, this art is the history of ourselves and our potential is pushed with each story we tell, each poem we write, each day we live.

The common historical consciousness is not the same as scientific history. The goal of scientific history is not to please or to uplift. As a product of the intellectual pattern of experience science uses history as mere material. However, "traditional, popular history, that common fund of ways of thinking and judging is alive. It makes the group the group that it is."[35] Even though the memory of a group may be the product of

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[33] *English Romantic Writers*, ed. David Perkins, 2nd ed. (Orlando: Harcourt Brace, 1995), 289.
[34] *Topics in Education*, 229.
[35] Ibid., 231.

non-scientific apprehension through the arts, scientific history cannot correct its mythical and artistic bends. Scientific history cannot fulfil the function of the history of tradition "for it is not an existential."[36] However, to treat the traditional memory as fact is to likewise misunderstand its meaning. It is the recognition of the artistic drive within a group that thrives through time to teach of the expansion of our world through the expansion of our minds.

Drama is the virtual image of destiny. The drama proceeds through the decisions that characters make and the situations that arise from these interdependent choices. Destiny is the linking of these successive situations. So too is there something in the succession of human choices that is outside the range of human choice. As Lonergan states: "That logic between the situations is one way of conceiving destiny, one way of conceiving the manner in which God moves man's will even though man's will is free. This is expressed in the drama."[37] Through the drama, we are concretely apprehending our freedom, our capacity to decide and the limitations on that freedom.

The lyric is to the drama as the statue is to architecture. The lyric is the expression of the subject "just as the statue is the visual expression of the space that actively feels, the space that is my body."[38] So too, then, is the drama the expression of destiny in the group as architecture is the home of the people and the expression of their living.

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[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid., 232.
[38] Ibid.

2.5 Art and Education

We have set out in this chapter to further understand how it is that Lonergan considers art a carrier of religious meaning. But prior to this we must first reflect on why his largest published work on art is in a series of lectures on education. Cognitionally, art is relevant to learning in that it builds imagination, but it is also relevant to concrete living as it is an exploration of the potentialities of concrete living. Lonergan considers the exploration of art of utmost importance:

> In our age, when philosophers for at least two centuries, through doctrines on politics, economics, education, and through ever further doctrines, have been trying to remake man, and have done not a little to make human life unlivable. The great task that is demanded if we are to make it livable again is the re-creation of the liberty of the subject, the recognition of the freedom of consciousness.[39]

The liberty of the subject is gained through an exploration of art. Art is a fundamental element in the freedom of consciousness itself.

In *Insight* Lonergan wrote of the aesthetic pattern as the liberation of experience from "the confines of serious-minded biological purpose."[40] However, he learned much more from Langer about the concrete details of this process of liberation, as it occurs in the various art forms. But liberation for what? In "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J." (1970), Lonergan spoke of the liberation of the ordinary person's ordinary experience into the known unknown, the realm of mystery:

> There's imagination as art, which is the subject, doing – in a global fashion – what the philosopher and the religious person and so on do in a more special fashion. It's moving into the known unknown in a very concrete, felt, way.[41]

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[39] Ibid.
[40] *Insight*, 184.
[41] "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J.," *A Second Collection*, 209-230, at 223-224.

Art as addressed in *Topics of Education* reveals, rather explicitly, Lonergan's view of art as carrier of religious meaning. He describes the necessity of art not only in building imagination in our minds but also in building, on a very conscious level, our awareness of our boundless potentiality.

Chapter 3: Towards Religious Meaning

3.1 Contextualizing Method in Theology

In this chapter, we turn our attention to Lonergan's theory of human meaning as it is treated in *Method in Theology*. The work appeared thirteen years after the lectures published in *Topics in Education* and incorporated material from that lecture, adapted to meet the demands of a different context. As with his previous presentations on this topic, Lonergan's thought in art is located as part of a related discussion, in this case human meaning. The integral connection between religion and aesthetic meaning is, again, not treated directly. Yet, as the frontispiece of this thesis clearly shows, Lonergan was explicit about the merging of aesthetic and religious meaning. However, this integrality might not be in plain sight. It bubbles out, sometimes in the most unlikely places. For instance, in an essay on economics written in 1942, Lonergan makes allusion to Tennyson's poem about the religious intimations of a little flower:

> Flower in crannied wall
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand
> Little flower- but if I could understand
> What you are, root and all, all in all,
> I should know what man and god is.[1]

The presentation of artistic and religious meaning in *Insight* is muted due to the apologetic nature of the work, a fact acknowledged by Lonergan himself in the epilogue

[1] Bernard Lonergan, *For a New Political Economy*, ed. Philip J. McShane, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 21 (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1998), 31.

of *Insight.*[2] Consequently, as we showed in chapter one, Lonergan does not start with his full integral religious perspective. There is a developing viewpoint that starts with the exigencies of the pure desire and slowly builds towards the full reach of human reason towards the divine. Similarly, Lonergan takes into account the bodily nature of human existence recognizing that "man's sensitivity needs symbols that unlock its transforming dynamism and bring it into harmony with the vast but impalpable pressures of the pure desire, of hope, of self-sacrificing love."[3] In *Topics in Education* Lonergan is speaking to Catholic educators, and so, while he still holds back on the full theological reach of his viewpoint, he can speak more comfortably about the religious destiny of the aesthetic reach: "Man is nature's priest, and nature is God's silent communing with man. The artistic moment simply breaks away from ordinary living and is, as it were, and opening, a moment of new potentiality."[4] In the final pages of those lectures Lonergan returns to the meaning of drama as exhibiting destiny, connecting this with the drama of Christ's death and resurrection. He writes: "It is this Christian hope that is the supreme force in history."[5]

Still, in keeping with the procedure of the previous two chapters in dealing with the material of *Method in Theology,* we will continue with his advances in meaning but hold back on the religious perspective until we enlarge the context in chapter four. In this chapter we enlarge the context in two stages. First we connect Lonergan's secular view of art with the context of his integral description of human meaning, which Lonergan

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[2] *Insight*, 732.
[3] Ibid., 223
[4] *Topics in Education*, 224-25.
[5] Ibid., 257.

takes up in chapter three of *Method in Theology*. Then, we focus on the significance of his discovery of functional specialization. Functional specialization is significant not only for understanding religion and art, but also for the clues it offers for how to restore an integral aesthetic in human living. This latter point picks up on a theme left dangling in *Topics in Education,* where Lonergan describes the disastrous secular efforts "in recent centuries to remake man"[6] and the cultural "slum"[7] that has resulted. In this context, functional specialization is a method that restores hope that, in a later stage of meaning, human beings can be comfortable with Lonergan's claim that "human life is basically artistic, creative."[8] In this chapter, however, we are still holding off from the full view.

In the first section of this thesis chapter, dealing with meaning, we will not include the section in chapter three of *Method in Theology* on stages of meaning. Its discussion belongs in a context that can establish the larger claim regarding the integrality of art and religion. We will deal with this topic in the fourth chapter of this thesis. At that time, we will talk about the stages of meaning within *Insight*'s context: the longer cycle of decline and the problem of breaking forward from it. The solution to that problem, identified by Lonergan as an unknown cosmopolis, will be identified more specifically in light of his later works, and this will ground the crowning claim of the thesis. We turn now to the discussion of meaning in chapter three of *Method in Theology*.

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[6] Ibid., 253.

[7] Ibid. These are topics that are returned to in the final pages of chapter three of *Method in Theology*, 99-101.

[8] *Topics in Education*, 235.

3.2 Meaning

A distinction that will be relevant in my following chapter, but not made up-front by Lonergan in his chapter on meaning, is the distinction between linguistic and non-linguistic meaning. It is self-evidently relevant to a full historical consideration of human religiosity: think of primitive cave paintings, which did not depend explicitly on the emergence of language. There is also the meaning of the primitive magic circle dancing[9] that visibly marked off zones of sacredness from the everyday: this separation marks the beginning of fragmentation within the second stage of meaning, a key topic of section one in chapter four.

Lonergan's purpose in chapter three of *Method in Theology* is to provide a sketch of the 'meaning of meaning' as background to his presentation of functional specialization. He begins the chapter with a presentation of the types of meaning: intersubjective, artistic, symbolic, linguistic and incarnate. We begin with his account of intersubjectivity meaning and its contrast with linguistic meaning. Then we can more readily discuss his account of art as a potential carrier of both intersubjective and linguistic meaning.

We will begin by focusing on intersubjectivity. It occurs as a spontaneous reaction. Without thinking, we naturally reach out to someone who is falling. Perception, feeling and bodily movement are involved but none of these factors suggest deliberate behavior. We raise our hand to protect ourselves just as we reach out our hand

[9] Mircea Eliade, "Methodological Remarks on the Study of Religious Symbolism," *The History of Religions, Essays in Methodology*, ed. Eliade and Joseph Kitagawa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

to save someone else. This spontaneous mutual aid not only occurs as a reaction, but also functions to communicate feelings: it is intersubjective. With Max Scheler's work as a backdrop, Lonergan distinguishes between community of feeling, fellow-feeling, psychic contagion, and emotional identification.[10] Community feeling is a parallel response by two or more people to the same object. In fellow-feeling, one person responds to an object and the next person responds to the reaction (i.e. the feelings) of the first person. Both community of feeling and fellow-feeling are intentional responses whose objects are known to illicit response and to arouse feeling. Community feeling can be illustrated in the sadness two parents would feel over the death of their child. In contrast, fellow-feeling is the response of a third party to the sorrow the parents feel. In community worship there is community feeling as the worshippers are similarly concerned with God. But fellow-feeling also exists by virtue of the fact that the worshippers can be moved to devotion by the devout attitude of others within the community.

Both fellow-feeling and community of feeling are in contrast with psychic contagion and emotional identification. The latter responses have a vital rather than intentional basis. Have you ever smiled while others were laughing even when you had no idea what was so funny? If you have, you have experienced psychic contagion: it is the sharing of another's emotion without prior information about the object of the emotion. This contagion of emotion is present in various emotional tones and moods and can be deliberately provoked. It is this provoked contagion that can be manipulated by

[10] Manfred Frings, *Max Scheler: A Concise Introduction Into the World of a Great Thinker* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1965), 56-66.

political activists, marketers, the entertainment industry, and by religious and pseudo-religious leaders.

In emotional identification "either personal differentiation is as yet undeveloped or else there is a retreat from personal differentiation to vital unity."[11] This undeveloped differentiation is not only illustrated in the emotional identification of mother and infant but also in the identification of primitive mentality and even in the way a girl plays with her doll; she not only identifies herself as mother but also projects herself into the doll.

In primitive non-linguistic communities very different ways were needed for members to express feeling to one another. Besides the intersubjectivity of action and feeling there are also intersubjective communications of meaning. This idea can be illustrated by something as simple as a smile.

A smile has meaning. It is more than a series of movements involving the lips, facial muscles and eyes. It is not only meaningful but also highly perceptible. The function of a smile goes beyond its physical perceptibility. When we are talking with someone on a crowded and noisy street we are able to differentiate between the meaningless sounds of the street and the sounds the person is communicating to us. We recognize there is meaning in a smile just as we recognize there is meaning in our language.

But we do not learn to smile. Both the act and the meaning of a smile are natural and spontaneous. While we learn the meaning of words, the meaning of a smile is something that each individual learns on their own and this meaning seems to permeate

[11] *Method in Theology*, 58.

each culture without much variation. The meaning of a smile is irreducible: it cannot be explained by causes outside meaning nor can other types of meaning clarify it.

Smiles have a wide variety of different meanings: from love to friendship and from refusal to contempt. This differs from linguistic meaning in that it tends to be univocal. In linguistic meaning there are distinctions between what we feel, what we desire, what we wish and so on. However, a smile's meaning is global: it is the whole expression of what one person means to another: its meaning is factual and not propositional.

The meaning of a smile is intersubjective. It is both a recognition and acknowledgment of a particular situation while also remaining a determinant of the situation. The meaning is not about some object: it reveals or even betrays the subject and this revelation is immediate. It is manifold and complex. The smile illustrates the important point that there exists a special carrier or embodiment of meaning and it is human intersubjectivity.

Nonetheless, in its embodiment in language, meaning finds its greatest liberation. Intersubjective and symbolic meanings, by contrast, seem more restricted by the spontaneities of sensible living and "while the visual and aural arts can develop conventions, still the conventions themselves are limited by the materials in which colors and shapes, solid forms and structures, sounds and movements are embodied."[12]

The emergence of linguistic meaning in human development is most strikingly illustrated by the story of Helen Keller. It was March 5th 1887 that Annie Sullivan came

[12] Ibid., 70.

into seven year-old Helen's life.[13] The story is no doubt familiar to us, and the facts are easy enough to recall. Annie Sullivan's challenge was to bring Helen towards and understanding of language. One of the first gestures Annie made toward this challenge was signing w-a-t-e-r into Helen's hand. It was only five weeks after Annie first signed the word on Helen's hand that it dawned on her what this gesturing was about: she discovered the meaning of words. The actual moment of discovery was a hand-washing and immediately following the discovery Helen quickly discovered another twenty or so words.

It is easy to see through Helen Keller's excitement and interest why ancient civilisations prized names so highly. The prizing of names is the prizing of the human achievement of bringing intentionality into sharp focus. This creates a two-fold need for ordering one's world and orientating oneself within it.

Language emerges within the first stage of meaning. Just as inquiry supposes sensible data and just as insight occurs with respect to some schematic image so inversely do the interior acts of conceiving, judging and deciding demand expression.

The development of proportionate expression is a three-step process. Firstly, there is the discovery of indicative signification. This can be illustrated by someone wanting to grasp a concept but failing: but the failure at least points towards something. If the pointing is understood as pointing then the subject might no longer try to grasp and simply point. The second step is generalisation. Insight is not only based on a schematic

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[13] Philip McShane, *A Brief History of Tongue: From Big Bang to Coloured Wholes* (Halifax, N.S.: Axial Press, 1998), 31.

image. It can use the pattern figured out by reflecting on the image to guide movements of the body, including vocal articulation. The movements may simply be mimesis of another's movements but even this can be employed to signify: then its meaning is the other's movements. Stretching mimesis to analogy, "one repeats the pattern but the movements that embody it are quite different; and as mimesis may be used to signify what is imitated, so analogy may be used to signify its original."[14] Finally, the third step is the development of language. This is built on a foundational community that has common insights into common needs and common tasks and is already in communication through intersubjective, indicative, mimetic and analogical expression. Just as frowns and smiles are understood, so too can this community share common vocal sounds with signification. Words reflect the data of experience, sentences the insight that shapes the experience while the sentences' mood varies depending on the meaning one is expressing.

Those five weeks of Helen's life were a major turning point for her understanding: she had a startling and fundamental experience. This experience gave her insight into the fact that the series of marks that Annie wrote on her hand were a symbol for how we represent water in words: unlocking the mystery behind how language develops. The climb to this dawning realisation – both in Helen's life and our own – involves a stretching of creative imagination. We do not merely learn the names of the things we see or in Helen Keller's case that which we do not see: we attend to and talk about the things that we can name. Language takes the lead in picking out certain aspects

[14] Ibid., 87.

of things that are in front of us, relating ideas that are stressed and the moving and changing that demands attention. There is a particularity to language: different languages adapt and develop in different ways. Even the best translations cannot express the exact meaning of the original text but merely attempt the closest approximation in another tongue.

Language not only moulds the mind of the user – the developing consciousness – but also structures the world around the subject. The tenses of verbs relate the present time of the subject or speaker, spatial adverbs and adjectives relate places to the place of the speaker and moods correspond to the subject's intentions. The symbols in language operate in a similar fashion to the symbols in art. Each represents something that is interpreted by individuals who colour the meaning of the symbol based on their own individual experience.

Various kinds of language have developed. Distinctions arise between ordinary, technical and literary language. Ordinary language uses colloquial words that provide us with a means to operate on a "day-to-day pursuit of the human good."[15] It is a transient form of communication that expresses thoughts and ideas of the moment and for the moment. Its basis is common sense and recognises that any added frills to ordinary speech would be more irritating than useful.

This common sense development of human intelligence gives rise to not only common, but also complementary results. As division of labour developed in human living, specialization of language occurs. This results in the technical language used by

[15] Ibid., 71.

craftsmen, specialists or experts when they speak amongst themselves. This process is carried even further when the shift in language moves from the common sense realm to theory, where inquiry is pursued for its own sake.

Finally, there is literary language. Unlike the transience of ordinary language, literary language is permanent. Ordinary language is elliptical, used as a supplement for the common understanding and feeling of common living. Literary language attempts to make up for the lack of mutual presence. It is important in a literary work that the reader or listener not only understand but feel. Literary language attempts to strike a balance between logic and symbol. "For the expression of feeling is symbolic and, if words owe a debt to logic, symbols follow the laws of image and affect."[16]

We can now turn to a discussion of artistic meaning. The refinement of literary language and other artistic forms of composition include an emotional component. But, unlike the frown or smile whose action expresses the feeling as it is felt intersubjectively, artistic composition recollects emotion in tranquillity. The result is the idealisation of the original experiential pattern – we might never know what Mona Lisa's smile intends, but the artist's keen ability, manifest in talented brushstrokes, keeps us guessing. The artist of words or paint or clay or sound reduces experience to its most refined and emotionally provocative state. It is, in a sense, truer than experience; more effective and lean, the artist is able to dive in and show us the oyster's pearl. The work of art is not merely an expression but an invitation to participate and to see for oneself. Just as "the mathematician withdraws from the sciences that verify to explore possibilities of

[16] Ibid., 73.

organizing data, so the work of art invites one to withdraw from practical living and to explore possibilities of fuller living in a richer world."[17] This invitation is also the artistic component that compliments religious experience. Both the artistic and religious involve a withdrawal from practicality. The invitation to a fuller richer life is a feature of both. The artistic opens up the human sensitivity to the larger possibilities of religious life.

As Lonergan expanded on in *Topics in Education,* there are many distinctions to be made within the artistic realm. The division between linguistic and non-linguistic forms of expression is of tremendous significance. Dancing, painting and sculpting are art forms whose symbols reside in movements, colours and form: language is not a symbol that expresses their meaning. A mime, like Marcel Marceau, perfects the art of meaning without words: the expression of his movements, gestures and facial tensions delivers a clear understanding of what he is intending to express. So too is the case with Calder's artwork. He explored ways to sculpt volume without mass and captured the essence of his subject through a precise economy of line. His work implied motion and delivered a space to his audience with which to explore further expressions of depth and perception. Words are meaningless symbols in Calder's creations. Even a chef's artistic ability to combine the smell and tastes that whet our palettes is divinely expressed with an onomatopoeic 'MMmmm' that words might not as easily identify. Non-linguistic expression is as primitive as it is progressive. Words hold meaning but can prove as limiting as they are limitless. But, as we have stated, it is within literary language that the art of words is expressed. Linguistic meaning in the epic, lyric, drama and even film

[17] Ibid., 64.

exploit the refined elements of words and the deeper meanings that can be created through the work of art as a whole.

Through language or without, artistic meaning is incarnate. It is the meaning of a person, of his way of life, of his words or of his deeds. This meaning can reach out to an individual, to an entire nation or perhaps even social, cultural or religious tradition. But, as meaning can be incarnate so too can it be present in the meaningless.

3.2.1 Functions of Meaning

Lonergan not only identifies kinds of meaning, he differentiates the different functions of meaning. With an account of the functions of meaning we will be able to understand artistic meaning in terms of its function.

A first function of meaning is cognitive. This cognitive ability moves us beyond the world of the child and into the adult world that is mediated by meaning. The infant's world is confined to what is felt, touched, grasped, sucked, seen or heard. It is a world of immediate experience whose natural boundaries make insight, reflection, judgment, deliberation and choice impossible. But, as a grasp and command of language develops, the world expands enormously. Words not only denote what is present but also what is past, present, future or absent. Words are not only expressions of our own experience but can also teach us what we want to learn. It is this larger world, mediated by meaning, that is beyond anyone's immediate experience: it includes the past and anticipates the future. Meaning is not only an act that repeats but goes beyond experiencing. It is understanding and judgment that make a world mediated by meaning a possibility. It is

within this larger world, mediated by meaning, that we live out our adult lives. This is the world we speak of when we refer to the 'real world.' But, because this world is mediated by meaning, and because this meaning can go astray the larger real world is insecure.[18]

A second function of meaning is efficient. When we set out to make something, we must first *intend* to make it. "From the beginning to the end of the process, we are engaged in acts of meaning; and without them the process would not occur or the end be achieved."[19] Their products are likewise meaningful.

Thirdly, meaning is constitutive. Social institutions and human cultures have meanings as intrinsic components just as language is composed of articulate sound and meaning. As Lonergan states: "Religions and art forms, languages and literatures, sciences, philosophies, histories, all are inextricably involved in acts of meaning. What is true of cultural achievements, no less is true of social institutions."[20] Our economic system is a theoretical illustration of an unfixed and mutable entity. It can adapt to change and in the light of a new idea can be reconceived. It can also be subjected to change on a revolutionary level. But all these changes also involve a change in meaning.

A fourth function of meaning is communicative. Human beings are social and their meaning is shared. Common meanings begin in individual minds but the meaning is communicated by gesture, symbol talk, artistic expression and the written word. As a

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[18] An illustration of this can be found within linguistic meaning, discussed in the previous section of this chapter. Linguistic meaning can be true in two ways: true as opposed to mendacious or true as opposed to false. One is grounded in truth as meaning honesty whereas separating truth from fiction grounds the other. In contrast, a smile, since it can be simulated can be true as opposed to mendacious but it cannot be true as opposed to false.

[19] *Method in Theology*, 78.

result, individual meaning becomes common meaning. The common denominator of common meaning is successful and widespread communication. It is not the work of one person or even generations of people. Its range includes the whole of human history.

It is important to recognise that a community is not merely based on the geography of people living within a shared space. It is an achievement of common meaning with varying degrees and kinds of achievement. A common field of experience must be present in order for common meaning to even be a potential.

3.2.2 Realms of Meaning

The various kinds and functions of meaning operate in different realms. These are common sense, theory, interiority and transcendent. Lonergan explains the emergence of different realms as a response to spontaneous exigence in human intentionality: common sense is a product of the demands of practical living; the systematic exigence moves us into the world of theory; the critical exigence moves us into the realm of interiority; and the transcendent exigence moves us into the religious realm. We begin with the differentiation of common sense and theory.

There is a realm of common sense and a realm of theory. Both regard the same real objects. But, the standpoints are so different, that they can only be related by shifting from one standpoint to the other. The common sense realm deals with the relation of things to us. It is the world that we see: friends, acquaintances, fellow citizens and so on. It is not known by scientific query, but rather practical intelligence. Practical intelligence

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[20] Ibid., 78.

allows insights to form gradually, accumulate, qualify and correct each other until we reach the point where we are able to deal with situations effectively. We use everyday language to describe these objects. The words then function by "completing the focusing of our conscious intentionality on the things, of crystallizing our attitudes, expectations, intentions, of guiding all our actions."[21]

We can illustrate the difference between the realms of common sense and theory with an example. The realm of theory emerges out of what Lonergan calls the systematic exigence. In Plato's early dialogues, Socrates asked people he encountered to define various virtues. It soon became evident that everyone knew there was a common meaning for courage or justice, for example, but no one, not even Socrates, was able to say what that common meaning was. The systematic exigence raises questions that common sense cannot answer and demands a context for answers and common sense that can neither supply nor comprehend this context. While common sense relates things to us, theory relates things to each other. It is a generalisation beyond the particularity of daily life. In the example for Plato's dialogue, each person's notion of justice was limited to the everyday use in the in the city or region that they lived. What Socrates aspired to, however, was a definition of justice that would be a generalisation of all its particular day-to-day meanings. To take a contemporary example, in the common sense world we speak of a car speeding up as 'going faster'. In such a manner, Galileo moves beyond describing falling bodies to develop a formula for explaining what we see before us. 'Going faster' becomes 'acceleration' but expressed as d^2s/dt^2. The different forms

[21] Ibid., 82.

of expression signal a different realm of meaning to us. They appear in different social contexts. What we talk about at the university is different than what we talk about at home with our family.

We can recognise the different realms of common sense and realms of theory. We use different language when we speak of each of them and the differences have social implications. As we have said: we might talk about certain subjects in an academic environment that we might not talk about with our families, just as our families may be privy to information of which the academic environment would be unaware.

To meet the systematic exigence fully reinforces the need for the critical exigence. Is common sense merely primitive thought compared to scientific thought with its intelligence and reason? This question, and the subsequent questions in which it gives rise, turns our focus towards our own interiority, subjectivity, operations, structures, norms and potentialities. It seems to resemble theory but is actually a heightening of intentional consciousness: not only are we paying attention to objects but to the subject and his acts. Withdrawal into interiority is not an end in itself. After the withdrawal we return to the world of common sense and theory with the ability to meet the methodical exigence. Self-appropriation illustrates a grasp of the transcendental method that provides us with the tools not only to analyse common sense procedures but also to differentiate the sciences and the construction of their methods.

Finally, there is transcendent exigence: there is an unrestricted demand for intelligibility in human inquiry. In human judgment there is demand for the unconditioned and likewise in human deliberation a condition that criticises every finite

good. So, it is evidenced that to reach peace and joy and even basic fulfilment we must strive to go beyond the realms of common sense, theory, and interiority. And, by doing this we reach into the realm of religion which in the Christian tradition God is known and loved.

Religious experience changes attitudes and harvests a spirit of love, joy, goodness and self-control. But, the experience also has a base of focus in what Lonergan refers to as the "*mysterium fascinans et tremendum*, and the expression of this concern varies greatly as one moves from earlier to later stages of meaning."[22] Lonergan explains that it is through the association of religious experience with its outward occasion that experience is expressed and can then become something both divergent and determinant for human consciousness.

Religious experience and its compact expression reveal areas of commonality between world religions like Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrian Mazdaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism. Lonergan adopts Friedrich Heiler's account of these common features. They are:

1. That there is a transcendent reality
2. The he is immanent inhuman hearts
3. That he is supreme beauty, truth, righteousness, goodness
4. That he is love, mercy, compassion
5. That the way to him is repentance, self-denial, prayer
6. That the way is love of one's neighbour, even of one's enemies
7. That the way is love of God, so that bliss is conceived as knowledge of God, union with him, or dissolution into him

[22] Ibid., 108. *Mysterium fascinans et tremendum* is taken from Rudolf Otto's *Idea of the Holy* (London: Oxford UP, 1923).

These seven commonalities between world religions show that religious experience has a global reach that far extends the confines of culture and the boundaries of bias. In the next section, we will establish the need for this type of integration in theology. By recognising the many divisions within theology and subsequently other areas of reflection, we can establish that the present fragmentation of the disciplines needs an integrated system in which to evolve in a progressive manner.

3.3 Functional Specialization

The first four chapters of *Method in Theology* were meant to establish for the reader the foreground necessary to appreciate Lonergan's account of functional specialization. Functional specialization was Lonergan's crowning achievement and its achievement displaces all his prior work by providing a new and more differentiated context for that work. For example, the discussion of meaning above would itself need to be sublated into the categories of functional specialisation, as Lonergan himself points out in chapter eleven.[23] Functional specialization is Lonergan's solution to a long-standing problem in the history of human inquiry. The problem goes back to Plato's efforts in *The Republic* to effectively implement the 'Idea.'[24] It is the problem of how the activity in the theoretical realm can be effectively marshalled to direct history intelligently. In its modern form, the problem emerges out of the specialised fragmentation of inquiry in all fields of the modern academy. Lonergan developed

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[23] See *Method in Theology*, 267-293, especially 285-288.

[24] This is discussed in Michael Shute, *The Origin's 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).

functional specialization to organise collaboration among specialists in his own field of theology, but the division of labour he proposes is easily adapted to other fields.

As contemporary theology is necessarily specialised, it is important to conceive of it not as a single set of related operations, but as a series of interdependent states. To organise and understand this conception of theology, we can distinguish between field (dividing and subdividing the field of data), subject (classifying the results of investigations), and functional specialization (distinguishing and separating stages of the process from data to results). *Field specialization* is a recognition that the potential to keep *au courant* with the amount of ever increasing information in a particular area is quite overwhelming and for most, impossible. There is a division of labour that exists by dividing and subdividing the field of relevant data. Thus, with reference to philosophical specialization, Lonergan observes: "So scriptural, patristic, medieval, reformation studies become genera to be divided into species and subspecies, to make the specialist one who knows more and more about less and less."[25]

Subject specialization directs its focus on the division of the results of investigations to be communicated. Whereas before, the division was into material parts, now the division is a conceptual classification that distinguishes between the various departments of a faculty and the subjects to be taught in that department. In an academic department, such as religious studies, there are several sub-divisions or areas of specialization that each professor in his respective field of interest might cover. A Faculty of Arts is divided into several departments (religious studies being one of them),

[25] *Method in Theology*, 125.

and those departments, in turn, would be divided into areas of specialization. Biblical Studies is an area of specialization that also includes an array of different and even further specialised areas including ethics, linguistics and archaeology, just to name a few. Finally, *functional specialization* distinguishes and separates sequential stages in the process from data to results.

Lonergan's entry into the problem is from its occurrence in theology and it is best to start there. There is a need for division and that is evident in the divisions that already exist and are recognised. The explanation to follow highlights four key aspects that in turn highlight the need for many existing branches of theology and the reorganisation that this conception creates as a result.

Firstly, the need does not simply stem from an issue of convenience. *Field specialization*, as evidenced in the previous paragraph, is clearly crucial as relevant data are too extensive to be investigated by a single person. The same is true of *subject specialization*. The distinction between these areas and functional specialization is that the distinction lies in specialties and not specialists. Its focus is distinguishing different tasks and preventing them from being confused as opposed to dividing similar tasks amongst various minds.

Secondly, different tasks exist. As soon as theology reaches a certain stage of development, we can recognise an explicit split between two phases and as a result we recognise in each of these phases the four ends that correspond to the four levels of conscious and intentional operations. The existence of these eight ends means that there are eight different tasks and methodological precepts that need to be performed and

distinguished. These distinctions are needed because without them, investigators will not know precisely what it is they are attempting to do, how what they are doing relates to their immediate goal, and how this goal relates to the overall end of the subject of inquiry.

A third point involves the need to reduce one-sided totalitarian ambitions through distinction and division. All eight specialties are important and co-dependant. No one can stand without the other seven. By assuming the specialty in which one studies is *the* area, all of theology suffers as a result. By acknowledging the autonomy of each specialty while at the same time recognising the interdependency of each specialty to all others we can avoid this outcome.

Just as Lonergan relates and connects the elements of any knowing from data to results, the functional specialties are intrinsically related to one another and are successive parts of the same process. Thus Lonergan establishes that specialties are functionally interdependent to keeping the overall unification of the process intact. This provides an approach to study that counter-balances the seemingly endless divisions of field and subject specialization.

There are eight functional specialties in theology: research, interpretation, history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines, systematics and communications. The focus of this thesis is on the first two. *Research* makes available the relevant data. Its correlative zone in cognitional process is the first level of experience. Research can be either general or special. General research is focused more on location, excavation and the mapping of ancient cities; it collects and catalogues manuscripts and will perhaps someday develop

into a complete information-retrieval system. Special research is the type of research that this thesis is exploring. It gathers information in light of a particular question or problem, in this case what Lonergan says about art and religion.

Research is, of course, the precursor to *interpretation*. While research reveals what was written on a particular subject, interpretation intends to understand what the author meant. The correlative zone in cognitional process is the second level of understanding. Interpretation restricts itself to the exegetical task of text interpretation, leaving larger issues of criticism and hermeneutics to the later specialties of dialectic and foundations respectively. The specific aim of this thesis is exegetical in relationship to the data on aesthetic experience, art and religion gathered by special research. The interest is in establishing what Lonergan said (research) and what he meant (interpretation) on the relationship of art and religion. While the thesis is focused on the first two specialties, it would be helpful for the purposes of clarity to indicate the relationship of these two to the remaining specialties.

While interpretation tells what the author meant, the third speciality, *History,* connects the author's writing to the relevant tradition of interpretation and, more generally, with the ongoing development of meaning in the culture. The correlative link to cognitional process is the third level of judgment.

Out of various efforts in the first three specialties arise differences of viewpoint. The task of the fourth specialty, *Dialectic,* is to sort out these differences in an effort to develop an integral viewpoint on the subject.[26] The correlative zone in the cognitional

[26] *Insight*, 564ff.

process is the fourth level, that of deliberation. As such it brings to the forefront a consideration of the values that inform any work. It is here that 'criticism' properly emerges.

The temporal mode of the first four specialties is to the past. Efforts in these specialties aim at collaborating in the recovery of the best account of what has gone forward up until now. In contrast, the final four specialties are orientated to the future. They are concerned with developing present meaning to deal with the "issues of the day." In the first four specialties, the organisation is from experiencing, to understanding, to judging, and to deliberating.

In the forward-looking specialties, the order of presentation is in reverse, beginning with deliberation and ending with experience. The fifth specialty is *Foundations*. Foundations establishes and explores our basic horizons. It asks where we stand in relation to future work. It intends an elaboration and defence of our basic philosophical and existential positions. The correlative zone in cognitive process is deliberation. While dialectic, which is also a specialty of deliberation, established the meaning of past utterances, foundations aims forward in time to establish the horizon within which doctrines or policy about what we are going to do are understood. It is here that the theologian explores the grounds for his or her basic orientation or horizon.

Doctrines, the sixth of the functional specialties expresses both judgments of fact and judgments of value. The correlative zone in cognitional process is judgment. Doctrines are, of course, present within the horizons of foundations, their precise definition comes from dialectic, their clarification and development from history and

their grounds in the interpretation of the data. However, in the sixth specialty of doctrines, the task is to establish what policies will guide future action.

The main concern of *Systematics* is to co-ordinate all appropriate systems to the task of planning future action. The correlative zone in cognitional process is understanding; interpretation similarly is oriented to understanding, but while it is primarily concerned with what was meant, systematics is concerned with the co-ordination of ideas relevant to what we are going to do.

Finally, the eighth functional specialty is *Communications*. The correlative zone in the cognitional process is experience; but, whereas research, which is also experience oriented, was about data assembling, communications is about delivering results. Thus, its main concern is mediating theology with its external relations. External relations are interdisciplinary connections divided into three types: Interdisciplinary connections such as 1) art, language, literature and other religions, 2) the natural and the human sciences, and 3) philosophy and history. Because functional specialization is a development of cognitional process, it is relevant to any field of study. As such, the methodology is relevant to other fields and to issues that involve an interdisciplinary approach, such as we find in the question of this thesis. Thus, while functional specialization was developed by Lonergan to deal with issues in theological method, it is easily adapted to the tasks specific to religious studies, especially in the first two specialties.[27]

So, we note that functional specialization works not only in the area of theology,

[27] On the use of functional specialization in the academic study of religion, see Ian Brodie's thesis: *Bernard Lonergan's method and religious studies: functional specialities and the academic study of religion* (MA thesis., Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2001). See also, Phillip Boo Riley,

but in all areas of reflection. Bruce Anderson explores the methodology of functional specialization in his treatment of legal reasoning.[28] Philip McShane explores how functional specialization would operate in economics, linguistics and aesthetics.[29] But, more vital to the task at hand, functional specialization works not only in the religious, but also the aesthetic realm. Thus Philip McShane in *The Shaping of the Foundations* comments:

> My indication of context will scarcely go beyond noting that the functional specializations outlined by Fr. Lonergan, are not restricted to theology, that 'listening and talking' occur in parallel complexity in the world of music ... where by listening I mean not only the listening of critical debate but aesthetic listening, and by talking I mean not only theoretical talking but the talking of man which is musical composition and performance.[30]

As we shall discuss in the next chapter, functional specialization is a crucial tool in Lonergan's notion of how we create an integral religious aesthetic in the future. Functional specialization exists as a result of Lonergan's recognition for the need of an integrated system of knowledge and information. This methodology moves us beyond the realm of theory and towards a realisation for the potential of a new and vertically oriented horizon. This vertical horizon hints at the spiritual orientation of all existence. It is with this grounding in religious meaning that we turn to chapter four and explore the concept and its connection to aesthetic meaning in further historical detail.

"Religious Studies Methodology: Bernard Lonergan's Contribution," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994) 239-250.

[28] Bruce Anderson, *"Discovery" in Legal Decision- Making* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996), 159-167.

[29] Philip McShane, *Economics for Everyone* (Halifax: Axial Press, 1998) and *A Brief History of Tongue*. See also McShane, *The Shaping of the Foundations: Being at Home in the Transcendental Method* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1976).

[30] Philip McShane, *The Shaping of the Foundations*, 47.

The goal of this chapter was two-fold. We first set out to contextualise Lonergan's theory of meaning with an eye to this theory being given fuller representation through chapter four's discussion of the stages of meaning we purposefully omitted in this chapter. Secondly, we focused our attention on the significance of functional specialization and the importance of this discovery for his view to restore an integral aesthetic. What functional specialization does do is restore hope. It is within this hopeful and optimistic framework that a later stage of meaning can comfortably relate to the idea and the ideals with which Lonergan held: that life was basically artistic, creative and religious. This optimism, as we will soon see in the next chapter, is evident yet evidently difficult to identify without finding out a little more about Lonergan's life and positively strong convictions about the interrelatedness of the religious and the artistic realms.

Chapter 4: Lonergan's Religious Aesthetics

In this final chapter we put the problem of the thesis in as full a context as possible, so our first task is to place the context of Lonergan's biography within the history into which his life merged, a history in which he sought a transformation at a foundational level. And while this biographical information was not the original destination of the thesis, it is without a doubt necessary for truly understanding the connection between art and religion for Lonergan.

This reflection then leads us towards the next broad consideration: both his life and his thinking about life reveal a massive historical gap and problem. This is not only an "existential gap" but also a historical gap, a gap that is associated with his analysis of the second stage of meaning.[1] This was a topic that was left out from the previous chapter but the time has come to face the significance of Lonergan's analysis of stages of meaning in history. This analysis then brings us face to face with Lonergan's foundational position that was expressed in both *Insight* and *Method in Theology*'s presentation of general and special categories and in our explanation of functional specialization. Then, we move into the third section and to a consideration of the existential and historical gaps in our current situation. How can we redeem the realities of aesthetic loneliness when we also face a culture of artistic effeteness? An image of those existential and historical gaps and the gap between the lonely and the effete, to

[1] On "the gap" see the index to *Phenomenology and Logic*, 137-8.

which we return in the discussion of the human good,[2] is evident in the difference between the vibrant openness of a teen rock concert and a stale middle-aged musing at a gallery opening. In the second to last section of this chapter, we raise the even deeper issue of an aesthetic education: an education which would be *de facto* religious – more so in that it is not being explicitly religious. In this section we then return to the final two chapters of *Topics in Education*. In light of the fuller context developed in this chapter we can better recognize Lonergan's efforts there to make concrete proposals concerning the future emergence of a larger living in a richer community in which integral human artistry flourishes. Then, the final section of the chapter gives a summary of the conclusions reached in the thesis.

4.1 Contextualising Lonergan - An Unobjectified Biography

There is a sense in which one must admit, at this stage, that both the direction of treatment and the point of departure of this thesis are quite false. Yet this falseness is justified by a certain falseness in Lonergan's own presentation of himself and of his work. That falseness is most evident in the book *Insight*. In the final two parts – the final chapter and the Epilogue – Lonergan hints at saying something about himself as both religious and aesthetic. He not only writes about human bodies linked together by joy[3] and the physiology of that joy, but about the aesthetic overtones of the community's possession of and possession by the absolutely supernatural.[4] In reality, these were the

[2] On "The Human Good" see chapter two of *Method in Theology*, 27-56
[3] *Insight*, 723.
[4] We return to this in the last section

data of his inquiry from the beginning. But Lonergan chose a pedagogical way in which to assert his view. One might now wonder whether this way is any longer legitimate, especially in light of Lonergan's own suggestions regarding character. Two of the shortest sections in *Method in Theology* discuss this idea: the sixth section of chapter three, on "Incarnate Meaning," and the first section of chapter fourteen, "Meaning and Ontology." Both sections deal with the same topic: the character that is desired and admired in contrast to the one-dimensional people[5] that seem to inhabit our present western world. So, Lonergan writes: "as meaning can be incarnate, so too can be the meaningless, the vacant, the empty, the vapid, the insipid, the dull."[6] This is in contrast to "the character"[7] for whom meaning is an ontological reality, the character that Aristotle thinks of as the core of the *polis*: "Since our purpose is to speak about matters to do with character, we must first inquire of what character is a branch. To speak concisely, then, it would seem to be a branch of nothing else than statecraft."[8] And, even though there is a certain pessimism – perhaps even realism – in Lonergan's thought of our present reality, he does recognize the potential for change and growth.

In reading about Lonergan's life, it is clear that this perspective was native to Lonergan long before his entry into the Jesuits. The story of his early life has been told by two different authors, both Jesuits, and it was clear that there was an early orientation

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[5] Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991).

[6] *Method in Theology*, 73.

[7] Ibid., 356

[8] Jonathan Barnes, *The Complete Works of Aristotle, Magna Moralia*, v. 2 (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1868.

that was both religious and artistic.[9] An early experience he cherished was of hearing his mother play a piano version of Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata[10] in their family home while he stood in the garden. This biographical recollection could have easily been present years later when he wrote of religious maturing as moving to a living in which one is "in a room filled with music."[11] But it is certain that his initiation into the Jesuit life and its annual venture into the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius gave him a solid context of "tasting and seeing that the Lord is sweet." The Exercises were done intensely through an entire month in the novitiate, something repeated at the end of the training. However, there was also an annual eight-day retreat in which the Jesuits, in the words of the poet Hopkins gave "Beauty Beauty Beauty back to God." The result of this training was a cultivated and integral perspective explicitly recognised as character-formation.

Relevant in this is a consideration of not only Lonergan's religiosity but the way that it flowed into his concrete living, something that has not been discussed with any fullness: its discussion suffers from the same complexities as our discussion of his parallel aesthetic development in chapter three. Scholars have written about various influences on Lonergan, but there is no question about the influence of *The Spiritual Exercises*: he read it and meditated on it annually for more than half a century.[12] By going through the text we can track its heroic tone in light of Ignatius' colourful

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[9] Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992). William Mathews' biography of Lonergan is forthcoming from University of Toronto Press.

[10] A version written by the composer Czerny

[11] Ibid., 290.

[12] The text referred to is *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, with a preface by Avery Dulles (New York: Vintage Books, 2000).

conversion,[13] on the centrality of sensibility, on the aesthetics of the images and the imaginings of the details of the life of Christ and on the self-attention involved in discernment. The whole process aims at a central religiosity. Moreover, not only did Lonergan soak himself in this perspective, he also led others in doing the same.[14] Lonergan thoroughly studied the work and as a result left behind many folders of notes on various aspects.[15] Not only did he give retreats, but he sketched a possible article entitled "Grace and the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius" where his goal was to rescue the exercises from voluntarism and conceptualism and a theology that "could not be related intelligibly and organically to ordinary life,"[16] where he emphasised "the reintegration of his or her spontaneous biological and psychic sensibilities."[17] In the folder note in Gordon Rixon's text, Lonergan points to the need of "providing helpful auditory and visual stimulation." Later in life, Lonergan began to both read and admire the work of Harvey Egan, a scholar of the Exercises,[18] which pointed to the fullness and openness of that horizon. Lonergan also drew on the works of William Johnson. "For Lonergan and Johnson, the mystic's withdrawal into apophatic prayer returns to find its authentic expression in the expansive freedom of a kataphatic spirituality."[19] Basically, what is being said is that in the final stage, nothing is rejected: science, music, poetry and

[13] Dulles, xiv-xv.
[14] Gordon Rixon "Bernard Lonergan and Mysticism", *Theological Studies* 62 (2001): 479-497.
[15] Ibid., 484.
[16] Ibid., 485. The underlined words are Lonergan's
[17] Ibid., 486.
[18] Harvey Egan, *The Spiritual Exercises and the Ignatian Mystical Horizon* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976).
[19] Rixon, 492.

the beauty of nature are seen and loved and cherished in God who is their being.[20] This is certainly an integral aesthetic with which Lonergan felt comfortable.

It is within this context that Lonergan lived his reflective life of prayer and self-appropriation and reached for what he called Hopkins' "self-taste." A fully comprehensive and in-depth interpretation of this idea would require a review of his life that would examine the work of his biographers from this fresh perspective: a daunting task. So, keeping in mind the narrowness with which we must approach the topic, all we are able to do here is trace aspects of his work that show the dominant directions of the integral drive of his Jesuit character. This drive is represented in the 1930's by his search for a view and a strategy that related to "restoring all things in Christ."[21] During the late 1930's, during his thesis work, he was engrossed in investigating the power and subtlety of the divine control of everything, the divine voice in all creation and the utter closeness of God.[22] In the early 1940's his attention focused on finality within the context of a theology of marriage: he presented his view of a vertical finality in all things, molecules and buttercups and birds, towards the divine. In Lonergan's view, that finality reached a new subtlety in human intimacy. Throughout the years he still continued to preach and give retreats: all of which pointed towards the orientation of the human subject and to the concrete presence of God. This drew attention to the end theme of the Spiritual Exercises, "The Contemplation for Obtaining Love," which asked that we focus our sensitive attention on the beauty of creation as a presence of God. The essence of his

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[20] William Johnson, *The Mysticism of the Cloud of Unknowing* (New York: Desclee, 1967) 183.

[21] See Bernard Lonergan, "*Pantôn Anakephalaiôsis*" [1932], *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 9.2 (1991): 139-172.

discussions and actions are captured in his brief claim, when lecturing on art, that "man is nature's priest and nature is God's silent communing with man."[23] What led him, in 1949, to begin what we might call the curious "aberration" of *Insight*?

In the mid 1940's Lonergan lectured to what we might consider a secular audience. His approach was informed by a strategy of 'despoiling the Egyptians,' that is, picking a convenient entrance point for making an unwelcome point. Perhaps he thought of his work as a Trojan horse in the secular city? So despite the fact that there is no 'pure' desire to know – human inquiry always has a bodily location – he used *Insight* as a contemporary apologetics[24] to show just how far the idea of a pure desire to know could go. And it went all the way to the affirmation of God. Existentially there was a split, perhaps even a deceit, akin to letting a child win at cards. So, he writes about art, but he does so within the strategy of apologetics.

> What is [man] to be? Why? Art may offer attractive or repellent answers to those questions, but, in its subtler forms, it is content to communicate any of the moods in which such questions arise, to convey any of the tones in which they may be answered or ignored.[25]

He talks of art as being "content" when perhaps it would be more truthful for him to say that he is the one who is strategically content, to communicate a mood. Later in the book, at the beginning of chapter seventeen, he faces the problem of ambiguity when dealing with the mystery that meshes with human sensibility, and writes of

> rites and ceremonies, song and speech. Pragmatically, there results a distinction between the two spheres of variable content: on the one hand

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[22] Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 1 (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2000), 109, 117-18, 145-46.
[23] *Topics in Education*, 225.
[24] *Insight*, 732.
[25] Ibid., 185.

> there is the sphere of reality that is domesticated, familiar, common; on the other hand, there is the sphere of the ulterior unknown, of the unexplored and strange of the undefined surplus of significance and momentousness.[26]

He talks of the two spheres being separated, like weekdays and Sundays, but then he takes note of Wordsworth's words for whom, "the earth and every common sight take on the glory and the freshness of a dream."[27] It is important to note that he writes of a distinction of spheres and not a separation. Does the distinction lead to a separation? This is a problem of the second stage of meaning; distinctions do become separations and fragmentations. There is an intimation of God from theology. That intimation comes in the concluding paragraph of the first section of chapter seventeen, on mystery: "So we are brought to the profound disillusionment of modern man and to the focal point of this horror."[28] It is the disillusionment that is bred of secularism, of a denial of the meaning of the sensible world.

By the time the book *Insight* came out, Lonergan had already returned to the world of clerics, lecturing and speaking in a context that was un-apologetic. So, for instance, he speaks of *Existenz*, not as a narrow existentialist but with Kierkegaard as a Christian,[29] and he draws attention to an aesthetic that is internal to a contemplation that pivots on "proceeding by our imagination until we arrive at the Palestine, the Bethlehem, the Nazareth and the Jerusalem of two thousand years ago."[30] Here he is being faithful to his character, to the view expressed in the frontispiece of this thesis. "What then is

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[26] Ibid., 532.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid., 549.
[29] Bernard Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, trans. and ed. Michael G. Shields, in collaboration with Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 7 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 19.

needed is a qualitative change in me, a shift in the center of my existing from the concern expressed in the *bavardage quotidien* towards the participated yet never in this life completely established eternity that is tasted in aesthetic apprehension."[31] The book he was reviewing when he wrote this happened to be on the problem of Christian philosophy, and Lonergan points in that review to the need for a *nuova scienzia*, an integral perspective on human living. In the next section of this chapter, we turn to the way that the broad crisis of culture also points to that need, and we will see even more clearly in the following sections the way in which Lonergan thematizes that need and the structure that meets it pragmatically.

4.2 Stages of Meaning

The *nuova scienzia* in the book review we mentioned at the end of the previous section was a reference to Vico and his view of shifts of civilisations. But Lonergan's view of shifts in civilisations was much richer than Vico's, and grew in complexity throughout his life. Lonergan's first interest and commitment was evidently in and to the shift in history that is associated with the fullness of time, the Incarnation. Lonergan began to appreciate that the fundamental acceptance of that shift – namely, Faith – was an undifferentiated reality in the human subject at any time in history, but even more so when the consciousness was primitive.[32] So, he emphasised the need to be undemanding in the issues of articulation or doctrine, as in the case of the various African religions

[30] Ibid., 31.
[31] Bernard Lonergan, Review of B. Xiberta. *El Yo de Jesucristo*. *Gregorianum* 36 (1955); 705-706.
[32] *Method in Theology*, 109.

such as Kimbanguinism.[33]

But his early encounter with stages beyond the 'great divide' of BC and AD came from his readings, in the 1930's, of Christopher Dawson and Arnold Toynbee. Later, during his years in Rome (1953-65) he read Eric Voegelin and Karl Jaspers and moved to the wider set of historical categories that appear in the tenth section of chapter of *Method in Theology*. Jaspers' axial period (800 BC-200 BC) did not sit well with either Voegelin or Toynbee[34] and it does not easily mesh with Lonergan's division of stages of meaning. Lonergan's view matured through the 1940's and 1950's and the pessimism of section eight of chapter seven in *Insight* seems to have clearly emerged. Instead of the manifest emergence of the kingdom of Christ that Paul seemed to expect, there was the horror of modern man. Yet Lonergan writes of a cosmopolis that would bring to an end the longer cycle of decline. What he meant by cosmopolis in *Insight* remains an issue for debate, but what we do know is that it clearly included a methodological component. It merged with and included dialectic, and "dialectic stands to generalized method as the differential equation to classical physics."[35] It also included the transforming presence of grace. Lonergan claims that the meshing of dialectic with the other specialties was a further necessary transformation – but we will return to that in the next section.

In writing of the stages of meaning, Lonergan avoided specifying the second stage of meaning. He was content with the idea that there were overlaps of the three stages:

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[33] Bernard Lonergan, "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time," *Third Collection*, 55-73, at 69-70.

[34] Philip McShane, ed., *Searching for Cultural Foundations* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1984), ch. 1.

[35] *Insight*, 244.

"the stages in question are ideal types"[36] but "in the main we have in mind the Western tradition and we distinguish three stages."[37] Looking back to the distinction he made in his treatise on the Trinity, it seemed that the first of his stages coincides with the prior time of humanity, where there is an integral mode of consciousness. From the discussion to follow of that first stage, it seems clear that Lonergan considers a sequence of sub-stages. Although he begins his reflections in this section with early language, he certainly acknowledges all the qualities in the pre-linguistic consciousness that he wrote about at the beginning of the discussion on meaning. In the pre-linguistic community, interpersonal responses and meanings existed, just as they exist in every family with infants, or in instances such as that of Helen Keller. In such pre-linguistic consciousness one must acknowledge an exceptional degree of compactness and it is also this compactness that can prevail beyond the emergence of language. This compactness is important for our reflections on the aesthetic. The field of sensibility for the compact subject is personal, a presence. It is integral to both one's living and one's reflections. Lonergan describes how Homer's heroes make up their minds:

> In Homer, inner mental processes are represented by personified interchanges. Where we would expect an account of the hero's thoughts and feelings, Homer has him converse with a god or goddess, with his horse or a river, or with some part of himself such as his heart or his temper.[38]

This type of conversing is ecstatic and integral in a way that characterises aesthetic experience. Moreover, it carries over its resonance's into the consequent actions and

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[36] *Method in Theology*, 85.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid., 88.

results by colouring the everyday. Equivalent conversation-patterns are found in primitive religious traditions. Lonergan writes: "as Malinowski has insisted ... myth and magic envelop and penetrate the whole fabric of primitive living."[39]

Lonergan devotes a separate section to what he calls "The Greek discovery of Mind" and notes in the following section titled "The Second and Third Stages" that

> the discovery of mind marks the transition from the first stage of meaning to the second. In the first stage the world mediated by meaning is just the world of common sense. In the second stage the world mediated by meaning splits into the realm of common sense and the realm of theory.[40]

The title of this section not only shows the tentative but also the problematic character of his thinking. Does the world of theory emerge securely? By the end of the chapter it is clear that it does not because he then begins to write about an effete culture that covers up a slum.[41] He then returns to the topic of general history, the destruction of man, the slum:[42] common sense is dominated by a contraction of both the aesthetic and the scientific. He gives a clear illustration of this when he talks of a type of physics teaching where there is no entry into the realm of science[43] and in *Method in Theology* he writes of the death of poetry.[44] His discussion ends abruptly with comments on undifferentiated consciousness. But now, the absence of differentiation is not the rich compactness of the primitive but the undifferentiation of modern life in the pragmatic denial of its artistry and its ultimate reach.

The problem is a sophistication of the problem of "the longer cycle of decline" of

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[39] Ibid., 89.
[40] Ibid., 93.
[41] Ibid., 99.
[42] *Topics in Education,* 253.
[43] On the bad teaching of physics see *Topics in Education*, 145.

section 7.8 of *Insight*. At issue is the vulnerability of the discovery of mind. In later sections of *Method in Theology*, Lonergan writes of the ongoing discovery of mind and expresses some optimism about our times. But to share his optimism pivots on a view and an acceptance of his own discovery. When presenting his challenge to both existentialist thinking and to modern logic he regularly refers back to the few great thinkers:

> The problem of philosophy is the problem of a development in the subject, in the student of philosophy, in one's raising himself up from whatever level he may happen to be on to the level of a Plato, then to Aristotle, and an Augustine, and an Aquinas. You have to do an awful lot of stretching to do that.[45]

The stretching requires a consciousness in sync with the riches of the contemporary culture. The problem with the second and third stages of meaning is the same problem of mutual self-mediation that Lonergan acknowledged in *Insight*, chapter seventeen, when he wrote, in section 1.2, of "The Genesis of Adequate Self-Knowledge" where: "Such self-knowledge can be reached only at the summit of a long ascent."[46]

This new long-term optimism can be brought to bear on Lonergan's earlier notion of two types of human subjectivity. Realistically, we can see that the transition between one and the other would be a long ascent, but it includes a descent, what Lonergan calls the longer cycle of decline, characterised by fragmentations that he describes at the end of chapter four of *Method in Theology*. We return to these fragmentations, and the consequent needs, in the next section. What is important to note here is Lonergan's

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[44] *Method in Theology*, 98.
[45] *Phenomenology and Logic*, 137-8.
[46] *Insight*, 535.

position as a character in the contemporary scene of modernity's fragmentations. The core of those fragmentations may be described as a state of truncation. "The neglected subject does not know himself. The truncated subject not only does not himself, but does not know that there is anything there to know."[47]

Lonergan seems to have incarnated a contemporary integral and cultured consciousness. Such integrity of consciousness in its scientific, aesthetic, and religious orientation is a rarity in modern times: it is a reaching of the ideal of harmonious development that Lonergan describes in chapter fifteen of *Insight*. One has to wonder: Is it possible to mediate the emergence of such integral consciousness in modern times? Lonergan's religious orientation, along with the dynamics of his own aesthetic and scientific bent, led him to affirm that possibility. It led him to write the invitation to integrity that is the book *Insight*. But the writing also disguised his own integral achievement behind an over-optimistic pedagogy. In the concluding sections we will attempt to re-locate that integrality in the context of his long-term optimism. In the meantime, we now return to the issue of fragmentation and the pragmatics of change.

4.3 The Pragmatics of Change

Lonergan, in various places in his writing, talks of a present crisis and he sees the solution to this crisis in a return to the subject. While he gives no forecast about the progress towards the solution itself or of the solution, he does seem to think that at times

[47] Bernard Lonergan, "The Subject," *A Second Collection*, 69-86, at 73.

the signs are there in the shift to interiority of these past centuries.[48] Signs involving what seems to be a shift towards the subject in philosophy could be viewed as indicating the emergence of the third stage of meaning. But increasingly, in the decades after Lonergan, it seems that such an emergence is something for a later century. And, in the decade after the publication of *Method in Theology,* Lonergan refined his view of the solution. In *Insight* the drive was towards a general empirical method. This method took as its data the data of consciousness just as positive science took as its data the data of sense.[49] So, the focus was on a reform of philosophy. In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan's focus was on a reform of theology: illustrations of functional specialization were in that area. In the years following its publication, Lonergan conceived of generalized empirical method in a more broad and powerful sense:

> Generalized empirical method operates on a combination of both the data of sense and the data of consciousness: it does not treat of objects without taking into account the corresponding operations of the subject; it does not treat of the subject's operations without taking into account the corresponding objects.[50]

It seems that the new perspective had more to do with a re-orientation of all fields of inquiry as opposed to a reform of philosophy. So, if one was engaged with objects of art, one could not be thus engaged with one's own subjectivity. The artist was to reach for luminosity regarding the artistic deed of creativity or reception. And in the issue of functional specialization there was a similar broadening: as Lonergan noted, from his reading of Wellek and Warren's book, *Theory of Literature*, the same issue, of

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[48] *Method in Theology*, 316.
[49] *Insight*, 73.
[50] Bernard Lonergan, "Religious Knowledge," *A Third Collection*, 129-145, at 141.

fragmentation and of the need for a division of labour, occurred in literature. In his final years he devoted himself to the task of doing dialectics in economics.[51] As a result, Lonergan arrived at a fuller notion regarding the pragmatics of change. The changes, the shift to the third stage of meaning, would not pivot on the reforms of philosophy and theology, but on a double shifting of culture. Various Lonergan scholars have noticed the shift towards functional specialization that contemporary fragmentation demands: Bruce Anderson noted the need in Law, Terrance Quinn in mathematics, and Ian Brodie in Religious Studies.[52]

These needs indicate the possibility of a larger mediation of change than that envisaged in *Insight*, and we discuss the issue further in the next section. But presently, we are interested in the other shift: the turn to subjectivity through the emergence of a richer activity of generalized empirical method in the arts. This topic points to a large work rather than to the conclusion of a thesis, so we place restrictions on the discussion by illustrating a single art form: the field of poetry. Specifically, we refer to two works, which aid in appreciating the curious remoteness of Lonergan in his writings of which we have already treated. We write of curious remoteness, because Lonergan's own final position on Foundations is that foundations are not axioms or precepts but the reality of converted subjects.[53] Despite this conviction, as we saw, Lonergan's means of expression hides the subject that he is: an aesthetically oriented religious person. The two works that stand in contrast to this are Seamus Heaney, *The Redress of Poetry* and

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[51] See McShane's introduction to *For a New Political Economy*, xxiv.

[52] Anderson, *'Discovery' in Legal Decision-Making*; Terrance Quinn, "Reflections on Progress in Mathematics," *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis* 3 (2003) [in press]; Brodie, *Bernard Lonergan's Method and Religious Studies*.

Brendan Kennelly, *Journey Into Joy*.[54] Both these works point to a need for, and an emergence of, a religious aesthetic, which parallels that of Lonergan's. Both authors point to a shift towards the subjectivity of the artist in the artist and both point to a redemptive significance in poetry. Heaney's work reaches through European literature whereas Kennelly restricts himself to the Irish tradition. Heaney looks to, and gives illustrations of, a poetry "haunted by the big questions of poetics."[55] He recalls the view of the South African writer Andre Brinks that repressed societies "typically employ only a portion of the alphabet that is available to them as human beings."[56] He regularly quotes Yeats: "Nature that framed us, Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds";[57] Yeats has clearly received what Hopkins in another context called 'heaven-handling.'[58] Heaney ranges between various languages and poets, and emerges with a single conviction: "We go to poetry, we go to literature in general, to be forward within ourselves."[59]

Kennelly is even more explicit about the journey of poetry. The title of his essay on the writer O'Casey is "Sean O'Casey's Journey into Joy," and he talks of transfiguration. Yeats called it 'tragic joy' and he also called it gaiety: "Gaiety has transfigured all that dread, / All men have aimed at, found and lost, / Blackout: Heaven blazing into the head." Such blazing is the topic right through the book, through various authors of the past hundred years. It has an explicit reach that echoes the verses of

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[53] *Method in Theology*, 267-270.
[54] Seamus Heaney, *The Redress of Poetry* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995); Brendan Kennelly, *Journey into Joy* (New Castle upon Tyne: Bloodaxe, 1994).
[55] Heaney, 5.
[56] Ibid., 28.
[57] Ibid., 29.
[58] Ibid., 148.
[59] Ibid., 159.

Hopkins and the aspirations of a Lonergan of the *Spiritual Exercises*. So, Joseph Plunkett takes a clear religious stand: "I see, his blood upon the rose / And in the stars the glory of his eyes, / His body gleams amid eternal snows, / His tears fall from the skies. / I see his face in every flower, / The thunder and the singing of the birds / Are but his voice – and carven by his power / Rocks are his written words."[60]

Plunkett was no remote mystic, but a revolutionary realist and the strategist behind the 1916 revolution in Ireland after which he was executed. This is the sort of poetry that Lonergan could take a stand on, expressing a perspective towards which he struggled in his living and his thinking. What he wrote in *Insight* and *Method in Theology* was removed from this type self-exposure, but what is clear is a future in which Lonergan's efforts will bear fruit in a fuller context both of poetic practice and of inquiry in poesis.

4.4 Foundations

The expression of Kennelly and Heaney we examined in the previous section brings out the oddity of Lonergan's own expression. In his writings he rarely "took a stand," like Luther who with a conviction, exclaimed, "here I stand." Because of this, it does not seem as though he challenges subjectivity in the reader. At the beginning of his chapter on foundations he talks of subjectivity as foundational, but when he comes to catalogue his foundations it comes to read just like a catalogue, a checklist.[61] Maybe he was being too polite and following a piece of advice that he gives – perhaps cynically –

[60] Kennelly, *Journey Into Joy,* 107.

later: "Doctrines that are embarrassing will not be mentioned in polite company."[62] In his aesthetic living he probably matched the intensity of George Steiner, for whom music "breaks the heart; a Monteverdi lament, the oboes in a Bach cantata, a Chopin Ballade."[63] But in his writing, Lonergan maintained a detachment, which, as we have suggested in the book *Insight*, seems to border on deceit. However, this is not the case if the book is viewed as a pedagogical effort as opposed to a foundational or even doctrinal effort. In fact, much of his life and his writing was in that zone. Most of the volumes of his *Collected Works* were of that type. So, at this point we ask: What might his foundational statement have been, in general and in the particular zone of art? What might he have written had he imitated the style of the poets that Heaney and Kennelly describe? What might he have written if had he met the demands that he makes of future foundational talk when he writes to historians and dialecticians?

> A further objectification of horizon is obtained when each investigator operates on the material by indicating the view that would result by developing what he has regarded as positions and reversing what he regarded as counterpositions.[64]

So, his discomforting doctrine for dialecticians is this: spell out where you stand. He hones in similarly on "the historian's own self-revelation. Now his account is prized because it incarnates so much of the author's humanity, because it offers a first-rate witness on the historian, his milieu, his times."[65] The historian works "all the more competently, the more the historian has been at pains not to conceal his tracks but to lay

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[61] *Method in Theology*, 286-7.
[62] Ibid., 299.
[63] George Steiner, *Errata: An Examined Life* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1997), 79.
[64] *Method in Theology*, 250.
[65] Ibid., 220.

all his cards on the table."[66] In *Insight* deliberately, and in *Method in Theology* consistently, Lonergan, on the matter of his own priestly and religious aesthetics, seems at pains to conceal his tracks, to keep his cards close to his chest. Only through attention to his concrete living can we come to a fuller and richer view of his full rich integral view. It is only then that we really discover Lonergan's full foundational position on art: "Yes, the world is charged with the grandeur of God."

4.5 Character Formation

We turn now to Lonergan's perspective on education, voiced in the last two chapters of *Topics in Education*, in its relation to art and history. This brings us back to the heuristics of character. The problem is expressed in the distinction between the titles of the first and second section of the final chapter of *Method in Theology*. The short discussion of ontology and meaning is followed by an envisioning of the shift to common meaning. Nowhere in *Topics in Education* does Lonergan tackle that problem. However, the need to tackle it is implicit in his emphasis on the importance of art. The answer to the problem, evidently, lies in the emergence of integral characters: those who, in Kennelly's words, make the Journey Into Joy or in Heaney's perspective reach for a redemptive poise through poetry.

It is best to deal with this issue by returning to the basic diagram of the human good, which Lonergan initially developed in his talks on education in 1959, but which was more refined by the time he wrote chapter two of *Method in Theology*.

[66] Ibid., 193.

In his 1959 lectures on education, Lonergan begins by considering the good as not only an object but also as the developing subject. He recognises both the absence and need for the integration of the good within the realm of education while still acknowledging the difficulties of its integration. The good is concrete, but:

> The problem is, of course, to obtain a notion of the good that is sufficiently concrete to be relevant to a discussion of education and its aims, and at the same time sufficiently differentiated so that one will be able to discuss the differences in educational aims at different times, in different cultures, in different societies.[67]

But what is it that is vital to education? Fostering imagination within the individual so that new realms are explored, questions are asked and ideas grow. The imagination allows individuals to explore vital questions that may not have answers: aesthetic appreciation and education fosters this growth. What Lonergan communicated in his talk on art in 1959 was that art is relevant to concrete living, "that is an exploration of the potentialities of concrete living."[68] Lonergan recognises that

> There is an artistic element in all consciousness, in all living. Our settled modes have become humdrum, and we may think of all our life simply in terms of utilitarian categories, but in fact the life we are living is a product of artistic creation. We ourselves are products of artistic creation in our concrete living, and art is an exploration of potentiality.[69]

This diagram (Table 4.1) serves to bring together the searchings of the entire thesis in one place, in one diagram. The issue all along has been what Lonergan thought of the capacity and the need that was the human being. That capacity is seen in its fullest light through attending to Lonergan's reflections on the meaning of "exigence" as the

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[67] *Topics in Education*, 26.
[68] Ibid., 232.
[69] Ibid., 217.

word occurs in existentialist literature.[70] Lonergan makes the word his own in those lectures.[71]

Individual		*Social*	*Ends*
Potentiality	*Actuation*		
capacity, need	operation	cooperation	particular good
plasticity, perfectibility	development, skill	institution, role, task	good of order
liberty	orientation, conversion	personal relations	terminal value

Figure 4.1 The Structure of the Human Good[72]

The problem of cultivating this exigence in people is the problem of breaking with various other institutions, roles and tasks. Hopefully there is the emergence of some foundationally oriented characters, characters fully tuned towards the terminal value that is the supernatural solution to the problem of evil. The new institution of functional specialization is the unidentified cosmopolis of *Insight* located within the zone of grace. The three-fold solution to the general empirical method and functional specialization within the realm of grace – the power of fulfilling the exigence – is to blossom into a concrete philosophy of education that should affect schooling from kindergarten to graduate school. The shift pivots on the emergence of characters that are integral in their living and their teaching, objectifying themselves in the presence of those who seek education. One looks to the emergence of a new community of artists, teachers and

[70] *Phenomenology and Logic*, 242.
[71] See the index of *Phenomenology and Logic* under "exigence"
[72] *Method in Theology*, 48.

philosophers who are as committed and open as the poets Joseph Plunkett and Gerard M. Hopkins.

4.6 Concluding Thesis

The process of writing this thesis was a personal movement towards integral character that gradually revealed the flaws in the approach, flaws that imitate on a small scale the flows of focus that dominate the writing of the book *Insight*. What is Lonergan's view on religions and arts? The normal procedure dictates that the texts be isolated, put in order, discussed creatively and cumulatively, thereby resulting in a reasonable integral view. That view is summarily expressed in the frontispiece of the book, or equivalently in his remark of 1959: "The fundamental meaning important to us in art is that, just as the pure desire to know heads to the beatific vision, so to the break from the ready made world heads on to God."[73] This view fits in with his normative account of the harmonious development of the human subject.[74] But that account is incomplete with regards to implementation: how is this to be achieved, in the differentiation of science, or the differentiation of art or the differentiation of religious consciousness? A narrowness of the focus of both *Insight* and *Method in Theology* was noted, and the solution to that narrowness was detected in Lonergan's own later reachings. His own achievement of personal integration of consciousness remained relatively hidden to the end but his fuller perspective on implementation, both through a new view of generalized empirical method and a new fullness of functional specialization

[73] *Topics in Education*, 224-5.

lifts the possibilities and probabilities of integral characters occurring in all areas. The emergence of pockets of culture have a better chance, in this new context, of blossoming into a continuity of tradition that would be self-luminous in regard to the ultimate significance of art in human life as an intimation of immortality and indeed as an indication of the character of immortality.

[74] See chapter 15 of *Insight*.

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