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I HAVE LONG REGARDED Bernard Lonergan's 1977 address to the American Catholic Philosophical Association, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," as one of his finest papers. It expresses as well as anything he wrote just what his work was really all about. Moreover, it opens upon possible developments of that work.

On a more personal note, reading "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness" always takes me back to chapter 7 of *Insight*. My reading of that chapter was the beginning of my committed involvement with Lonergan's work. Both writings attempt the articulation of the intelligibility of "a single object that can gain collective attention,"¹ an intelligibility that can be articulated even though the situations that embody it are as a whole "commonly ... neither foreseen nor intended" by most people affected by them.² In chapter 7 of *Insight* this single object is, in the words of the title of the chapter, "Common Sense as Object," while in "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness" it is "collective responsibility," the coalescence of "the manifold of isolated responsibilities" into the unfolding of a history that flows from a total and dialectical source of meaning.³ In each case the issue is the relation between a subjective field and at least a portion of what would play in Lonergan's thought something of the role that objective *Geist* plays in Hegel's. Thus chapter 6 of *Insight* is called "Common Sense and Its Subject" and chapter 7 "Common Sense as Object," but "common sense as object" means at least partly the objectification in culture and society of the subjective field introduced in chapter 6; again, in "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," the question is how "the issues that individuals have to deal with in their own

1 Bernard Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985) 176.

2 *Ibid.* 169.

3 *Ibid.* 176.

minds and hearts" become 'writ large' in the dialectic of history.⁴ These are essentially the same topics. They are major topics. They must be addressed, and Lonergan has given us some of the tools to do just that.

Now the interest that began for me in reading chapter 7 of *Insight* and that gained precision from the presentation in "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness" of the plateaus on which that "single object" unfolds⁵ became, in some manner whose details can probably never be traced, the inspiration behind much of what I tried to do in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*. In my ongoing work, I am revisiting basic points of that work, and I find that theology elevates "collective responsibility," in the concrete dispensation that is ours, into something like "social and cultural grace." By this term I mean the objectification, the being writ large in the overarching dialectic of history, of God's entry into human affairs in the divine love that floods our inmost hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us and in the revelation of that love in Christ Jesus. The issue is the historical effects of the divine missions. What difference does it make to the dialectical processes of human history that there is a universal offer of what Christians call the Holy Spirit? What difference does it make to the same dialectic that the mission of the Son is among other things a revelation in incarnate and linguistic meaning of that universal offer? Here again, there are a subjective and an objective obverse and reverse. It is as though there are several manners in which to express the correlative subjective fields and objectifications: in one version they are "Common Sense and Its Subject" and "Common Sense as Object"; in another they are "the issues that individuals have to deal with in their own minds and hearts" and the coalescence of their negotiations of those issues into the dialectic of history; and in the present effort they are the reality that is given to many individuals and in fact that is offered to all, a reality that Catholic theology understands as participation in divine, that is, Trinitarian life, and that good Catholic systematic theology differentiates precisely in its Trinitarian form, and the coalescence of those individual gifts into a single object that can gain collective attention, an object that we might call the social objectification of grace, or in shorthand social grace, or in biblical terms the reign of God in human history.

4 Ibid.

5 The plateaus of 'Natural Right and Historical Mindedness' are the stages of meaning in *Method in Theology*, but their function as objectifications of the "single object that can gain collective attention" is much clearer in "Natural Right." See Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (latest printing, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) 85-99.

There is a second context, however, for my present remarks. It is the ongoing context of what I hope will be an annual colloquium at Marquette University sponsored by the Marquette Lonergan Project, a colloquium on "Doing Catholic Systematic Theology in a Multi-religious World." At the first of these colloquia, held last October, papers by John Dadosky, Darren Dias, and myself emphasized the universal mission of the Holy Spirit as a central locus of twenty-first century Catholic systematics, stressed Frederick Crowe's position on the relations of the mission of the Spirit and the Son, and brought into play and updated with Lonergan's help some central Ignatian insights regarding discernment and dialogue.⁶ The upshot of the colloquium was twofold: the shared recognition of the need for greater clarity regarding the mission of the Son in relation to that of the Holy Spirit, but also a subtle agreement (subtle, at least in that for the most part it took the form of an absence of non-agreement) with my position that the global implications of Lonergan's scale of values provide an extraordinary litmus test regarding the major authenticity of the various religious traditions in our world, where 'major authenticity' refers not to the authenticity of individuals vis-à-vis their traditions but to the authenticity of the traditions themselves as currently appropriated and implemented or exercised.

The two results of the colloquium are complementary. The mission of the Word is carried on, participated in, both in the church and beyond the church, partly through the gifts and vocations of theologians, philosophers, scientists both natural and human, and scholars, all speaking intelligible words of truth, justice, and reconciliation to a broken world. Of special importance are breakthroughs whose significance could so reorganize the social mediation of the human good that genuine transformation of social structures would take place. Paradigmatic in this regard, at least in its intention and I think partly in its execution, is Lonergan's economic insight into the real significance of the potential social dividend that surplus income yields.⁷

At any rate, it is time for theology to turn its attention explicitly to social grace, in the context of both divine missions. Liberation theologians

6 The three papers can be found in PDF and audio on the website www.lonerganresource.com, under Events: Conferences: October 29-30 2009.

7 I suspect that the economic situation today, where macroeconomic dynamics are absorbed in information technology much more than when Lonergan was writing, will force us to add complications to Lonergan's model of economic process, but I gladly confess that I am singularly unequipped to say just what these may be.

and others have made us aware of the social objectifications of sin. These objectifications were already captured by Lonergan in chapter 19 of *Insight* where he speaks of the 'moral evils' that are the consequences of 'basic sin.'⁸ Most of us have little difficulty today in acknowledging the existence of "sinful social structures," that is, of the social and cultural coalescence into a single object of manifold refusals or failures to do what is right or to reject what is wrong. But we should also attempt to disengage just what would be the structure of the coalescence into a single object of manifold instances, first, of fidelity to the transcendental precepts, and second, of the elevating and healing divine grace that maintains one as consistently faithful to these precepts.

The transcendental imperatives themselves are nature, in fact precisely part of the nature that is the immanent principle of movement and rest in 'Natural Right and Historical Mindedness.'⁹ Refusal or failure to observe the imperatives, though, is sin, and recovery or redemption occurs through a grace that elevates the nature whose law is expressed in the imperatives to participation in a radically other nature, a Trinitarian nature that is absolutely supernatural in that it cannot be attained in any immediate fashion by any created nature whatsoever, except and only insofar as it gives itself, bestows itself in gratuitous and extravagant generosity, even wastefulness, upon an obediential potency that is capable only of receiving it. This is the upshot of Lonergan's brilliant treatment of moral impotence in chapter 18 of *Insight*, an analysis that is permanently valid despite his own disclaimers regarding his approach to the dynamics of decision in that work.¹⁰

However, by the time of "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," the source of progress or normative source of meaning in history resides not simply in the transcendental precepts but in the coalescence of individual

8 See Bernard Lonergan, CWL 3 689-91.

9 I say "as part of nature" because, as we will see in a moment, embracing and including the transcendental notions that constitute the levels of intentional consciousness is the "tidal movement" that begins before intentional consciousness, permeates it as it moves through its various questions and answers, and reaches beyond it in being in love. That is the primary meaning of 'nature' in "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," and to the extent that the love is God's own love, that nature is obediential potency for grace.

10 The disclaimer, I think, is only partially correct: there is a second presentation of those dynamics, one that achieves inchoate expression in chapter 2 of *Method in Theology*. But, as I have argued in several places, each presentation has its limited validity, and neither is to be discarded. See www.lonerganresource.com under 'Books': *Essays in Systematic Theology*, items 18 and 19.

responsibilities, in the communities that are faithful to the demands of ongoing self-transcendence, communities toward which the levels of consciousness themselves are oriented precisely because of their function in a "tidal movement that begins before consciousness, unfolds through sensitivity, intelligence, rational reflection, responsible deliberation, only to find its rest beyond all of these" in "being-in-love."¹¹ And the source of decline now resides in collective infidelity to these demands, while the source of redemption or recovery in history lies, we may surmise (though this is not mentioned as such in the paper), in the coalescence into common living of the individual gifts of participation in Trinitarian life that God has bestowed, whether explicitly or anonymously. The self that God bestows on a nature that is obediential potency to receive it is Trinitarian and so interpersonal, and the bestowal itself has a Trinitarian and so interpersonal structure.¹² What John Dadosky has called the fourth stage of meaning begins, I submit, with this movement beyond acknowledging the individual interiority of intentional consciousness to acknowledging an interpersonal level of consciousness, where, as Lonergan said as early as his Latin work on the Trinity, the presence of the beloved in the lover is constituted by love itself.¹³ This interpersonal dimension coalesces into communities faithful to what the turn to interiority revealed in the first place.¹⁴ If this fidelity is itself a function ultimately of grace, then the expression "social grace" assumes some valid significance, at least as much significance as the expression "social sin."

I am focusing on the contribution that *Theology and the Dialectics of History* might make to the question of just precisely what is the structure of the social objectifications of divine grace. In biblical language, what is the structure of the reign of God in history? The basic move comes with the recognition that the scale of values articulated on pp. 31-32 of *Method in Theology* and spelled out in greater detail in *Theology and the Dialectics of*

11 Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 175.

12 For an attempt to understand this interpersonal Trinitarian structure, see Robert M. Doran, 'Sanctifying Grace, Charity, and Divine Indwelling: A Key to the *Nexus Mysteriorum Fidei*,' to appear in *Lonergan Workshop 23*.

13 See Bernard Lonergan, CWL 12 218-29.

14 See John D. Dadosky, "Midwiving the Fourth Stage of Meaning: Lonergan and Doran," in *Meaning and History in Systematic Theology*, ed. John D. Dadosky (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2009) 71-92; also in the same book at 331-43 Philip McShane, 'The Fourth Stage of Meaning: Essay 44 of the Series Field Nocturnes Cantower.'

History is an objectification of the structure of individual consciousness, just as "Common Sense as Object" is an objectification of "The Subjective Field of Common Sense," and just as negotiation of the issues that individuals have to deal with in their own minds and hearts coalesces into the situations that emerge from the dialectic of history. The scale of values is the structure of intentional consciousness writ large, and its unfolding is the unfolding of the coalescence of individual authenticity and inauthenticity into a single object that can gain collective attention. The relationship between the structure of consciousness and the scale of values, then, is analogous to that between the same structure and functional specialization, in that in each case we are speaking of a communal objectification of a subjective structure.

Each section of *Theology and the Dialectics of History* needs to be interpreted in relation to the issues understood in this manner. In the present paper I can address only the basic terms and relations proposed in the book, as these are introduced in the first part.

"Basic Terms and Relations," then, is the title of part 1 of the book. Needless to say, the first set of such terms and relations consists of those found in Lonergan's analysis of conscious intentionality. These are traced in chapter 1 in accord with their chronological emergence in Lonergan's thought: the self-affirmation of the knower, the emergence of a distinct fourth level, the post-*Method* focus on love and the possibility of an affirmation of a fifth level, the two vectors in consciousness – the creative vector moving from below upward and the healing vector moving from above downward. These together are conceived now as constituting some of the dynamics of the normative source of meaning that becomes a central category in "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness." But first, that normative source of meaning must be filled out by acknowledging another dimension of consciousness. This insistence is present in 'Natural Right and Historical Mindedness' itself, where the dynamics of intentional consciousness are part of the tidal movement that I have just mentioned. This movement precisely as movement assumes conscious form in the dispositional or aesthetic-dramatic participation of the sensitive psyche in the adventure of conscious intentionality, an adventure that Eric Voegelin has called the search for direction in the movement of life.¹⁵ Second, the total source of meaning in history includes bias and its effects, as well as conversion in the

15 See Eric Voegelin, "The Gospel and Culture," in *Jesus and Man's Hope*, ed. D.G. Miller and D.Y. Hadidian (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1971) 63.

movement from above downward. The sensitive psyche is left to chapter 2 in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, but the dialectical functioning of bias and the healing of conversion are included in chapter 1's presentation of Lonergan's development.

I found it essential even fifteen years ago to relate this discussion to the notion of 'patterned experience' that appears toward the end of chapter 1. This notion already situates this structure in the dialectic of history, in the context, if you want, of the relative dominance of the dialectic of community vis-à-vis a plurality of individual dialectics of subjects. The notion of patterned experience became for me later what I call 'received meaning' as partly constitutive of empirical consciousness itself. All empirical consciousness, except for surprising events, is *patterned* experience. Presentations – sensations, memories, images, emotions, conations, bodily movements, associations, spontaneous intersubjective responses, free images, utterances¹⁶ – are patterned presentations. Some of these patterns are governed by interests that we have made our own, and then we enter a given pattern because it is something we have chosen or accepted or perhaps been chosen for, whether the pattern be artistic or intellectual or practical or dramatic or mystical, to name the principal possibilities. But the pattern can be a function not only of my own self-determined interests, but also of psychological, social, economic, political, linguistic conditioning and seeming determinisms, conditioning operating 'from above' in one's development to establish schemes of recurrence that are inimical to development, and so not a function of autonomous artistic, intellectual, practical, interpersonal, or mystical orientations, but of psychological and social pressures. The person *governed* by negative patterns may also tend to believe that this is the way it has to be, that there is no alternative. Then the patterning is under the control of a bias, but in this case a bias that is not one's own doing. What is required is a recognition that can initiate a reinterpretation; the reinterpretation makes possible new patterns and the appropriation of the power to establish patterns of experience on the basis of new interests. Such a recognition occurs through a set of insights, including the "inverse insights" that interrupt the very flow of one's conscious

16 Why has it taken us so long to recognize the hermeneutic significance of *Insight's* placing on the level of empirical consciousness the 'free images' and 'utterances' that "commonly are under the influence of the higher levels before they provide a basis for inquiry and reflection?" Lonergan, CWL 3 299.

intentionality with the recognition that one is on the wrong track. But such insights occur *outside* the normal patterns, outside the box, if you want, and launch a possibility of a new interpretation of experience, including the acknowledgment that insight itself is what begins to break these patterns.

Next is the further owning not just of a spirit of inquiry but also of the ability for critical reflection on one's own insights. What is the guarantee that the new insight or set of insights is not just the function of a new arbitrary and falsifying way of patterning experience? And we rise above the conditioned patterns of our experience not only by insight and judgment but also and primarily by decision, in which we select what it is worthwhile to do, what kind of world we want, what kind of people we want to be, and how we are going to move toward that. Finally, only being on the receiving end of a love that is unconditional and so graced, however that love may be mediated by human community, is the ultimate condition of possibility of such recovery and redemption.

Already by the end of chapter 1, then, the structure of intentional consciousness is coalescing into a single object that can command collective attention. A crucial second step in determining the basic terms and relations comes with the acknowledgment that consciousness is twofold, and so that the relatively dominant dialectic of community as it issues in received meaning, meaning that Eugene Gendlin argues becomes stored in the body for better or for worse,¹⁷ can affect either or both of its dimensions, and can do so either positively or negatively. I now make capital of the following quotation from *The Triune God: Systematics*: "[W]e are conscious in two ways: in one way, through our sensibility, we undergo rather passively what we sense and imagine, our desires and fears, our delights and sorrows, our joys and sadness; in another way, through our intellectuality, we are more active when we consciously inquire in order to understand, understand in order to utter a word, weigh evidence in order to judge, deliberate in order to choose, and exercise our will in order to act."¹⁸ The entire argument of *Theology and the Dialectics of History* from chapter 2 forward depends on what is affirmed in that sentence. As chapter 2 of *Method in Theology* speaks of operational

17 See, e.g., Eugene Gendlin, *Let Your Body Interpret Your Dreams* (Wilmette, IL: Chiron Publications, 1986). Gendlin's more theoretical *Experiencing and the Creation of Meaning* (Toronto: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962) was helpful to me in my early statements on psychic conversion. See Robert M. Doran, *Subject and Psyche*, rev. ed. (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1994), 115-17, 169-72.

18 Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 139.

development and a distinct affective development, so the self-appropriation that constitutes the "total and basic science"¹⁹ has to include the vagaries of the dispositional, aesthetic-dramatic dimension of the sensitive psyche that precedes, accompanies, and overarches the operations of conscious intentionality, influences those operations, and is influenced by them. Self-appropriation without this dimension runs the risk of fostering the basic form of alienation, alienation from one's very self. As Heidegger affirmed *Verstehen* and *Befindlichkeit* to be equiprimordial but distinct ways of being *Dasein*,²⁰ so I am affirming that the aesthetic-dramatic dimension is always co-constitutive of consciousness along with our intentional operations. And perhaps beyond Heidegger, I maintain that this dimension includes its own set of aesthetic-dramatic operators of human development. In like manner, if consciousness is a search for direction in the movement of life, the search is a function of intentional inquiry, while the movement is experienced in the pulsing flow of the aesthetic dimension. The two together are essential ingredients of the notion of dialectic that, along with the scale of values, functions as the key category in the entire work.

That notion of dialectic constitutes the next installment on basic terms and relations. From the addition of the psychic, dispositional, aesthetic-dramatic dimension to the structure of the normative and total sources of meaning in history, there comes a refinement on Lonergan's notion of dialectic. For Lonergan 'dialectic' refers to the concrete, the dynamic, and the contradictory. The refinement is to the effect that 'dialectic' is a notion that refers to the concrete, the dynamic, and the *opposed*, but that opposition can take two quite distinct forms. I believe this complex notion is already operative in chapters 6 and 7 of *Insight*, though it is not articulate there precisely as a complication of the basic notion. We are conscious in two ways, one being more passive than active, the other more active than passive. These two ways are not contradictory to one another, unless they become so when one of them is neglected in favor of the other. Their opposition I call, for better or for worse, that of contraries rather than of contradictories. To confuse contradictories and contraries or mix them up with one another can be quite disastrous, not only theoretically but also existentially.

19 Bernard Lonergan, "Questionnaire on Philosophy: Response," CWL 17 355.

20 "In *understanding* and *state-of-mind*, we shall see the two constitutive ways of being the 'there.'" Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) 171-72. 'Understanding' translates *Verstehen*, and 'state-of-mind,' *Befindlichkeit*.

I know this distinction has been a bone of contention among some, but I continue to hold to it, and for very serious reasons. I first came upon the distinction by negotiating the Jungian tendency to reduce all oppositions to what I am calling contraries and so to attempt to achieve a position beyond good and evil: a tendency that I regard as self-destructive and perhaps even demonic. But there is the other tendency, all too prevalent in Christian spirituality and moral teaching, and, may I add, in some of the "effective history" of Lonergan's own work, to regard the contrariness of sense and spirituality, neural demands and the censorship, intersubjectivity and practical intelligence, as a matter of contradictories and so, practically, to neglect or even suppress the sensitive psyche and intersubjectivity as if they were evil, and, theoretically, to interpret all the limitation that is imposed on intentional operations by their dependence on sense as itself, if not evil at least as concupiscent. I was dismayed to find Lonergan himself doing this when, in a response to a question asked him at a Lonergan Workshop regarding the notion of limitation that he sets in tension with transcendence in some brilliant paragraphs in chapter 15 of *Insight*, he limited his response to the discussion of the limitation imposed by moral impotence and sin.²¹ That is not what he is talking about when he first introduces the notion of limitation. Of course, to regard the criteria of the world of immediacy as though they were the criteria of human knowing in a world mediated by meaning does set up something contradictory, and the remedy for that philosophical blunder is, in Lonergan's terms, to break the duality of our knowing and to affirm that fully human knowing unfolds through the three dimensions of experience, understanding, and judgment. But breaking the duality of knowing does not mean breaking the duality of consciousness. It means rather affirming that duality in the series of sublations of empirical consciousness by the intelligent, rational, and existentially world-constitutive and self-constitutive operations of human conscious intentionality. To break the duality of the unity-in-tension of consciousness in favor of either sense or intellect is to invite either empiricism or idealism, whereas to affirm their unity-in-tension is to affirm at least implicitly a critical realism, where insights are into imagined data, where verification almost always entails a rational return to concrete sensible data, and where apprehensions of possible

21 This session (16 June 1980) appears on www.bernardlonergan.com as 97300A0E080, with a transcription at 97300DTE080. Lonergan's comments on limitation appear at the very beginning.

values are given in insights laden with feeling. The dialectical structure of the aesthetic-dramatic and intentional ways of being conscious is then writ large in the dialectic of community between intersubjectivity and practical intelligence and in what I would like to promote as an emerging dialectic of culture between cosmological and anthropological sets of constitutive meaning. Contradictory dialectical relations obtain not internally to these distinct but related processes, but with regard to requisite higher syntheses: the higher synthesis of the dialectic of the subject in the acceptance or rejection of grace; that of the dialectic of culture in the acceptance or rejection of personal authenticity; and that of the dialectic of community in the pursuit or refusal of cultural values.

Lonergan's scale of values is complicated to yield an explanatory account of the relations of these three sets of dialectical processes. And it is also expanded to present a basic optic on the global situation of our time, yielding a sympathetic impetus to the best of liberation theology in its insistence on a certain preferential option for the poor and the marginalized.

Finally, the section on 'Basic Terms and Relations' concludes with a chapter that begins to express some of the dynamics of the church's mission in the world. "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Those dynamics would be swept by a systematic theology into a more heuristic view of the church understood in reliance on the category of mission, where ecclesial mission becomes a participation in the missions of both the Son and the Spirit in the world, just as the character of 'servant' that was highlighted in the chapter on the church in *Theology and Dialectics of History* understood the church as participating in Jesus' embodiment and fulfillment of the Deutero-Isaian vision of the servant of God.

In conclusion, then, just as there is a graced elevation of the various levels of consciousness (the relation of religious and personal values), so the presence of grace can be acknowledged also at the levels of cultural and social values with an impact on vital values. The establishment of a category of social grace will depend on arguing that the objectification of the subjective structure of intentional consciousness that is found in the complete scale of values can, like intentional consciousness itself, receive a graced elevation to the participation of society in divine life, in divine meaning and in the divine community of the three persons of the Trinity. The state of grace, as Lonergan begins to argue in the still neglected sixth chapter of his Trinitarian systematics, is a social, interpersonal situation. It is likely

that we will be able to locate in communal living an objectification at the level of social values of the kind of elevation of the level of understanding that grace brings to individual consciousness, and that we will be able to locate in the same communal living an objectification at the level of cultural values of the kind of elevation of the level of judgment that accrues from elevating grace. Moreover, further work on the relation of religious to personal values will disclose an elevation of the operations of deliberation, evaluation, and decision, and this will no doubt find objectification in the communal sphere of policies and planning. The next move in a systematics based on Lonergan's work, will, I suspect, be the objectification in culture and society of the individual structure of consciousness gifted by God with the grace of an unconditional and unqualified love.