

## Exploring Three Dialectical-Foundational Missing Links in Academia That Loneran Retrieves

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### Introduction

Igor Stravinsky and Pablo Picasso—respectively pioneers of modern music and painting—were staunch friends. Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" (1913) was intended to shock. Its "savage violence confronted head-on the aesthetics of impressionism—then at the apogee of Parisian musical fashion—just as the razor-sharp editing between phrases subverted the smooth, seamless flow of the Germanic symphonic tradition with pitiless efficacy. It has been said that the 'Rite of Spring' is 'cubist music'—where musical materials slice into one another, interact and superimpose with the most brutal edges, thus challenging the musical approach and form that had dominated European ears for centuries."<sup>1</sup>

In some ways, Loneran's lifework parallels Stravinsky and Picasso's achievements in their fields. As is the case with the two giants of modern music and art, Loneran's method incorporates previous achievements while opening vistas able to guide the future. His method is able to integrate revolutionary efforts within various traditions while opening up paths to interfaith, interdisciplinary perspectives. His work offers us several dialectical-foundational missing links<sup>2</sup> that can help connect the intellectual and spiritual facets of our lives both personally and multicultural endeavors. But opposed to this optimistic prognosis for Loneran's method, the effectiveness of his achievement is undermined if not vitiated by what Phil McShane calls the "darkness" affecting humans—a darkness that has not spared the efforts of Loneran students. "That darkness gives us the possibility, even some slim probabilities, of a

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/may/29/stravinsky-rite-of-spring>. Stravinsky embodied modern artistic quests as did Picasso—as both of these men were foreshadowed in various 19th century efforts while pointing to a revolutionary future. Stravinsky and Picasso recognized one another's pioneering quests

<sup>2</sup> My aim in this essay is to identify and expound on such missing links which can be found in Loneran's opus and which might connect us with both ultimate and present reality so that we might meaningfully address the confused realities of modern life.

fresh start on the stumbling meaning of *Method in Theology* from Section 5 of chapter ten to the end of the book. That stumbling meaning has to become a precise lean-forward meaning<sup>3</sup> hinted at in *Method in Theology*'s chapter on history.

In view, of this sharp contrast between what Lonergan's method is at its core and the darkness of which McShane speaks, this essay focuses on retrieving, or at least identifying, three dialectical-foundational "missing links" to which I just referred. In principle, such missing links<sup>4</sup> can be grounded in a person's intellectual-cum-spiritual-ethical experience. However, a problem that needs to be addressed is how does one's personal life "connect" with the lives of others as addressed by Lonergan, for example, in "The Dialectic of Community."<sup>5</sup> There Lonergan speaks of the tensions within communities, but his method is designed to address such problems. In the face of the tensions of community, Matthew Lamb advocated a solidarity with victims<sup>6</sup> to help relieve global tensions. The question is how the Lonergan community can come to grips with the realistic ideals of Lonergan's method so as to confront the darkness that, in fact, afflicts humans in general and the taken-for-granted presuppositions of much of scholarly life.<sup>7</sup> A person must personally appropriate the complex factors of his/her experience; this cannot be taken for granted for we are also confronted with the deep, quasi-intractable problem of human biases and the presuppositions of much of academe

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<sup>3</sup> Phil McShane, "Lonergan and the Positive Anthropocene Age: Seeding a New Popular Culture," [www.philipmcshane.org/forum/forums/reply/1949](http://www.philipmcshane.org/forum/forums/reply/1949) refers us to his article "Arriving in Cosmopolis," where he asks "How does a community of serious understanding mediate a rhythmic lift of daytime talk?" McShane notes that while his paper can be read foundationally, he is there refraining "from technical complexities. From the Halifax lectures on, most of Lonergan's public lectures were popular talk in this sense, vulnerable to *haute vulgarization*, something he condemned strongly (CWL 6, 121, 155). *Method in Theology* is vulnerable popular talk; *Insight* is vulnerable doctrinal talk."

<sup>4</sup> Lonergan hints at said missing links: "There is the rock on which one can build," (*Method in Theology*, 19) that is the four transcendental precepts that grasp "unnoticed and unrealized possibilities." (*Method in Theology*, 53) He adds: "It will become evident in Chapter Four that the more important part of the rock has not yet been uncovered." He points to various biases that, in my terms, vitiate the effective deployment of needed ethical-spiritual theory-praxis links directly following his treatment of the community of dialectic (*Insight*, 242–44): that is, such links remain missing.

<sup>5</sup> *Insight*, Chapter 7, 239–44.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew Lamb, *Solidarity with Victims: Toward a Theology of Social Transformation* (New York: Crossroad, 1982).

<sup>7</sup> In Part I, I address the tensions of community life in general, in Part II of potential "Kingdom" communities. In Part III, I reach for a deeper dialectical foundational missing link, for an "eye of love" which would transcend divisions.

which could viable approaches to confronting social injustice and exploitation.

Some initial remarks on appropriating and expounding Lonergan's poise towards the good of all are in order. Lonergan notes that "general history is perhaps just an ideal"<sup>8</sup> and later he speaks of dialectic as "a generalized apologetic conducted in an ecumenical spirit."<sup>9</sup> The contrast between the hard- to-realize ideal of a general history and the possibilities which dialectical foundations hopefully open up is addressed by Lonergan in the complementary aspects among the eight reciprocally interdependent functional specialties (FS).<sup>10</sup> Inasmuch as dialectic deals with the concrete, dynamic, contradictory, it is key to help us reconcile differences but dialectic must be complemented by the foundations of committed, effective personal (and communal) foundations.<sup>11</sup> Some of the missing links that this essay seeks to emphasize are intimated in the two key proposals outlined in *Insight* and *MiT*, namely that Lonergan's method can be approached as a generalized empirical method functionally specialized (GEM-FS).<sup>12</sup> GEM-FS includes Lonergan's various approaches to dialectics in *Insight* as complemented by a mediated theology based on ethical-foundational commitments. I shall briefly argue that GEM-FS—a holistic philosophical, theological, interdisciplinary method—supplies some "missing links" needed to integrate the actual, all-too-disunited approaches to science and the humanities.<sup>13</sup> Below, I explore three such missing links that GEM-FS implicitly supplies for us and that are worth

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<sup>8</sup> *Method in Theology* 128[124].

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 130[125].

<sup>10</sup> See *Ibid.*, 138–44[132–37].

<sup>11</sup> Catherine King in a personal message writes that in her experience "only a few have opened their minds to dialectic as not only a philosophical method, *but also* as a structured-in (to consciousness) aspect of transcendental method."

<sup>12</sup> The fact that GEM-FS is a *generalized* method able to integrate *specialties* is the reason it can provide the missing links needed in various human endeavors. In evolutionary studies, the "missing link" was a "hypothetical extinct creature halfway in the evolutionary line between modern human beings and their anthropoid progenitors. In the latter half of the 19th century, a common misinterpretation of Charles Darwin's work was that humans were lineally descended from existing species of apes. To accept this theory and reconcile it with the hierarchical Great Chain of Being, some fossil ape-man or man-ape seemed necessary in order to complete the chain. Today it is recognized that the relationship of modern humans to the present anthropoid apes (e.g., chimpanzees) is through common ancestors rather than through direct descent. These ancestors have yet to be identified, but ape-hominid divergence may have occurred 6 to 10 million years ago." Quoted from [www.britannica.com/science/missing-link](http://www.britannica.com/science/missing-link)

<sup>13</sup> GEM-FS is a revolutionary, integral method that has yet to get the recognition it deserves.

retrieving. It would be to everyone's advantage, I believe, to spell out such links more fully.

Mike Shute has pointed out to me that Lonergan adapts the meaning of 'dialectic' according to given contexts. In *Insight*, his use of the term varies. There is a dialectic of community (chapter 7); dialectic as a deviation in genetic development (chapters 15ff); dialectic in metaphysics (chapter 17); dialectic as it faces the problem of liberation in humans (chapter 18). In chapter 20, Lonergan speaks of a threefold dialectic that includes the supernatural. By way of example, Shute asks what the evolutionary connection is between the irritation in the clam (that produces the pearl) and the tension of human development that led Lonergan to his 1965 discovery of functional specialization. What tension produced Lonergan's transformed horizon in *Method in Theology*? This paper argues that in *Method in Theology*, the various types of dialectics treated in *Insight* are recast in terms of the fourth functional specialty, "dialectic" which calls for a division of labor. In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan writes that "what is termed a universal viewpoint" in *Insight* is subsumed in "a distinct functional specialty named dialectic."<sup>14</sup>

Shute notes that if one is to speak of "a missing link" in Lonergan studies, it is the insight that connects the theoretical division of labor of functional specialization and its implementation in the complex of social issues involved. The loci of the connection "is to be found in the insights generated and communicated in the feedback loop"<sup>15</sup> later reprised in modified fashion in Communications, the eighth specialty, as it enters into history and is picked up anew in Research, The first specialty. But one may ask whether the needed implementation of GEM-FS has been sufficiently and adequately addressed by the Lonergan community. In 1970, David Tracy had already called attention to "the only entry into the contemporary theological dialectic" as being "the entry into the level of evaluation and decision, of conversion and its thematization."<sup>16</sup> Tracy's remarks, based on his privileged access to Lonergan's manuscripts, anticipated by two years the dialectical-foundational breakthroughs explored in *Method in Theology*.

The present exploratory essay argues that the dialectical tensions between e. g. special and general research that Lonergan points to in chapters 5 and 6 of *Method in Theology*, are best approached in functionally specialized, interdisciplinary ways. I shall refer to the entire GEM-FS process as I attempt to identify integrative but all-too neglected, "missing" links that, if emphasized as they should be, might help promote

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<sup>14</sup> *Method in Theology* 153, note 1[146, note 2].

<sup>15</sup> The said "feedback loop" is equivalent to what some refer to as GEM-FS's reduplicative feedback structure.

<sup>16</sup> David Tracy, *The Achievement of Bernard Lonergan* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 253.

GEM-FS studies' healing-creative potential.<sup>17</sup> Thus retrieving so as to implement the missing links GEM-FS implicitly provides at its core could help the Lonergan community better promote Lonergan's integrative, interdisciplinary method. GEM-FS is both a generalized and specialized method able to address the tensions facing mankind.<sup>18</sup> It helps one relate the facets of one's intellectual, spiritual and societal facets of life both personally and communally. Lonergan himself uses the metaphor of a "rock" on which one can build when one objectifies the normative pattern of one conscious and intentional operations. This objectification cannot be revised in that any attempt to revise it would involve the operations in question.

Since GEM-FS offers us a rock on which to build so as to help us resolve tensions facing mankind, it behooves the "GEM-FS community" to identify and act upon some of the missing (or overlooked) links which GEM-FS directly or potentially offers scholars and the world at large. If GEM-FS is to be the rock Lonergan claims for his method, what is needed is that GEM-FS students act in coordinated, dialectical-foundational fashion so as to effectively build on the GEM-FS rock by retrieving, deploying missing links.

There are various types of dialectic explored in Lonergan's Opera. For Lonergan, dialectic is "a concrete unfolding of linked but opposed principles of change; it occurs if (1) there is an aggregate of events of a determinate character, (2) the events may be traced to either or both of two principles, (3) the principles are opposed yet bound together, and (4) they are modified by resulting changes."<sup>19</sup> Viewed from the standpoint of Lonergan's notion of "horizon,"<sup>20</sup> dialectic is a unity of opposites, of which there are three types: complementarity, contradiction, and genetic.

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<sup>17</sup> Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," *A Third Collection*, New York: Paulist Press, 100–109.

<sup>18</sup> Jeremy Wilkins in his review of Matthew Lamb's *Eternity, Time, and the Life of Wisdom* (Naples, FL: Sapientia Press, 2007) notes that, for Lamb, "the relationship between Catholicism and modern cultures calls for dialectical discernment. Lamb understands dialectic in Lonergan's sense of coming to grips with the radical source of differences. This is altogether more differentiated and serious than asking, for example, whether Catholics should adopt the posture of separatism or assimilation vis-à-vis American culture. A serious critique of culture demands coming to terms with transcultural norms, which norms Lamb, following Lonergan, finds in the 'communicative praxis' of asking and answering questions. The root of dogmatism and nihilism in modern culture, he argues, is 'misplaced normativity' by which we attribute to our products and practices the normativity that really belongs to the praxis of intelligence, reason, and charity." Such misplaced normativity keeps missing ethical links *hidden*.

<sup>19</sup> *Insight*, CWL 3, 242. For background to this section, see John Raymaker and Godefroid Molumba, *Bringing Bernard Lonergan Down to Earth and into our Hearts and Communities* (Eugene: WIPF and Stock, Eugene, 2018), 26.

<sup>20</sup> *Method in Theology*, the first section of chapter 10.

The dialectic of complementarity occurs when different viewpoints or horizons reinforce one another. Each part is what it is in virtue of its functional relations to other parts; there is no part that is not determined by the exigence of other parts. The whole possesses a certain inevitability in its unity, so that the removal of any part would destroy the whole. A university exemplifies this in that it has such different domains of interest as faculty, administrators, non-professional staffs, students, etc. Each is aware of and recognizes the need for the others. No single point-of-view or “horizon” is complete or self-sufficient. Together, they represent the motivations and knowledge required for the collective, collaborative effort required in running a university. One must coordinate complementary horizons.

In the dialectic of contradiction, the different horizons exclude one another. No common ground can be found: “What in one is found intelligible, in another is unintelligible. What for one is true, for another is false. What for one is good, for another is evil. Each may have some awareness of the other and so each in a manner may include the other. But such inclusion is also negation and rejection.”<sup>21</sup>

A genetic dialectic considers the various stages in a process. It identifies how a process, despite differences, constitutes an organically whole entity. This can be illustrated in a dialectic of personhood. A child grows into adulthood only by “negating” childish traits. Given stages of the same person differ, yet they are organically united: later stages remain rooted in the earlier stage but in a transformed way.<sup>22</sup>

In our co-authored book, *Bringing Lonergan Down to Earth* book,<sup>23</sup> Godefroid Mombula and I address the fact that, for Lonergan, a community is not just a number of persons within a geographical frontier. Rather, it is an achievement of common meaning striving to foster the

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* Lonergan is here considering dialectic from the standpoint of one’s “horizon.” Matthew Lamb writes that if the criticisms of capitalism, “however justified in themselves, are not to degenerate into a value-neutral legitimation of the status quo, then we must elaborate an accurate and critical economic theory and praxis capable of concretely and dialectically overcoming the alienation so massively present in both” (*Solidarity*, 133).

<sup>22</sup> The transformed way is made possible by sublation: “What sublates goes beyond what is sublated, introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, yet so far from interfering with the sublated or destroying it. On the contrary needs it, includes it, preserves all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context.” (*Method in Theology*, 241[227]).

<sup>23</sup> The book relies in part on Mombula’s PhD thesis *Human Community and Dialectic in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan* (Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2017). See *Bringing Bernard Lonergan Down to Earth and into our Hearts and Communities*. One might also invoke Michael Shute’s *The Origins of Lonergan’s Notion of the Dialectic of History. A Study of Lonergan Early Writings on History* (Lanham MD: University Press of America, 1993).

good. With a view to fostering the good as advocated by Lonergan, this essay seeks to identify three overlooked, glossed-over, taken-for-granted “missing links” in the sciences and in the humanities that Lonergan in his overall corpus explicitly or implicitly identified; the links are there “for the taking,” but must be adverted to and deployed systematically and effectively communicated. Rather than focusing on the structure of dialectic as detailed in *Method in Theology*,<sup>24</sup> I ask how may Lonergan’s GEM-FS be best implemented? As noted, “GEM-FS” is a way of summarizing Lonergan’s overall approach to the *dialectical foundational* nature of his transcendental method. Part I briefly explores Lonergan’s notion of the dialectic of community and its accompanying tensions.<sup>25</sup> Part II suggests how the tensions inherent in a dialectic of community can be remedied by, e.g., living the Good News of Jesus and participating in establishing the Kingdom of God. Part III notes that implied in a grounding of a dialectic of community, there are needed moral-religious conversions stemming from the heart, from the “eye of love.”<sup>26</sup> These conversions as lived are the needed foundational links our world needs, but all too often, they remain “missing” in much of human endeavors. As Lonergan makes quite clear, the conversions must be built on. Intellectual conversion is the main theme of *Insight*. Religious and moral conversions are at the heart of the teachings of the founders of the world religions. Cumulatively, these three conversions need to be dialectically-foundationally deployed. The three “missing links” I focus on in this essay are ways to make explicit so as to better build on and deploy the GEM-FS rock Lonergan refined for us. They involve, of course, primarily the level of decision. Lonergan speaks of the challenge of decision to risk the initiative of change, one that “pertains to the prior more spontaneous level on which theology reflects”<sup>27</sup> and objectifies. “It enters explicitly into theology only as reflected on and objectified”<sup>28</sup> in foundations. Analogical decisions were also made by the initiators of the other world religions and even by secularists who have rejected religion. I speak here only of an authentic secularism. Implicit in all three parts of this essay are a) a search for the grounding aspects of the decision process in *Method in Theology*’s first phase as hopefully leading to the authentic, effective conversions of the second phase; and b) some of the communal, interfaith apophatic-kataphatic realities that Lonergan explored in his various, multifaced

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<sup>24</sup> *Method in Theology*, 249–50[234–5]. The details of that core dialectic heuristic are soundly treated in the third chapter, “Self-Assembly” of Philip McShane, *The Future: Core Precepts in Supramolecular Method and Nanochemistry* (Amazon, 2019). The demands of this third chapter are to be the focus of operations in the volumes to follow of *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis*.

<sup>25</sup> *Insight*, CWL 3, 239–44.

<sup>26</sup> *Method in Theology*, 115[113].

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 135[129].

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 135[129].

writings. Such interfaith-apophatic-kataphatic realities can be rooted in the genuine mystic aspects of life as traditionally taught and lived in the world religions. Secularists on principle reject the apophatic, but Lonergan can be said to find some missing links overlooked in authentic or distorted forms of secularism.

### **I. Lonergan's Dialectic of Community and Accompanying Tensions Outlined in *Insight*.**

One of the peculiarities of GEM-FS is that it is only comprehensible to the extent that one accepts Lonergan's notion of the data of consciousness spelled out in *Insight* and *Method in Theology*. His notion of these data is presupposed in his various approaches to dialectic. It implies 1) a genetically related series that adequately treats data by way of understanding, judgments, decisions, and actions; and 2) an ongoing series of dialectically operative methods grounded in decisions and actions aimed at promoting the good. GEM "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."<sup>29</sup> Generalizing the notion of data to include those of consciousness enables GEM to function as a reduplicative structure<sup>30</sup> within one's consciousness so as to ground the eightfold functional specialization process explored in *Method in Theology*. In doing so, GEM-FS expands the notion of data by spelling out what must be added to the commonly received notion of empirical method and its various potential applications. In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan applies *Insight's* lessons to theology. Exploring the role of religion in a cultural matrix, he develops GEM-FS as an eightfold process involving two phases: in the first phase, theologians learn from the past; in the second phase, they seek to solve contemporary problems. Both phases involve and interrelate the four levels of a person's conscious and intentional activities: experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding—activities Lonergan explored at length in *Insight*.

GEM-FS, the reduplicative structure Lonergan has elaborated (wherein the data of consciousness are indispensable) also applies, for example, to the dialectic of community he addresses in Chapter 7 ("Common Sense as Object") of *Insight*.<sup>31</sup> Within the context of the dialectic of community, Lonergan develops such key notions as the human biases<sup>32</sup> and cosmopolis.<sup>33</sup> Or in the words of Mike Shute, Lonergan

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<sup>29</sup> Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, "Religious Knowledge," 141.

<sup>30</sup> Frederick E. Crowe, Lonergan and the Level of Our Time, edited by Michael Vertin, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 161. Raymaker, *Heart*, 21.

<sup>31</sup> See Godefroid Mombula's 2017 dissertation, *Human Community*, 26–38.

<sup>32</sup> *Insight*, CWL 3, 244–63.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 263–67.



provides a feedback loop to treat existential problems. He supplies a subtle missing link that helps us interrelate our mental processes to address complicated social issues. The link had been obscured by Descartes, the “father of modernity.”<sup>34</sup> After him, modernity became oppositional in tone. “Philosophies can straddle, as did Cartesian dualism, or choose one of the alternatives, as did rationalism and empiricism respectively, or reject both, as did Kantian criticism.”<sup>35</sup>

Since the data of consciousness operate not only within an individual person’s mental process, but also in various interpersonal interchanges, GEM-FS students should draw the needed implications. They should be mutually aware that, lacking an explicit notion of the data of consciousness, the tensions affecting community life in general as well as the inability of scholars to truly communicate among themselves are due to failures to “exploit” the reduplicative feedback-links at the heart of GEM-FS. This lack of explicit communication has resulted in a tragic failure to adequately consider GEM-FS, as the reduplicative dialectical-foundational method it, in fact, is. In turn, it has preempted society’s ability to fully appreciate and develop GEM-FS’s potential. In summary fashion, this essay suggests how the present situation might, for example, be improved by reexamining the dialectic of community and its tensions. In *Insight*, Lonergan notes that as in scientific fields, “so in human events and relationships there are classical and statistical laws that combine concretely in cumulating sets of schemes of recurrence.”<sup>36</sup> He goes on to say that “only ideal republics spring in full stature from the mind of man.”<sup>37</sup> In trying to find “a functional unity to be discovered,”<sup>38</sup> he stresses that “really there is a duality to be grasped”<sup>39</sup> for common sense differs from the ways of systematic intelligence.

At issue, is the “tension of community,” for besides the detached and disinterested stand of intelligence, there is the more spontaneous

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 560. Doubt was Descartes’ starting point. He reveals his basic principle in “On what can be called into doubt” in *Meditations*, 17: “Some years ago I was struck by the large of falsehoods that I had accepted in my childhood. (. . .) realized that it was necessary (. . .) to demolish everything completely and start again right from the foundations.” Hume practiced the universal point “more successfully” than did Descartes. *Insight*, 436.

<sup>35</sup> The etymologies of tension and intention both imply being stretched out or a stretching toward. For Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18, 281, “The existential gap consists in the fact that the reality of the subject lies beyond his own horizon.” Due to this, what we know and what we think we know in fact differs—we are ever stretching out toward the new. After *Insight*, Lonergan evolved from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis. This enabled him to develop functional specialties enabling cooperators to mutually correct their existential gaps.

<sup>36</sup> *Insight*, CWL 3, 234.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 236.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

viewpoint of the individual subjected to needs and wants.”<sup>40</sup> There is a need to reorient spontaneous attitudes. Lonergan then explores the dialectic of community noting that his notion of bias is also dialectical. “The contents and affects emerging into consciousness provide the requisite aggregate of events of a determinate kind; these events originate” from neural demand functions “and the exercise of the constructive or repressive censorship; the two principles are linked as patterned and patterning.” For example, “a misguided censorship results in neglected neural demands forcing their way into consciousness.”<sup>41</sup>

In principle, all humans have an unrestricted drive to know, but this drive has to be developed both personally and communally. Development connotes achievement. One comes to know one’s unrestricted drive to know through different activities. But because humans are prone to biases, a higher viewpoint on the level of being is needed to offset the negative effects of bias.

Clearly, according to Lonergan, unresolved tensions afflict both individual persons and the communities they live in. In Part II, I shall suggest how in the case of Christian communities such inherent tensions can, should be influenced, even remedied, by making efforts to live the Good News of Jesus. Here, I merely note some basic dynamics that affect all communities, Christian or not. Additionally, I suggest that, overall, Lonergan addressed change and effective global transformations in light of his profound, challenging vision of “cosmopolis,”<sup>42</sup> a notion which one might relate to, but not equate with the Kingdom of God preached by Jesus. I shall approach “cosmopolis” via the concerns of “caring eyes.”<sup>43</sup>

As GEM “generalizes the notion of data to include the data of consciousness, so too it generalizes the notion of method. It wants to go behind the diversity that separates the experimental method . . . and the quite diverse procedures of hermeneutics and of history. It would discover their common core.”<sup>44</sup> How make straight the path that can efficiently achieve needed dialectical-foundational breakthroughs? How successfully

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 240.

<sup>41</sup> I reference here points from *Insight*, CWL 3, 240–47.

<sup>42</sup> See Dennis Gunn “Teaching for Cosmopolis: Bernard Lonergan's Hopeful Vision for Education in a Globalized World” at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00344087.2017.1393179?scroll=top&needAccess=true&journalCode=urea20>

<sup>43</sup> In “caring eyes,” I include all people of good will intent on overcoming injustice and exploitation. This also applies to those who live ethical, secular lives or the valid teachings of the world religions

<sup>44</sup> Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, “Religious Knowledge,” 141. Inasmuch as Lonergan did discover their common core, the GEM-FS world can credibly claim that Lonergan has found or retrieved one missing link that has afflicted Western thought since Descartes. The “GEM-FS world” should show a united, coordinated front in spelling for thinkers in general the implications of the GEM-FS link. The fact is, however that Lonergan’s “GEM-FS potential global team” remains a voice crying in the desert.

deploy the missing links of caring or loving eyes that might enable people to base their lives on a meaningful ethics and/or on a spirituality lived within the ideals of a “world community”?

## **II. Toward a Dialectic of Community-Promoting Kingdom Values: Philosophical Horizons in Search of Remediating Modern Reductionisms**

Part I argued that the tensions Inherent in a dialectic of community can be remedied, for example by living the Good News of Jesus, ethical, secular lives or the valid teachings of world religions. In Part II, I appeal to what the later Lonergan suggests in *Method in Theology*, namely the dialectical-foundational, self-corrective notion of GEM-FS’s collaborative potential. In the case of individual persons, when a misguided censorship<sup>45</sup> militates against one’s good intentions a therapist can help remedy such a situation. For Lonergan, “As there is a dialectic of the dramatic subject, so also there is a larger dialectic of community. Social events can be traced to the two principles of human intersubjectivity and practical common sense.”<sup>46</sup> These two principles are linked. They interact. They are also “modified by the changes that result from them. . . .The alternations of social tranquility and social crises mark successive stages in the adaptation of human spontaneity and sensibility to the demands of developing intelligence.”<sup>47</sup>

Lonergan’s larger notion of dialectic, as a combination of the concrete, the dynamic and the contradictory,<sup>48</sup> “is concerned with the apprehension of values and disvalues” which is an “intentional response”<sup>49</sup> on the part of persons of good will. Briefly said, at issue is the two-phase approach of *Method in Theology* which conceives theology as reflection on religion. “In a first, mediating phase, theological reflection” ascertains the ideals, beliefs and the performance of a religion. “But in a second mediated phase, theological reflection takes a much more personal stance.” It is a matter of moving from indirect discourse to the direct

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<sup>45</sup> Lonergan, *Insight*, CWL 3, 242.

<sup>46</sup> *The Lonergan Reader*, edited by Mark and Elizabeth A. Morelli. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1997, 127–28. See also *Insight*, CWL 3, 243.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>48</sup> While dialectic has to do with these three realities, “cooperation, power, and authority have to do with the concrete and dynamic. Authenticity and unauthenticity add a pair of contradictories. The resulting dialectic is extremely complicated.” (*The Lonergan Reader*, 554). For brevity’s sake, this article treats GEM-FS as a dialectical foundational method that seeks to briefly explain how it pierces through the armor of said complexities so as to expand on Shute’s view (noted above) that GEM-FS supplies a missing link that consists in “the insight that connects the theoretical division of labor of functional specialization and its implementation in the complex of social issues involved (and) is to be found in the insights generated and communicated in the feedback loop.”

<sup>49</sup> *Method in Theology*, 245[231].

discourse of a foundational reality and the conversions involved in and requisite to such a new reality.

Part I touched on the tensions that a *de facto* lack of adequate conversions on the part of many people in general presents to a genuine, effective dialectic of community. In an effort to remedy such a lack, in Part II, I attempt to briefly outline what a “dialectic of the Kingdom of God” may entail. Lonergan reinterpreted the Christian faith in the light of the Catholic tradition so that it might better address human needs today. The Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad all radicalized the traditions they had inherited. Each did so in his own intense way: a topic of Part III. While Nietzsche sought to undermine Christian notions of values and morality, Lonergan brings us back to quests for the Kingdom of God, for cosmopolis and for the common good which are complementary ideals. For Lonergan, authentic cosmopolitanism does not impose a universal, totalizing metanarrative. Rather, it embraces the particularity of one's own cultural, religious, and intellectual traditions, while remaining radically open to dialogue with the other. By doing so, education for cosmopolis fosters both authentic appropriation and reflective critique of one's own traditions, as well as an appreciation for the authenticity of others. Teaching for cosmopolis is an invitation to dialogue which promotes mutual understanding, mutual respect, and mutual interdependence in a globalized world. As noted, I am approaching “cosmopolis” through the lens of “caring eyes” which would include such non-Christian searches for truth and justice outlined in the present paragraph.<sup>50</sup>

Christians are challenged by Jesus to establish the Kingdom of God on earth (as in the Lord's Prayer). This challenge of Jesus, in fact, requires societal cooperation as Lonergan realized. For him, method offers a framework for collaborative creativity. It is “a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results. There is method, then, where there are distinct operations, where each operation is related to the others, where the set of relations forms a pattern, where the pattern is described as the right way of doing the job,

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<sup>50</sup> As noted by Tad Dunne, <https://www.iep.utm.edu/lonergan>, “Any moral tradition is essentially a sequence of moral standards . . . Darwinian, Hegelian and Marxist views of history are largely genetic. Needless to say, Lonergan and his advocates should have much to contribute to such dilemmas but many seem to be on different sheets of music. In *Second Collection*, 157, “The Future of Christianity (1969), Lonergan writes: “Normally, the gift of God's love is not a sudden transformation character or personality. It is like the seed planted in ground that needs to be tilled, like the sprout that needs sunlight and rain and protection from choking weeds, devouring insects, and roving animals. As Charlie Brown needs all the friends he can get, so Christians need all the help they can get. Great saints are rare, and even they call themselves vessels of clay.” Lonergan wrote that when he was in the final stages of writing *Method in Theology*. He refers to “religionless Christianity” etc. Indeed, the fields are ripe for GEM-FS dialectical-foundational reintegration which through the spectacles of “caring eyes” can foster cosmopolis.

where operations in accord with the pattern may be repeated indefinitely, and where the fruits of such repetition are, not repetitious, but cumulative and progressive.”<sup>51</sup> In terms of Kingdom-of-God ideals, Lonergan nuanced his method as he moved from *Insight* to *Method in Theology*. His notion of dialectic in *Insight* is mostly philosophical—subtle and to the point. *Method in Theology* builds on *Insight*, but goes beyond it in the sense that in *Method in Theology*, the notion of dialectic is profoundly transformed. It is no longer a mere philosophical dialectic of the mind but one that can open us to the wonders of foundations—foundations motivating the heart toward committing one’s self to Kingdom values in the case of Christians or toward “equivalent” values of genuine interiority in, for example, Buddhism or Islam. Lonergan adapts Wilfred Cantwell Smith’s crucial faith-belief distinction which allows us to speak of a “realm in which love precedes knowledge”<sup>52</sup> and to consider how this realm applies to a dialectic of community in our globalized, pluralistic world. Lonergan is here in search of a mystical eye of love which might retrieve in some fashion the virtue of silence in one’s life. For Lonergan, the fourth realm of meaning, is that of “transcendence in which the subject is related to the divinity in the language of prayer and of prayerful silence”<sup>53</sup> as mediated by a transcendental exigence of love. Unless a sufficient number of people are attuned to in-depth silence—another missing link in the superficial strivings of so many persons today—the human race will remain stuck in its sore predicament. To address that facet of our lives, Lonergan appeals to a spiritual “eye of love.”

### **III. Religious Conversion Implies a Conversion of the “Heart” Based on an “Eye of Love”**

In the second section of chapter 13, “Systematics,” Lonergan examines “closed options” such as the “abstraction” of speculative intellect or pure reason. He relies on our orientation to God, “to transcendent mystery”<sup>54</sup> based upon the four levels of our conscious and intentional operations. In my view, Lonergan is here retrieving, through his intentionality analysis, a link to the transcendent missing in and thus afflicting the lives of many persons unable to free themselves from contemporary ideologies. He argues that “God’s *gift of his love* (Rom. 5, 5) is not something that results from or is conditioned by man’s knowledge of God.” Rather, “it would seem that the gift may precede our knowledge of God and, indeed may be the cause of our seeking knowledge of God.”<sup>55</sup> Lonergan here appeals to Pascal who is also the source of his use of an “eye of love” in one’s life. Lonergan is hereby retrieving another lost or missing link haunting much

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<sup>51</sup> *Method in Theology*, 4[8].

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 123[119].

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 257[241].

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 341[315].

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 340–41[315].

of secular life.<sup>56</sup> To the extent, it does function in one's life, an "eye of love" is also a foundation applicable to those who live ethical, secular lives or who base themselves upon the valid teachings of world religions. To illustrate this I shall briefly refer to some instances of great thinkers and religious leaders who have tried to identify links to truth missing in academic or religious life.

The work of "Nietzsche has given rise to controversy, misunderstanding, and dissent. Today Nietzsche is remembered as the revolutionary author of such polemical ideas as the death of God, the reevaluation of values, the will to untruth, and the *Übermensch*. But is Nietzsche's philosophy as atheistic, relativistic, nihilistic, and immoral as some commentators have claimed? Or ought we perhaps to give more credence to Nietzsche's own assertion that one writes books 'precisely to conceal what one harbors?'"<sup>57</sup> Lonergan joins Ricoeur<sup>58</sup> in categorizing Nietzsche's writings as a hermeneutic of suspicion. Lonergan immediately adds that his own dialectic is one mediated by meaning, a dialectic of recovery that supplies the links Nietzsche could only hint at, but not find. Lonergan's "third way"<sup>59</sup> refers to transcendental method where we can go "behind the procedures of the natural sciences to something more general and more fundamental, namely, the procedures of the human mind" or again, the "core" that is "common" to all inquiry whether distinctly "specialized" yet or not. For Lonergan, the ground for functional specialization already exists in the mind. "In everyday commonsense performance, all four levels are employed continuously without any explicit distinctions between them. In that case no functional specialization arises, for what is sought is not the end of any particular level but cumulative, composite resultant of the end of all four levels."<sup>60</sup>

The previous paragraph points to Lonergan's acumen in dialectics but this has to be complemented by his openness to a foundational eye of love, evident, for example, in the teachings of great mystics. For Lonergan, our ability to question in unrestricted ways underlies our capacity for self-transcendence; being in love in an unrestricted fashion is the proper fulfillment of that capacity. That fulfillment stems neither from our knowledge nor our choice. No! Love dismantles and abolishes the horizon

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<sup>56</sup> Lonergan here also appeals to William Johnston's *The Mysticism of the Cloud of Unknowing*, New York, 1967.

<sup>57</sup> Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 9, 289 quoted at <https://wipfandstock.com/misreading-nietzsche.html>. The editors ask if "whatever is profound loves masks" (BGE, 2, 40) then might Nietzsche's more daring claims be interpreted as clever masks behind which he conceals a deeper philosophy and on which he reveals a hidden truth? Is it not possible that the standard readings of Nietzsche are in fact misreadings—that his work invites misreading, that it is intentionally unclear, deceptive, disguised?"

<sup>58</sup> *A Third Collection*, "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," 157.

<sup>59</sup> *Method in Theology*, 4[8].

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 133–34[128].

“in which our knowing and choosing went on and it sets up a new horizon in which the love of God will transvalue our values and the eyes of that love will transform our knowing.”<sup>61</sup> One is transported into a new conscious dynamic state of love, joy, and peace. Lonergan is trans-valuing Nietzsche’s own transvaluations—thus supplying an important missing link in atheist discourse. While Nietzsche sought to undermine Christian notions of values and morality, Lonergan brings us back to a quest for the common good. He reinterprets the Christian faith in the light of the Catholic tradition so that it may better address our human needs today. As did the Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad in their own day, Lonergan radicalizes the tradition he inherited; he identifies needed missing foundational links in modern thought.

In negative theology, an “experience of the Divine” cannot be expressed in words. Humans cannot define the infinite-yet-unified complexity of the divine. Any attempted description of the Divine is mistaken. Lonergan avoids this dilemma<sup>62</sup> by emphasizing interiority and reintegrating the spiritual and communal dimensions of life. Prayer transforms persons. Whether one meditates silently as do Zen practitioners, or whether one dances communally as in Africa, or whether one bows in prayer as do Muslims, believers do pray—but in their various traditions. Thinkers within these various traditions also think and reflect, but in accordance with their own tradition. The greater the thinker, the more apt he/she is at identifying missing links in everyday life or in common parlance. Thomas Merton, for instance, was able to find some resonance between Zen and the Desert Fathers. Like Zen *roshis*,<sup>63</sup> the Desert Fathers sought a kind of loss of the self and its merger into a larger reality which transcends both self and object. They often enough gave the equivalent of Zen *koans* (unsolvable and puzzling riddles) for apprentice desert monks to meditate on. Their meditations on the *kenosis* (emptying of Christ) and the monk’s similar emptying in poverty and acceptance of suffering struck Merton as akin to the Buddhist notion of emptiness.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 106[102].

<sup>62</sup> Paradoxically, this dilemma helps relate the three world religions in that all of their mystics acknowledge the limitation of words as to the Ultimate. But since humans need words to communicate, the experience of God is paraphrased in “beliefs” which help unite the believers of a given religion but separate them from other religions.

<sup>63</sup> “*Roshi*” is the Japanese honorific title used for a highly venerated senior teacher in Zen Buddhism.

<sup>64</sup> Both in Catholicism and in Buddhism there is a middle way to enlighten a person. The European Enlightenment greatly weakened the Catholic ideal of enlightenment. Descartes had had a parallel effect, though that was not his aim. As to comparing Buddhist-Christian enlightenment, Peter Kreeft says [www.peterkreeft.com/topics-more/religions\\_buddhism.htm](http://www.peterkreeft.com/topics-more/religions_buddhism.htm) “Like Jesus, Buddha taught a very shocking message. And, like Jesus, Buddha was believed only because of his personality. ‘Holy to his fingertips’ is how he is described. If you or I said what Buddha or Jesus said, we would be laughed at. There was

Finally, let me allude to one among many Muslim-Sufi mystics who have lived their religious ideals faithful to their own tradition of God's mercy. I would argue that such ideals are helpful in establishing "love-faith bridges of mercy" also able to transvalue values beyond Nietzschean putdowns. For William Chittick,<sup>65</sup> God has no choice because mercy pertains to the very stuff of reality. God cannot give priority to wrath over mercy, to severity over gentleness, because that would be to give priority to unreality over reality, (. . .) to others rather than to himself. It would contradict the (. . .) truth upon which the universe is built, the fact that there is no reality but God, there is no true existence but God's existence.<sup>66</sup>

To conclude this section on an eye of love informing the lives of mystics, I cite the example of one great Islamic Sufi, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058–1111). Al-Ghazali was dissatisfied with the science and philosophy of his day rooted as they were in observable phenomena. For him, the Divine reality transcends all such phenomena. As did Kant seven centuries later, Al-Ghazali realized that the methods of science and philosophy could not help a believer find certitude in his/her belief. He went through a period of clinical depression, and resigned his teaching post. Eventually, he went into a period of a mystical "Dark Night of the Soul." Having affiliated himself with a Sufi community, he travelled throughout the Middle East. During this period of reflection, he wrote his

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something deep and moving there that made the incredible credible." The dramatic events of Buddha's life "offer a clue to this 'something.'" It is not Buddha's life or his personality that are central to Buddhism. "There could be a Buddhism without Buddha. There could not (. . .) be a Christianity without Christ. "Buddha" is a title, not a given name—like 'Christ'. Buddha means 'the enlightened one,' 'the one who woke up.' Buddha claims we are all spiritually asleep until the experience of Enlightenment or Awakening." I am in this section, adapting material from Raymaker-Durani *Bringing Lonergan Down to Earth*.

<sup>65</sup> For William C. Chittick, "The Anthropology of Compassion," *The Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society* 48, (2010) 1–17. Classical Sufi scholars define Tasawwuf (ت صوف) as "a science whose objective is the reparation of the heart and turning it away from all else but God. It refers to the inner or esoteric dimension of Islam—as integral to Islam as is Sharia and is complemented by outward practices." Such Sufis as Al-Ghazali, and Rumi considered Sufism to be based upon the tenets of Islam and the teachings of Muhammad. I would consider it to be a practice of the heart—a possible relevant dialogue partner with Lonergan and with the mystics of other religions.

<sup>66</sup> William C. Chittick, "The Anthropology of Compassion," *The Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society* 48, (2010) 1-17.

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masterwork, *The Revitalization of the Religious Disciplines*, which deals extensively with human and divine knowledge.<sup>67</sup>

### General Conclusion

Exploring the role of religion in a cultural matrix, Lonergan develops the functional specialties as an eightfold process involving two phases. In the first phase, theologians learn from the past. In the second phase, they seek to solve contemporary problems. This brief essay is a concentrated search for missing links in modern thought which Lonergan retrieved for us in the first and second phases of functional specialization. The links are, to repeat, there for the taking. More dialectical-foundational work that can help us link and apply these two phases outlined in *Method in Theology*<sup>68</sup> is needed. For Lonergan, the unity of the first phase is “not static but dynamic.” The specialties stand to one another “as successive partial objects in the cumulative process of inquiry.” Eventually, dialectic helps one decide amidst conflicts. For Lonergan, this decision is one that grounds a horizon which, ideally, should enable persons, scholars and theologians to establish a basis for the type of foundational reality, of the conversions outlined above.

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<sup>67</sup> *The Revitalization* is a very profound treatment of *ilm* (“secular” knowledge) and *ma'rifa* (mystical knowledge) in the Islamic tradition. In his short, important *The Niche of Lights*, Al-Ghazali explains the Sufi experience of *fana* and *fana al fana* (self-annihilation and the annihilation of self-annihilation). *Fana* involves the experience of losing oneself completely and being one with Divine Truth; *fana al fana* expresses a further experience of annihilating the “self” in the experience of identity with the One Divine Truth. As with the Buddhist Oxherd, a mystic eventually returns to the market place and to ordinary life; he silently showers others with enlightenment.

<sup>68</sup> *Method in Theology*, 140–44[134–37].

