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On Bernard Lonergan's 'Collection'

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IN July, 1965, PHILIPPINE STUDIES published a special number (Vol. XIII, No. 3) on *Some Aspects of Contemporary Theology* featuring, along with other items, four articles touching on the writings of Father Bernard Lonergan, and an extended note, "Subject and Soul", contributed by Father Lonergan himself. The articles, written by Frederick E. Crowe, Robert L. Richard and James W. Sanders, together with a brief account of Lonergan's life and work reprinted from *Time* magazine, constituted the first introduction to the thought of the Canadian Jesuit theologian to be locally published.¹ At the time we remarked that "it had been originally planned to preface the first two series [of papers: on Karl Rahner and on Lonergan] with an article introducing the two theologians," but that "for several reasons we have had to go to press without" it. Perhaps interested readers may allow us to make up for that lacuna, to some extent, by using this occasion—a review of the new Herder and Herder book, *COLLECTION, PAPERS BY BERNARD LONERGAN* (New York, xxxv-280 pp., \$8.50)—to write a little more fully on the work of which the volume under consideration gives us a valuable

¹ We might note that two student publications, *The Philippine Scholastic* (Berchmans College) and *Studium* (San José Major Seminary) have since 1958 carried not a few studies on Lonergan's thought, and that at least three M. A. (Philosophy) dissertations, still unpublished, all from Berchmans College, have dealt with aspects of what *Time* magazine has called an "authentically towering masterpiece", his *Insight*:

Antonio S. Samson, *The Problem of Objectivity in Bernard Lonergan's 'Insight'*, Cebu City, 1963, v-173 pp.:

Jaime José T. Cruz, *Lonergan's Approach to the Affirmation of God*, Cebu City, 1965, iv-254 pp.;

William M. Abbott, *The Notion of Vertical Finality in Bernard Lonergan's Philosophy*, Quezon City, 1966, vi-156 pp.

The first two of these theses were written under the direction of Fr. José A. Cruz, at present head of the philosophy department of the Ateneo de Manila. While at Berchmans College Fr. Cruz conducted seminars on *Insight* and, along with Fathers Joseph Johnston and Vicente Marasigan, may be said to have given the first impetus to the study of L's philosophical work in this country.

sampling, and on the theologian about whom it has been written that "he may be the most important Christian thinker of the century" (Michael Novak) and that he is "the most challenging and stimulating systematic thinker within the Christian community" (Justus George Lawler).

* * *

In *Collection* Father Frederick E. Crowe, a former student of Lonergan and presently a colleague on the faculty of the theologate of the Jesuit Province of Upper Canada, Regis College (Willowdale, Ontario) has brought together sixteen of the more important papers L (= Lonergan) has written during the years 1943-1965. A glance at the bibliography (99 items are listed) Crowe has assembled for the 1964 Lonergan *Festschrift*, *Spirit as Inquiry* (Chicago, *Continuum*), 544-549, will make obvious that the book under review is far from being anything but (hopefully) the first of a series of collections of L's *Schriften*. "Father Lonergan was himself only a lukewarm supporter of the project [of collecting and republishing his shorter writings], regarding most of these articles as mere sketches preparatory to a more definitive treatment," C (= Crowe) says in his introduction. This lukewarmness is of a piece with what Michael Novak has said were L's own "hopes that his work would not become subject to sloganeering . . . the thing he feared most." However, for the steadily growing number of L's students (L himself, as David Burrell remarks in a note in *Continuum*, "eschews the formation of cliques of disciples"), these papers will be a welcome addition to the small *corpus* of his published work which is generally available. And as for those who have yet to make an extended acquaintance, this new harvest will allow them to read a little more of him, instead of just hearing or reading about him.

Father Crowe, two of whose previous essays: "The Origin and Scope of Bernard Lonergan's '*Insight*'" (*Sciences Ecclesiastiques*, 9/1957, 264-295) and "The Exigent Mind: Bernard Lonergan's Intellectualism" (*Continuum*, 2/1964, 316-333), together constitute the best introduction to L's person and work, puts us once more in his debt with an introduction which will be of real service to anyone seriously interested in making contact with L's thought. David Burrell has remarked that

this prefatory essay "represents by far the most sensitive and accurate introduction to Lonergan, the man and his thought," and several readings have impressed me with how much C has been able to say about his subject in these 35 pages.

C's preface recalls the earlier steps of L's personal intellectual pilgrimage (from Newman to Augustine to Plato; Marechal, Aquinas and Aristotle); it recounts briefly the stages in a work which began with the formative doctoral dissertation on Aquinas' concept of *gratia operans*, a sustained and rewarding effort of "reaching up to the mind of [the] genius" of the great Dominican, an effort continued and in a sense completed in the incredibly thorough and original study of Thomist cognitional theory which were the five *Verbum*-articles published in *Theological Studies* (1946-1949).² In a sense completed, we say, because C remarks of the latter work that it "marked the term of his [L's] dependence on the great medieval theologian," and that the period of development which followed it, and which culminated in *Insight* (1958), should be seen as one of independent affirmation.

Insight was "an essay in aid of a personal appropriation of one's rational self-consciousness"; it situated in bold relief the structure of cognitional activity with its three levels of experience, understanding and reflection, with its two basic questions operating the advance from the level of empirical consciousness to the level of intellectual consciousness, and from the level of empirical and intellectual consciousness to that of rational consciousness, and its basic orientation, the pure, detached, disinterested and unrestricted desire to know. This appropriation of cognitional structure was in turn seen as basis for methodical activity.

The thrust of the more personal work which has been pursued by L after *Insight* has been in the direction of method

² These articles have been reissued in book form in *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, edited by David C. Burrell, C.S.C., of the philosophy department of the University of Notre Dame (Notre Dame University Press, Notre Dame, Indiana). We hope that a review of this work, written by a theological student who spent a year at Oxford University "reading Lonergan", will be published in a forthcoming issue of this quarterly.

(method in general, method in philosophy and the sciences, method in theology), and of the further themes: the meaning that *constitutes* human institutions, the new historical consciousness of man, and the need for a basic development in the control and judgment of meaning.³

Collection is not a Lonergan *summula*; its contents cover a wide range of very diverse themes. The papers it gathers together discuss logic, the ends of marriage, divine operation and secondary causes, the dogma of the Assumption, some issues raised by Henri de Lubac's *Surnaturel*, geometrical possibility, the role of a catholic university, the *via analytica* and *via synthetica* in theology, the isomorphism of Thomistic thought-structures and those of modern empirical scientific method, some aspects of the cognitional theory developed in

³ The mention of these categories which are prominent within L's present concern would perhaps call for some explanation of them, and so these lines from C's *Continuum* article on "The Exigent Mind" may prove helpful:

There is the category of *constitutive* meaning; in the old science of nature and essences, meaning was irrelevant to the constitution of the object, but the human sciences have made us conscious of the constitutive function of meaning: a lawcourt is just noise unless there is meaning in its proceedings, change the meaning of marriage and you change the reality of marriage, a nihilist is one for whom life has lost all meaning, etc. In other words, where the methodical stage ended in a return to the world from interiority, the point of the present stage is the expansion and transformation of that world due to the intervention of human meaning. And, of course, the meaning is not simply linguistic, but may be intersubjective, aesthetic, symbolic; a man may express the whole meaning of his life in a gesture, as Christ did dying on the cross.

Meaning is an extremely important category in Lonergan's new phase, but perhaps more central still and more comprehensive is the category of *historical consciousness*. In contrast to classical consciousness which was characterized by respect for the universal and necessary and unchanging (and hence used a definition of man that applied equally to St. Thomas Aquinas and to a moron), historical consciousness is characterized by attention to the particular and contingent, the changing and developing. The transition is from substance to subject, from man conceived with a remote universality to man conceived as he is, empirically, intelligently, rationally, morally conscious, tossed about in history by influences that bear on one aspect or another of his polymorphic consciousness. ("The Exigent Mind: Bernard Lonergan's Intellectualism," *Spirit as Inquiry, Continuum* 2/1964, 325.)

Insight, the two-fold consciousness and the one person of Christ, religious experience and the unfolding of the human spirit. The first two of the last four essays return to the recurring interest in cognitional theory and cognitional structure; in "Metaphysics as Horizon," written as a review of Emeric Coreth's *Metaphysik*, L compares Kant's critical idealism, Gilson's immediate realism, and Coreth's use of the transcendental method, and "Cognitional Structure" is a synthetic summary of his own account of human knowing, its dynamic structure with its three levels of activity, and what this structure implies. The last two articles take us into the areas of L's present concerns: e.g., the theme of *Existenz*, the temporality and becoming of the human subject, the subject's changing world, the subject's authenticity and his world, and the theme of the world of immediacy, of the world mediated by meaning and the world constituted by meaning, seen in the context of the present moment of the breakdown of classical culture and its standardization of man. So diverse are the themes in the volume that it has been well said that its "point of unity is allowed to stand forth without apology: Lonergan himself."

C in the second half of his introduction indicates the setting of each paper which *Collection* republishes (only "Dimensions of Meaning" makes its first appearance here), and he performs his task with such a familiarity with the content of each essay and its location both within the field of L's work and within the movement of that work's development that it would be presumptuous for any one less acquainted with L's total endeavor to attempt to repeat the process. But let us simply note that a study of *Collection* will profit significantly (especially if the reader is a relative newcomer to L) from a close and faithful reading of C's Baedeker.

* * *

We may be allowed to call attention, more or less briefly, to a few of the book's essays, with the intent of indicating some aspects of L's work and pointing out some problems connected with the study of his writings.

1. "Finality, Love and Marriage" was first published in *Theological Studies* in 1943. It was written at a time when

the discussion on the meaning and ends of marriage aroused by the then-recently published book of H. Doms, *Du sens et de la fin du mariage* was quite lively; a year later the Holy Office stepped in with the 29 March 1944 reply (DS 3838) which in effect put a temporary end to the controversy. For the content (and style) of the paper, and some indication of the breadth of its scope, we may quote L's own foreword in the essay:

The present paper... aims at no more than a brusque occupation of strategic theoretical points on finality, on love, and on marriage. On finality is affirmed, besides the absolute reference of all things to God and the horizontal reference of each thing to its commensurate motives and ends, a vertical dynamism and tendency, an upthrust from lower to higher levels of appetite and process; thus are provided the empty categories of the ultimate solution, since horizontal ends are shown to be more essential and vertical ends more excellent. Next, an account of the nature of love is attempted, and this opens the way for a discussion of the "primary reason and cause of marriage" mentioned in the papal encyclical, *Casti Connubii*. Here the argument draws upon Aristotle's classic on friendship and Aquinas' transposition of Aristotelian analysis, and it endeavors to formulate an ascent of love from the level of two-in-one-flesh to the level of the beatific vision. Finally, there emerges the problem of inserting the vertical tendency of love from sex to divine charity into the horizontal process from fecundity to offspring; and such insertion has to be made on the background of the general field of human process. For it is only in the cosmic breadth of a simultaneous context of nature, history and grace, that appear at once the justice and the assimilative capacity of the, on the whole, traditional view that the most essential end of marriage is the procreation and education of off-spring but its most excellent end lies on the supernatural level of personalist development. (Pp. 17-18.)

C. believes this article is "one of the most brilliant in this collection, certainly the most complete and thorough." And, let me add, its interest (especially if studied from the point of view of *how* the problem is confronted and *how* the factors are positioned in the speculative outline: see the "ends of marriage diagram"—well-known to L's students—which is reproduced on p. 42 of *Collection*) goes well beyond the discussion of the meaning and finality of marriage. Re-reading the essay nearly 25 years after its first appearance, when the question to which it addressed itself has been given new life, and discussion of that question considerably more room, by the

recent ecumenical council in *Gaudium et Spes*, one is struck by the sweep of its movement and the vigor of its argument, and hopes that the neglect it suffered during the past quarter-century may at the present be compensated for, even if the question may not now be posed in exactly the same language and manner as it was then, nor the climate of thought quite identical. But one wishing to find a framework which allows the traditional its valid place and yet to articulate the new—the personalist, the cosmic and historical dimensions—with it can still do no better, I think, than *begin* with this essay.⁴

2. "The Natural Desire to See God," first published in 1949, was my first contact with L's writing; with the recent publication of Henri de Lubac's *Le Mystère du Surnaturel*, this relatively short paper may assume a "regain of actuality". It was written in connection with the controversy which grew around de Lubac's earlier volume, *Surnaturel*. Intended for a meeting of Jesuit philosophy teachers, it is *modo scholastico*, terse and brief: affirmation of the natural desire to see God, its presuppositions, the objections raised against it.

The thesis, resumed in L's own words, is:

There exists a natural desire to understand. Its range is set by the adequate object of intellect. Its proper fulfillment is obtained by the reception of a form proportionate to the object understood. This natural desire extends to understanding God. In that case its fulfillment is the beatific vision. Still, only the theologian can affirm a natural desire to see God; a philosopher has to be content with paradox (p. 87).

The conclusion, with regard to the issues of the controversy:

I believe that a world-order without grace is a concrete possibility. But I suggest that this possibility is not a central doctrine but merely a marginal theorem. It is a central doctrine if it can be demonstrated from the gratuity of grace and from the liberality of God in bestowing grace; the suppositions, usually concealed, of such demonstrations seem to me to be highly questionable. On the other hand, the possibility of a world-order without grace is a marginal theorem if its truth is on the same footing as the truth of any other possibility, namely, it contains no internal contradiction (p. 94).

⁴ Incidentally, the reference sought on page 48, footnote 74, would seem to be 1252a, 27-30 in Aristotle's *Politics*.

But the real interest of the paper, for many, will be L's examination of the two presuppositions of the debate. In a few trenchant paragraphs he sketches the broad lines of (on the objective side) "a static essentialism that precludes the possibility of natural aspiration to a supernatural goal" (and on the subjective side) of "a closed conceptualism that precludes the possibility of philosophy being confronted with paradoxes which theology can resolve." These spare and sharp paragraphs retain their actuality today. One would be hard put to find anywhere a clearer delineation of the static essentialist view (e.g., "Plato's ideas are in the divine mind pretty much as the animals were in Noah's ark": finite natures are prior to world-orders) or of the closed conceptualism which follows from "terms . . . had by an unconscious process of abstraction from sensible data" and which sees science as "a matter of comparing terms, discovering necessary nexus, and setting to work the cerebral logic-machine to grind out all the possible conclusions."

What L has written on the tendencies just mentioned, we said, is still highly relevant. (Would that it were not!) Not perhaps any longer—or principally—in the classroom, where our concern is aroused rather by a phenomenon of another sort and from a somewhat different pole. But (an echo of Father Murray's remark that renewal in the Church is outdistancing reform?) too many generations have been brought up, as we know, in the schools of static essentialism and closed conceptualism (they are similar—correlative—positions), and the mentalities these views have fostered remain very much alive in our midst in, e.g., what Michael Novak has called non-historical orthodoxy and in, understandably enough, the kind of immobile legalism and conceptualist spirituality which derive from the same sources and are generated by the same 'inspiration'.

As his alternative to these positions, L sketches an "open intellectualism" which, at its source and all along the line, presupposes and grows out of genuine acts of understanding.

Again, conclusions result from principles, and principles result from their component terms. But the terms are expressions of acts of understanding. The selection of certain terms as basic, the elucidation of

their precise meaning and import, the validation of such choice and determination are all the work of wisdom (*Sum. theol.* 1-2, q. 66, a. 5, ad 4m.); and wisdom is the cumulative product of a long series of acts of understanding. Hence it is that the nexus between terms is not at all evident to a person who understands nothing, more or less evident to a person who has attained some greater or less degree of understanding, but perfectly evident only to a person who understands perfectly. Hence it is that there exists a natural desire to understand, the development of understanding, and the consequent development of science, philosophy, and theology. Hence it is that any finite wisdom must expect paradox; only perfect wisdom can understand and order everything satisfactorily. . . . Such in the briefest outline are the intellectualist, dynamic, existential presuppositions of the affirmation of a natural desire to see God. (Pp. 89-90.)

There is more to "The Natural Desire to See God" than this discussion of its presuppositions and the reader interested in the issues will find much to absorb him here, but as Michael Novak has pointed out, "conceptualism is the worst insult in [L's] arsenal," and it is here perhaps that he most incisively characterizes it. Further, I thought it worth highlighting this for a prospective reader of *Collection* because of the importance, for doing both philosophy and theology, of our understanding of "the opposition that separates the constructive tendencies of intellectualism and the atomistic tendencies of conceptualism." In the last sentence of the essay under comment, L makes this final point: "At the present time, it seems to me that the real issue does not lie in the possibility of a world-order without grace; the real issue, the one momentous in its consequences, lies between the essentialist and conceptualist tendency and, on the other hand, the existential and intellectualist tendency" (p. 95).

3. "Theology and Understanding," which was written (in 1954) as a review-article commenting on the views held by Johannes Beumer in his book *Theologie als Glaubensverstaendnis*, on the relationship between Thomist thought and *Glaubensverstaendnis* as this latter is understood by the decree of Vatican I, is the central piece in *Collection*. C notes that "especially important [in it] is the beginning of [L's] work on the *method* of theology." "This article . . . sketches for the first time the integral method of any treatise that would do justice at once to the word of God, to Catholic tradition, to

speculative thought, and to modern application and parenetics" (xxv). A later, fuller exposition was to appear in the introduction to the first volume of *De Deo Trino* (pp. 5-14) and in the first chapter of the second volume of the same work (pp. 7-84).

Admittedly, "Lonergan's chief contribution to present-day theology lies in the . . . area of method and methodology" (Robert L. Richard in *Philippine Studies*, July 1965, 526), and thus the temptation is strong to delay at this point and attempt some description of that contribution. This, however, is a task for another time, and moreover, two years ago Fr. Robert Richard did summarize L's own statements of his understanding of theological method in an article which graced the pages of this journal (*loc. supr. cit.*, 530-535 and 537-544); our readers will, I presume, have easy enough access to it. If I may just be allowed to note two things: *first*, that although I have seen other theologians use the terms, *via inventionis* and *via doctrinae*, I have found they often enough understand them differently than L does. And at least a few times in conversation with others, I have been somewhat dismayed that some even among those who have read L's text and can repeat many of his words have not really grasped what L means by the terms. It would seem to me necessary to have followed L's own performance (and, in a way, "done it yourself") in, say, his *De Deo Trino* (to light on a *locus primarius*) to understand what he means by them. (And of course someone will add here that even then he must presuppose *some* grasp of L's cognitional theory too!)

Secondly, one key point in L's approach to theological method is that when one is engaged in reaching out for that *intelligentia mysteriorum* which Vatican I speaks of and which in his mind is the fundamental concern of speculative theology, the quest is not for "evidence for indisputable certitudes". "There exists certitude," L says in the essay under consideration, "but it is derived from the certitude of faith, and the derivation is exhibited in the *via inventionis*. There is no additional certitude generated by understanding itself, for our understanding of the mysteries is imperfect. To convey that imperfect understanding is the function of the *ordo doctrinae*."

nae, and one only betrays one's incomprehension if, on the one hand, one pretends to find evidence for certitude where such evidence does not exist or, on the other hand, one dismisses *argumenta convenientiae* as proofs that do not prove" (p. 133). Rather, one's effort is toward understanding, albeit imperfect, and it is the *ordo doctrinae*, with its approximation to a single view, which yields "an apprehension of the exact context and the exact implications of the many mysteries in their many aspects," which "simplifies and enriches one's own spiritual life" and "bestows upon one's teaching the enviable combination of sureness of doctrine and versatility of expression," and, finally, which fixes the single synthetic view in one's intellectual memory (*ibid.*).

Before I take leave of "Theology and Understanding": in this whole question of the relationship between the objective categories of (e.g., scholastic) thought and the intersubjective categories of ordinary human experience, between "scientific theology" (cf. what Richard says of "theology in the strictest sense of the word" in his *Philippine Studies* article, 530 ff.) and catechetics and various ways of preaching, may I urge the student of theology to re-read the fifth section of this key essay, and especially pp. 136-137?

For one of the most crucial problems the theologian must meet today is precisely the question of whether there is need in the Church today for the kind of theological effort which is concerned with the problems of what *Insight* (pp. xxv-xxvi) calls the "upper context". Philip McShane, in a review of *Collection for Theological Studies*, has said, I believe rightly, that "the key issues of the [context of contemporary theological debate] are the issues of the upper context, issues of method and meaning, of objectivity and truth, of knowledge and belief." "The pressure of a range of philosophies," he notes, "from Whitehead to Wittgenstein, from Husserl to Heidegger, is at present being felt in theology. There is no denying the positive aspects of that invasion of theology, but there is a central negative aspect that can be adequately met only in so far as the theologian shifts to the upper context: for, as Fr. Lonergan remarks, 'the crop of philosophies produced since the enlightenment are not open to revealed truths be-

cause they possess no adequate account of truth.' Only in so far as one shifts to the upper context in scientific fashion is an adequate account of truth forthcoming. That shift requires an openness of the subject, an authenticity that is ready to get down to the subject's own cognitive performance." And towards the end of his review, McShane comments:

[The] pressure of the pastoral and practical in particular is a contemporary good which nonetheless menaces the urgent need of development in scientific theology. The pressure is good: there is the pressure of the laity looking for light, the presence of worthy causes calling for support. But the pressure can harm a greater good: the quest for theological meaning and for a methodological control of meaning. There is a like pressure in the sphere of technology and science, but here the theoretician is respected, the second-rate article more easily rejected: it is admitted without difficulty that one cannot have better television sets without better electronics. But in theology a rush for wallpaper when the walls are crumbling can pass for prudence. The argument here of course is not for the exclusion of the pastoral in favor of science: it is for the inclusion of both, for the mediation of one by the other, for the positive acknowledgement that a focus of vitality lies within the science.

4. The strong, rather merciless reply to a critic, "Christ as Subject," calls for extended comment, but it will suffice to indicate that in the pages on "the notion of subject" (pp. 173 ff.) L explains his distinction between *conscientia-experientia* (consciousness conceived as an experience) and *conscientia-perceptio* (consciousness conceived as the perception of an object) with notable incisiveness; it is well known, I think, how crucial this distinction is for much of L's thought.

Lastly, I would like to convey some idea of the content of "Dimensions of Meaning," the last essay, L's 12 May 1965 lecture for the Marquette University Distinguished Lecture series. C says in his introduction that it reveals L's present preoccupations: the worlds of meaning, the breakdown of the classical mediation of meaning, man's new historical consciousness, etc.; it is in substance also, we are told, a section of the book L is now writing on the method of theology.⁵

⁵ The date of this lecture might be worth remarking, in connection with the current talk on "dehellenization". It might be interesting to compare what L has labelled "static essentialism" and "closed conceptualism" and what he means by the end of "the classical mediation of

His argument is, more or less in his own words, this: Meaning is important as part of human living: for human reality, the very stuff of human living, is not merely meant, but in large part constituted through acts of meaning. More important still is reflection on meaning and the consequent control of meaning. Since changes in social institutions and culture are "at root, changes in the meanings that are grasped and accepted, [then] changes in the control of meaning mark off the great epochs in human history."

To repeat Karl Jasper's thesis in his *The Origin and Goal of History*: the life and activities of primitive societies, despite what anthropologists tell us of the intelligence and reasonableness of primitive man, were wholly "penetrated, surrounded, dominated by myth and magic." This is true, even if in a modified manner, of the ancient high civilizations too. "Now myth and magic are both instances of meaning. Myth is a declarative meaning; magic is an imperative meaning. But the declaration of myth is mistaken, and the command of magic is vain. Both have meaning, but the meaning is meaning gone astray." Hence the importance of the Greek achievement, the classical mediation of meaning, "the movement associated with the name of Socrates and . . . fourth century Athens." This movement broke through beyond the primary, spontaneous level of meaning to the secondary, reflexive level of meaning, the level of definition, of form, of what we refer to as the hellenic understanding of science. This achievement marked the coming-to-be of a radically new era in the history of man: between the years 800 and 200 B.C., man "set aside the dreams and fancies of childhood; man became of age."

The Greek mediation of meaning resulted, as we know, in classical culture, but "by and large, classical culture has [now] passed away."

By and large, its canons of art, its literary forms, its rules of correct speech, its norms of interpretation, its ways of thought, its manner meaning", with what Michael Novak has called "non-historical orthodoxy" in his *The Open Church*, and what Leslie Dewart means by the term "dehellenization". Vid. "The Dehellenization of Dogma," *Theological Studies*, 28/1967, 336-351: L's review of Dewart's *The Future of Belief*.

of philosophy, its notion of science, its concept of law, its moral standards, its methods of education, are no longer accepted. What breathed life and form into the civilization of Greece and Rome, what was born again in a European renaissance, what provided the chrysalis whence issued modern languages and literatures, modern mathematics and science, modern philosophy and history, held its own right into the twentieth century; but today, nearly everywhere, it is dead and almost forgotten. Classical culture has given way to a modern culture, and, I would submit, the crisis of our age is in no small measure the fact that modern culture has not yet reached its maturity." (Pp. 258-9.)

The modern conception of science provides the clearest illustration of the breakdown of classical culture, and the shift in the meaning of the word, science, affects the basic fabric of that culture. (The highly-condensed paragraphs on the contemporary understanding of what science is, on the difference between this, and what classical culture understood by science, and the implications of this difference in various areas—in the realm of prudence, for instance [pp. 259-60] are among the finest things in the book, and deserve several readings.) Whereas classically-oriented science regarded the essential, the universal, the necessary (*scientia est de necessariis*), the attention of modern science is on the concrete, the particular, the contingent, the 'accidental', the existential, the historical; on the existential subject, his decisions, on the history of peoples, their social institutions, their cultures, and the like. Thus a "new notion of science has undermined and antiquated certain fundamental elements of classical culture," and in its turn calls now for a new understanding of man, and man not now as classically defined (*animal rationale*) but as symbolic animal or incarnate spirit.

Hence our time—in Freud and Jung, in Gilbert Durand and Paul Ricoeur and Mircea Eliade, on Madison Avenue drawing boards and those of the totalitarian-state ministries of culture—has rediscovered myth, has turned to the phenomenology of inter-subjectivity, to *Existenz*, to the liberty by which we, each one of us, may become "freely and responsibly, resolutely yet precariously, the persons we choose to be." Psychologists and phenomenologists increasingly reveal man's multifarious interiority to himself; all the techniques and apparatus of the sciences and technology of our age endlessly and relentlessly search out everything, light up, analyze, codify, inter-relate

every aspect of the world in which man lives, explore the outer reaches of the universe he inhabits. But this vast modern effort to understand meaning in all its manifestations has not been matched by a comparable effort in judging meaning, in helping man to choose and to decide. "[Judging] and deciding are left to the individual, and he finds his plight desperate. There is far too much to be learnt before he could begin to judge. Yet judge he must and decide he must if he is to exist, if he is to be a man."

The task of Catholic philosophy and theology today (and when philosophy becomes existential and historical the very possibility of the old distinction between philosophy and theology vanishes) is to replace classical culture with which they were profoundly and, it seemed to many, almost inextricably involved and which has now passed away, with the elements and constructions of a new culture, the culture of a new world the constitution of whose meaning must be thought out in Christ Jesus. It is to work out, step by step, the concrete solutions to the problems which face man and society today, in the light given us by our own human understanding and by the Spirit of the Lord, and by the power of the courage and love which he pours out into our hearts. For the Christian thinker then, this time is one for profound and far-reaching creativity, a time for those whose spirits are large enough "to be at home in both the old and the new," for those who have the courage to be creative in their personal life and the projects they undertake, who are willing to lay down patiently and painstakingly, unmoved by the temptation of the merely fashionable, unafraid of stretches of uncharted territory, unforgiving of half-measures, the bridges and ways of intellect and faith whereon contemporary man and the sons he will engender may make their way to the City of God.⁶

⁶ The foregoing account is something of a caricature of what L says in the essay, but I thought it would serve at least to suggest what L, in his most recent writing, has to tell us. The last part of "Cognitive Structure", on the relations between the dynamic structure of objective knowing and the larger dynamic structure that is human living, and the essay, "*Existenz and Aggiornamento*" address us along similar lines.

This review article might profitably have included some more general remarks on the reading of Lonergan's work, noting *inter alia* that in spite of an almost universal misconception, there is really no "Lonergan system" in the ordinary closed sense in which that word is understood, but that what Lonergan teaches is firstly a way of coming to the understanding of human thinking and human rationality, a way that leads to the appropriation of one's own experience on its various levels, of the differentiations in one's consciousness, of one's own inwardness: a self-appropriation which is immensely more important for one's own growth toward wisdom than any treasure of ideas and concepts stored up carefully in the mind; that thus in "following Lonergan" one is meant to resist all along the way what he himself is so strongly opposed to, an orthodoxy which consists in the mere parroting of either his words or his ideas. For to read him as he intends to be read is not to rest on the level of the products of the mind only, but to get beyond them to the "upper context", the data of one's own cognitive operations and eventually to the self-knowledge, "conversion" and liberation which this accomplishes for one's thought.

To help clear up a persistent misapprehension, we might have noted too that the relationship between Lonergan's work and "traditional" scholasticism is almost wholly misunderstood by those who have read him only superficially, etc. Some things might fruitfully be said about the large body of his Latin works, or about what Michael Novak has called, in relation to the Anglo-Saxon philosophical context, his "remoteness of language and accent", about what *Time* has noted as his "steadfast refusal to popularize" and his "disinterest in hurrying his ideas into print"—and so on. It is just as well, though, that space forbids attempting all this, for then I would have written as one who having read Lonergan off and on for more than fifteen years with some measure of both assiduity and awe, has only begun to grasp (or at least I hope I have), with the help of a couple of teachers who understand him better, just what he is "really all about".

Let me end by citing one or two of the growing "cloud of witnesses" who tell us of his "timeliness for post-conciliar

theological work," in the hope that where I have failed to state the point, better-known names will lend the support of their credentials.

In the London *Tablet's* account of the World Methodist Conference held in August 1966, Dr. Albert Outler, the distinguished American theologian from Southern Methodist and official observer at Vatican Council II, is reported as having given "a brilliant and witty survey of contemporary Protestant theology with its coteries and vogueishness." And the account of Outler's remarks ends with this sentence: "The only living theologian for whom he expressed unqualified regard was the Jesuit Father Bernard Lonergan" (3 September 1966, 985).

Several times during the period of his editorship of the *Clergy Review*, Charles Davis wrote of the contemporary relevance of Lonergan's work, and in the editorial of that periodical's April 1965 issue, he speaks of his belief "that [Lonergan] is one of the great thinkers of our time." "I should like to record my conviction that Father Lonergan's writings are far more relevant to the present situation than most of what is being read today. He provides a base from which one can reach out to modern knowledge in all its complexity without bewilderment. He himself is the least confined of theologians, open wide to secular knowledge, assimilating and ordering its insights. The horizon of most theologians is bounded by the Church, even if they are anxiously writing about its relation to the world. Seemingly more conservative in matters of doctrine and theology, Fr. Lonergan regards faith as a liberation and enhancement of the pure desire to know, and nothing of truth is alien to him, neither in theory nor in practice" (*The Clergy Review*, 50/1965, 250).

Finally, one of Lonergan's students whom I have previously quoted in this article, David Burrell of Notre Dame, welcomes the appearance of *Collection* at this time because he believes Lonergan's writings are being republished just when "many have wearied of the initial enthusiasm, question and criticism that have spelled *aggiornamento*." He continues:

Nearly everyone in the Catholic world is now convinced that things are open, thoroughly open, at least to inquiry if not to experiment. And experiment must follow in the wake of inquiry, so openness of

inquiry is far more than the first step. Yet something more is needed, something to allay our fears of the utterly open-ended, someone who will provide us not with a presumed blueprint but with the tools we need to get down to work.

Certainly Bernard Lonergan is one such, yet his type of genius was out of style so long as we remained fascinated with the mere prospect of open inquiry. Now that the challenge to build is clearly cast down, there is no more need for mandate. Those will build who have the tools, and only those.

And comparing Lonergan's work with that of Teilhard de Chardin, Burrell writes:

... [It] is worth contrasting Lonergan with Teilhard de Chardin. Teilhard is essentially a seer, a man of vision. Here lies his brilliance but also his limitation. One is never quite sure what he can do with Teilhard's vision, though he is often aware of standing within it. Lonergan is rather preoccupied with method. The vision is usually presupposed, though some of the essays in *Collection* do us the service of making it more explicit. But if one can avoid bewitchment by the magisterial manner, he finds himself in possession of a perspective that he can put to work. If he works along with Lonergan, he will be rewarded with a set of tools that he can use himself to expand and develop that perspective in a confident and fearless manner. In this sense Lonergan should prove a more useful guide than Teilhard. He is especially useful in providing both example and methods for assimilating our past as well as confronting the present. And if we are to be truly contemporary we must certainly discover how to do both. (*Continuum*, 5/1967, 187, 190.)

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Perhaps the preceding pages, for all their involved writing, will tempt some at least of our students of philosophy and theology to try reading *Collection*, and grappling with Lonergan's thought in the new edition of the *Verbum*-articles or the two tomes of *De Deo Trino*. Or, better still, they might send them to *Insight*, invite them to enter into the new world it opens up to one who is willing to go through the lessons (and the asceticism) of its difficult school. There are some things one doesn't really want to persuade people to undertake if persuasion implies the least duress; especially if one speaks to those whose talent and energy and courage the wear of years has not yet taxed too much nor much diminished, one simply says, Try it and see.

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