

Dialectic Exercise on 'the General Bias'

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First and Second Objectifications

A. Pat Brown

The assembled text is *Insight*, Chapter 7, section 8, on the "general bias" of common sense. First, I attempt to identify key counterpositions that previously guided my thinking about general bias. Second, I identify a position that can be developed. Third, I attempt to indicate the view that would result from reversing those counterpositions and promoting that position.

The First Objectification

There is a spontaneous tendency to think that you know all about everything, and that understanding then adds on mere details. Why is that so?¹

(1) A fundamental counterposition on interpretation

For years I had a merely plausible apprehension of the principle that the meaning of words varies with the act of understanding that utters them.² I

¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, vol. 10, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert Doran and Frederick Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 168.

² See Lonergan, "Introduction" to his lectures on "Philosophy of God, and Theology," *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, vol. 17, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert Croken and Robert Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 160. See also the "Epilogue" to the *Verbum* articles, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, vol. 2, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 222–27. Lonergan expresses a central and programmatic position on interpretation when he writes there of "the conceptualist illusion." To be hostage to that counterposition on interpretation is "to forget that there

did not fully grasp the danger that academically-acceptable description may lull a reader into a state of premature satisfaction with the initial meanings one brings to bear on Lonergan's texts. To some degree, this is the product of the conceptualist illusion or counterposition, a counterposition so pervasive it is practically part of the air we breathe.

The interpretative counterposition may be reinforced by a moral counterposition to the extent we opt for the satisfaction of resting content with initial meanings over pursuing the value of the long-term growth in meaning that would better position us to better approximate and appreciate Lonergan's meaning. The moral counterposition is then itself reinforced by the general bias of common sense because the tendency to mistake the initial meanings we generate for adequate meanings really is a species of "complacent practicality"³ in the realm of verbal facility. Defective "realist" strategies are as deeply embedded in contemporary reading and interpretative practices as they are in contemporary political practices.

does exist an initial and enormous problem of developing one's understanding; to overlook the fact that, if he is content with the understanding he has and the concepts it utters, then all he can do is express his own incomprehension in the words but without the meaning uttered by the understanding of Aquinas." CWL 2 (*Verbum*), 223. The position applies to one's personal positioning vis-à-vis the words just quoted, of course.

Lately I have become better able to name that counterposition on interpretation using the rubric of "initial meanings," a term Lonergan uses in Chapter 17 of *Insight*, and a term whose significance my prematurely contented understanding had previously allowed me to miss. See *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 567; *ibid.* at n.5. We can all be all too "content with the understanding" supplied by initial meanings. It runs against our commonsense grain not to be inertially content with initial meanings. After all, "the whole tendency ... of present ways of understanding and judging, deliberating and choosing, speaking and doing is for them to remain as they are." CWL 3 (*Insight*), 501. In other words, we chronically underestimate the enormity of the "initial and enormous problem of developing one's understanding" to the extent we are inertially content with the understanding we have already arrived at, and the concepts it utters have settled into familiarity but not, alas, also mastery. The less developed we are, the less we appreciate the need for development. CWL 3 (*Insight*), 650. The point is highly relevant to the present exercise, inasmuch as the push to "develop[] one's understanding" can seem to the general bias within us to be an impractical and difficult effort with no immediate, proportionate, tangible reward.

³ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 253.

In other words, the assembled text can be read in accord with ordinary standards of acceptably soporific academic reading, precisely because those familiar ways of reading direct attention away from our core personal nescience and shunt it into soothingly familiar academic prose. Some even mistake this verbal self-soothing for clarity and explicitude. Rich description can cloak the gap⁴ between naming and understanding the thing named, while avoiding the task of bridging it.

I can put this another way. For years it did not occur to me that my understanding of the general bias was itself a function of the general bias. For the most part, I read the relevant sections descriptively and apart from the larger context of "the existential gap," namely my own, and apart from what I have since come to regard as the evident need for "the heuristic turn."⁵ For that reason, I failed to diagnose that my understanding of the general bias of common sense remained largely within common sense, complicated only by the false assurance generated by a satisfying naming of the bias. And the satisfaction of that false assurance disposed me to oppose—spontaneously and with little conscious fanfare—the effort, pain, and delay in understanding signaled by adequate heuristic symbolisms. Do expressions like " $f(p_i ; c_j ; b_k ; z_l ; u_m ; r_n)$ " engage your curiosity, or do they kick-start your sympathetic nervous system into initiating a hormonal cascade in your adrenal medulla as you spontaneously prepare for fight or flight? Does the technical expression evoke a searching wonder about its meaning or instead a fleeting sensation of fear or even mild hostility, as though you had just been wrongly accused of not knowing? Perhaps a little of both?

I am bluffing here, of course, in my talk of the adrenal medulla, or to put it more politely, I am naming an issue. My high school physics and chemistry courses do not survive in my mind as operative intellectual habits, and even if they did, I've never taken a course in the neural sciences, never mind the series of climbs required to make a serious entry into that explanatory world. How mistakenly or culpably 'content with the

⁴ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 565. That gap is part of a larger "existential gap," an ontogenetic and phylogenetic condition in which the human subject "suffers from an *indocta ignorantia* with regard to himself." *Phenomenology and Logic: The Boston College Lectures on Mathematical Logic and Existentialism*, vol. 18, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Philip McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 282; 281–84.

⁵ See "Editors' Introduction," *Seeding Global Collaboration*, ed. Patrick Brown and James Duffy (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2016), v–vi.

understanding I have and the concepts it utters'⁶ am I? That is a question that will be touched on in the following section. But at least I can identify with the honest response, 'a little of both.'

2. Counterposition concerning the flight from explanatory understanding

I used to read *Insight* as if it were a very profound work to be understood by deploying with relentless perseverance the scholarly means conducive to understanding other profound classics of the philosophical and theological traditions. But this turns out to be misguided. If you start and end in the mode of scholarship, which is a sophisticated development of commonsense understanding, and yet the thing to be understood is explanatory system, your interpretation cannot be fully successful. Your effort may end up falling into "the large but commonly obscure gap"⁷ between accurate verbal usage and the nature of the 'what' denoted by the words.⁸

The world of explanation is not the same as the commonsense world of familiar words and objects, and so far as I can tell from within my own limitations, it is not entered by the simple expedient of redescribing explanatory terms within the mode of common sense, however sophisticated that mode may be in a scholarly context. For example, for a number of years I was comfortable speaking about "emergent probability" even though I lack an elementary apprehension of the mathematics of probability. That comfortable speaking was riddled with the general bias. The general bias encourages and supports the rejection of the explanatory viewpoint, and the flight from that viewpoint can be subtly supported by the whole texture of a scholarly community's operative conventions of communication, publication, and conferencing.

⁶ See CWL 2 (*Verbum*), 223.

⁷ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 565.

⁸ A good example might be the meaning of 'what,' especially where the 'what' is you. "What do you mean when you ask *what*? The difficulty of that question lies not only in the term 'being' but also in what is meant by *what*." CWL 10 (*Topics*), 171. The commonly obscure gap is even more obscure when, in accord with initial meanings, one radically underestimates the difficulty of the task of "understanding the object." *Method*, 156–58; CWL 14, 148–50. In that section of *Method*, Lonergan takes on the principle of the empty head as an interpretative counterposition and alludes to Chapter 17 of *Insight*. But what counts as a sufficiently full head for purposes of adequate interpretation? Surely the treatment of scientific hermeneutics in *Insight* offers a partial answer.

The significance of the flight from explanatory understanding was indicated by Lonergan in an almost-final draft of Chapter 17. "Far more treacherous insidious [sic] is the refusal of the explanatory viewpoint when one attempts to understand man, his psychology, his literature, his politics, his religion, his historical development."⁹ A hard saying, that, but where do I stand with respect to the insidiousness, the treachery? Do I spontaneously dismiss the adjectives 'treacherous' and 'insidious' as gross overstatements? Where do I stand with respect to the assertion that "the scientific effort to understand is blocked by the pretense that one understands already"?¹⁰ One's existential stance towards these questions has a bearing on the meaning one gives the phrase, "the general bias of common sense."

Like other manifestations of the general bias, this one, too, is cumulative. Communities of inquiry can be constituted, in part, by general-bias-based meanings and values. The common sense of a community can be compromised by the shared general bias of the community, even a community of scholars, and that compromise can be disguised to the group by its own insufficiently diagnosed existential gap.

3. Cosmopolis and "reflex history"

This exercise is by its nature highly selective, and so I choose only one aspect of the assembled text to develop. The term "cosmopolis" is a heuristic designation, an X for which Lonergan offers a few initial determinations.¹¹ Lonergan provides a crucial context for those determinations when he writes of how humans "can discover how present insights and decisions influence through emergent probability the occurrence of future insights and decisions," and when he draws attention to how this discovery is relevant to "the vastly more ambitious task of directing and in some measure controlling [humanity's] future history."¹²

That 'vast task' can be given further determination by reference to Lonergan's work prior to *Insight* and also his later work. The prior treatment in his early historical manuscripts from the 1930s concerns what he then called "reflex history" and its contrast with "spontaneous

⁹ 41700DTE050 (ms. of Chapter 17 with changes), at 16 (header 81)(crossed out paragraph immediately following the paragraph ending in "what is outside space and what is before time" in CWL 3, 563).

¹⁰ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 529.

¹¹ See CWL 3 (*Insight*), 262–66.

¹² CWL 3 (*Insight*), 258.

history."¹³ The later treatment occurs under the rubric of "the two times of the temporal subject."¹⁴ The transition between spontaneous and reflex history, and between the prior and subsequent phases of the temporal subject, pivots on the explicit discovery by humans of our intellectual nature and the utilization of that discovery in bringing about future progress. This suggests a profound connection between the role of 'cosmopolis' in future history in *Insight*, and the role of functional collaboration in future history in *Method*. Put in different terms, functional collaboration and its implementation have a great deal to do with whether the vastly ambitious task of directing in some manner future human history will succeed or fail.

The Second Objectification

The view that would result from reversing the counterposition on interpretation I identified is one that would more explicitly and thematically recognize the enormity of the problem of developing one's understanding, and developing one's understanding of understanding, all along the line. Reversing the counterposition implicates a quite different view of adult growth, a view that is obscured or pre-empted to the extent one buys the conceptualist illusion as reinforced by the general bias and also by the moral counterposition that opts for the satisfactions of verbal facility over the value of putting in the labor of enormously developing one's understanding, or shrinks in fear at the revelation of our basic human nescience.

The view that would result from reversing an insufficiently recognized and counterpositional flight from the explanatory viewpoint is a view that would demand massive changes in contemporary academic self-

¹³ See, e.g., "Analytic Concept of History [1938]," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, vol. 11 (1993), 18; A713-12DTE030 ("Outline of an Analytic Concept of History," 10 (header 7), 12 (header 9)("between man's discovery of the reflex use of intellect and his utilisation of this discovery for the systematic planning of the making of man by man, there is a period of real progress of reflex intellect within the frame-work of the spontaneous social unit of tribe or nation."))

¹⁴ See, e.g., Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert Doran and H. Daniel Monsour, trans. Michael Shields (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 405–09.

conception and in the institutions and practices of the human sciences at every level.¹⁵

The view that would result from developing and expanding Lonergan's view of 'the vastly ambitious task' of humans reflexively directing history—rather than endlessly suffering recurring series of inexplicable crises and collapses—is a view that puts functional specialization and collaboration in a much wider and deeper context than is normally recognized. The view would result in a more differentiated view of institutions, roles, and tasks set by 'the new science'¹⁶ envisioned by Lonergan. The view that would result would also provide higher and deeper criteria for the success or failure of the project of contemporary Lonergan studies.

Engineers spend a lot of time on what's called failure analysis. Whether you're designing, or testing, or building, you ... because, you know, things break. They fail, they explode, collapse, burn out, there's stress, fatigue, fracture. And you want to find out why it failed; that's part of your job. You want to find out what's wrong so you can fix it.¹⁷

¹⁵ Reversing the counterpositional discounting of the full horror ("insidious") of the flight from the explanatory viewpoint would seem to call for a self-reassessment of the community of Lonergan scholars regarding its "disregard of larger issues" and its "indifference to long-term results." CWL 3 (*Insight*), 251. If my own self-assessment is any indication, the community's self-assessment would need to recognize painful and longstanding failures as well as limited successes.

¹⁶ Lonergan, "Review of M.F. Sciacca, *Saint Augustin et le neoplatonism: La possibilité d'une philosophie chrétienne* and Maurice Nédoncelle, *Existe-t-il une philosophie chrétienne?* [1959]," in *Shorter Papers*, vol. 20, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert Croken, Robert Doran, and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 223.

¹⁷ Michael Chabon, *Moonglow: A Novel* (New York: HarperCollins, 2016), 351–52.

B. Catherine King

It is changing a concrete synthesis in living, and that change necessarily involves a whole retinue of emotions.¹⁸

According to James Duffy, we have two tasks:

Distinguishing between positions and counter-positions and (ii) indicating a resulting view ... the first task ... a positioning of yourself ... auto-biographical ... regarding things you can talk about ... and not talk about ... you make explicit your credentials, the conditions and assumptions implicit as you reread ... General Bias. CWL 3, 250-267.

Second: "Where would my positioning lead? What would result positively or negatively from my positioning?" ... a kind of reversed-nostalgia, a letting loose of my imagination "presenting an idealized version of the past." *Method in Theology*, 251; CWL 14, 236.

All good; however, neither general bias, the counter-positions (in *Insight*), nor intellectual conversion captures the shift from conceptualist/classicist to historical consciousness. Still, Lonergan explored that shift as distinct in his post-*Insight* essays. Also, that shift (a) is germane to my own development and (b) with positional achievements, adds to the richness of the foundations that inform dialectical analysis, pedagogy, and live discourse.

Decades ago, I didn't "get it" either; but thought that **I**, and not **Lonergan**, was in error. I was right to do so. Much later upon reading *A Second Collection*, I had already experienced the shift that Lonergan is so intent on conveying in that work.

In my experience, aside from other absences, this shift is commonly missing in philosophical discussions, even with people who profess to understand Lonergan's work. If so my having undergone such shifts of thought over time made me aware of the difficulty presented by philosophical discourse in any venue.

The problem is not missing or erred concepts nor bad logic. Rather, it's twofold and tacit: first, the presence of erred assumptions about subjectivity; and second, thinkers begin with no ground coupled with an "excessive objectivism." From there, thinkers cannot "get it" precisely because they are already thinking with those two assumptions in place. The need is not to pile new concepts on those same assumptions, but for thinkers to personally unearth and inspect their own assumptions.

¹⁸ CWL 18, 291.

The First Objectification

From Classicist-Conceptualist to Historical Consciousness

Circa the late-80's, I could make no sense of the "neglect of the subject." "Isn't it merely *in-here* psychology?" No insights came; and so the question buzzed around for years. However, along the way I recognized an image of fog in my thinking that was there long before I noticed it. Instead of veering-off from it, I decided to face it . . . by standing open to it.¹⁹

Reflections 1

Before, I did not know that I started with *ungrounded-objectified* concepts even though I was not satisfied and felt a vague but deadening tautology at work in my thinking. A long time passed before I could *give voice to myself: of my felt dissatisfaction*. When I did, and with much self-reflection, the fog began to clear revealing assumptions that, before, had "automatically" obscured my need for verity. Earlier-learned, those assumptions were pre-conceptual. Gone now, they were a remote source of my dissatisfaction.

With that realization, via the theory, I identified my mind in action. I underwent a *heightening of consciousness*; and I verified both the theory and my mind.

Readers familiar with Lonergan's work will recognize above a movement towards *self-appropriation*; a recovery of subjectivity as critical-empirical ground; and both threaded with the potency of *intellectual conversion*. Also, after the initial upside-down shock, over time, I "fell back" into old thought-habits. If I am correct, on our way to a new integration, we need to struggle to hold-on to the insights we gained with that shock.²⁰

¹⁹ I later referred to this "facing the fog" as *presencing*. For further explorations, see my essay on *Language and Self-Presence*: https://www.academia.edu/24125701/Language_and_Self-Presence?email_work_card=thumbnail-desktop

²⁰ We might undergo intellectual conversion as a radical turning-upside-down experience; but our habits of thought remain deep-set and "foggy" (polymorphic) requiring long-term self-transitional work.

A Further Shift: Self-to-World View

The above occurred much earlier than the shift to historical consciousness.²¹ Lonergan leads us to other breakthroughs, yes; but also to undergo a shift in our thinking that concerns our self-to-world view.

Again, I faced the fog. Somehow in my early years I had “absorbed” an image from which a set of *erred assumptions* flowed.²² This shift was existential and fully conscious.²³ It enabled me (a) to recognize my ungrounded starting point and (b) to identify, expunge, and replace a powerful image residing deep in my mind. As long as it remained, it secured my erred view. A new image would set the stage to complete the shift from my conscious direction to functioning spontaneity.

The Image

Years ago, my teacher, Emile Piscitelli, chalked an image on the board. It made little impression on me . . . so simple; but I noted it. Below are two diagram sets (A) Piscitelli’s and (B) mine.

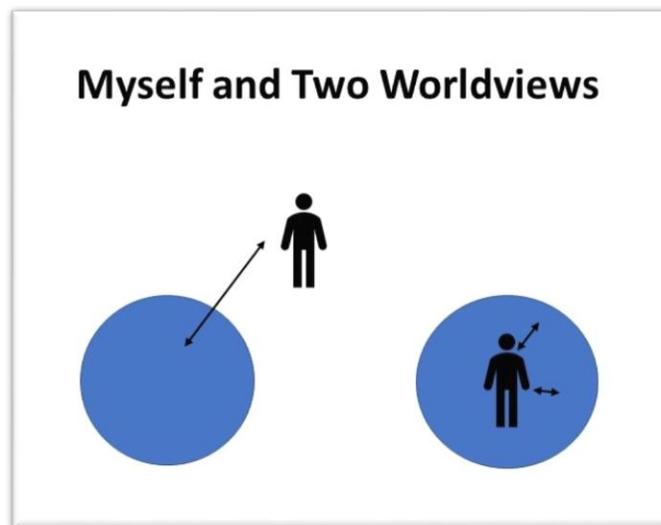


Diagram A Before and After

²¹ I experienced my initial intellectual conversion while sitting on my couch at home reading philosophy—as a start. The shift to historical consciousness occurred years later.

²² I refer to tacit philosophical education that occurs in our early years. For further exploration, see my paper: “The Four Times of Philosophical Learning” (draft, to be published).

²³ The shift occurred during an e-mail exchange with a Lonergan friend. By *existential* I mean we can *refer to* an experience but *referring-to* is not *undergoing*.

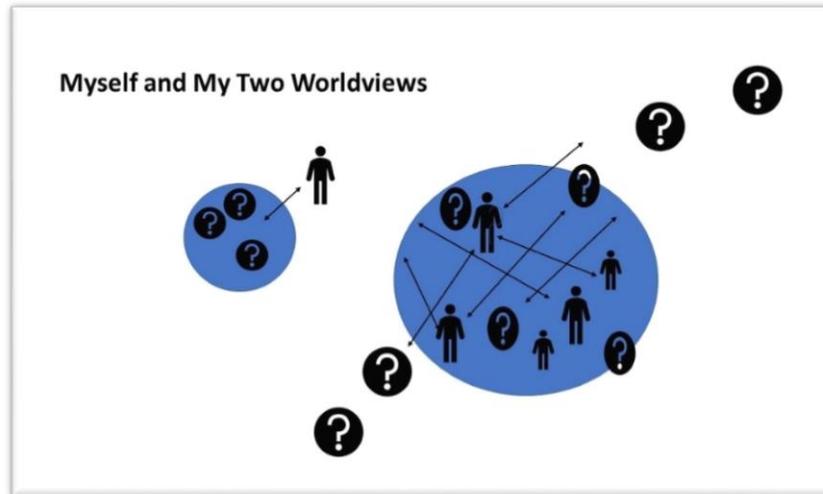


Diagram B Before and After

Somehow in my early education I had internalized the *outsider* image. I have no memory of learning that image.²⁴ Nevertheless, *I thought with it*, where I *look* at the world from *outside*: (a) separate and/or (b) erased “out of the picture.”²⁵

Despite other corrective shifts, with the old image in place, any authentic movements of thought I experienced conflicted with patterns in the image and the assumptions that built-out from it as I developed language. Complements of that image, my living as a whole person became nigh-impossible: I remained an anxious outsider.²⁶

²⁴ Such image formation I refer to as *primitive insights* that occur in pre-language children, or later in our education. For an exploration of primitive insights, see my *Language and Self-Presence* draft:

https://www.academia.edu/24125701/Language_and_Self-Presence

²⁵ In my inborn ability to objectify, I had not yet objectified myself as distinct from other objects; and so I de facto collapsed myself in/with the object and, in fact, *forgot myself* (easy to occur in the process of differentiating one’s mind). Throughout my education, object-knowledge, rather than philosophical development, was the issue. From my view, K–12+ education in the U.S. has made *extroversion* systematic. (Much work is needed here.)

²⁶ Years before, I had understood the commonsense/theory distinction and relationship, undergone self-appropriation and intellectual conversion, and continued to work hard to correct my mind-habits. But still, through the early installment of that image, I had maintained a residue of self-abstraction that, again, kept me in deep conflict. Returning to a wholeness of being, I suggest, is one aspect of the recovery of *historical consciousness*.

Reflections 2: The Shift

Like my other shifts, this was an *undergoing*: *I experienced the shift physically and, as it occurred, I was reflectively aware-of it at the core of my being.*²⁷ My old image melted away taking my erred assumptions with it. The new image gave form to new assumptions about my self-world relationship: *I question being from within being.*

This shift relates to AND differs from (a) *self-appropriation*; (b) distinguishing *theoretical, commonsense, and interior consciousness*, and (c) *intellectual conversion* with its after-work. Like other shifts, this one is *developmental*, but also *corrective*.²⁸ My new image and its flow of assumptions now correlated, rather than conflicted, with my earlier shifts toward authenticity.²⁹

Though specifics differ, images and the philosophical assumptions that flow from them are built-in to our early learning. But shifts of consciousness are not only about unearthing distorted images.³⁰ Erred assumptions also

²⁷ I thought later that perhaps I had closed what Lonergan refers to as my “existential gap.”

²⁸ For developments, derailments, and needed corrections in the history of philosophy in the West, see Lonergan, “The Absence of God in Modern Culture,” *A Second Collection*, ed. William Ryan and Bernard Tyrrell (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1974), 101–116; CWL 13, 86–98. If indeed corrective, I assume the prior errors need not occur, but *have*, and on a large scale. Also, knowledge of such corrections opens the way for new questions about epochal philosophical developments. Also, aside from the developmental aspects of the conversions, as Lonergan sets out, their corrective aspects are a part of our historical inheritance of thought and need further development.

²⁹ I do not refer to “picture-thinking” or mental pictures *as equivalent to knowledge* but to images that hold intelligible patterns that we think with, and from which insights occur that, in turn, form our assumptions. With Lonergan, my view is that Western thought is caught-up in aspects of this derailment. The need is for both development and corrective. Thus, we can distinguish writ-small (person) and writ-large (group-cultural) dimensions of our present dialectical project. See Lonergan, “The Absence of God in Modern Culture,” *A Second Collection*, 101–116; CWL 13, 86–98.

³⁰ From our images flow a correlate set of assumptions that vie to give frame and habit to the philosophical thought that underpins all other object-thinking. Importantly, badly-formed images and erred assumptions live in deep conflict with our more basic *method of mind* and its own set of assumptions. This conflict of assumptions, I suggest, is where our philosophical polymorphism begins. See my paper given at West Coast Methods Institute, 2016: *Scrutinizing Our*

tend to endure; and both hold in place a *self-to-world view* that conflicts with our mind's method, that *we think with*, and that is difficult to uproot.³¹

The shift to historical consciousness, and its relationship to the other shifts, needs to be worked out as they relate to the conversions that, according to Lonergan, inhabit *foundations* that inform dialectical analyses.³²

It's not one, then, but a complex of comprehensive growths and corrective shifts that constitutes our optimal foundational comportment, and so the rich but developing standard we seek to inform dialectical analyses. That standard includes moral and religious conversions; but where, *historically*, all are tenuous, worked out in community with others.

At each stage, I compared the old with the new. From where I "stood," I recognized deficits in my earlier thinking where, before: *one view only for me and all. Soul?* I vaguely thought I had one; not thinking of the fallacy of "self-explanatory" or how I had slipped quietly into *not-real* thinking. Similarly, concepts were to just accept and to compare abstractly. I never asked about an empirical ground for making intellectually honest, critical, and/or evaluative judgments. I just judged.

In time, my comparisons gained their critical ground: "You have the subjective pole of an objective field." My concepts were still relevant. I only had *repositioned* myself in history (above *after* images).³³ With the new view, you don't have "propositions about yourself; but yourself, in your spiritual reality, to guide you in working out what that objective horizon is."³⁴

Philosophical Assumptions/Polymorphism: How is it that, "the subject's reality lies beyond his own horizon"? Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/24023805/>

³¹ This need is why self-reflection (know thyself) is essential to philosophical health.

³² On foundations, see *Method in Theology*, 267; CWL 14, 250. I avoid references to *interior dialectic* as set out in Piscitelli's work. For that exploration, see my rewrite of the "New Wineskins" paper given at the West Coast Methods Conference in 2017 (to be posted to Academia.com).

³³ My understanding of Lonergan's *virtually unconditioned*, of *finality*, and of metaphysics as *an open integral heuristic structure*, began to fall together. I am far from understanding the entire theoretical movement; however, I have ceased to expect it to be absolutely unconditioned or merely conceptual in my old way of thinking.

³⁴ Lonergan, "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J.," *A Second Collection*, 214–15; CWL 13, 181. Lonergan writes: "An acknowledgement that the real is verified makes it possible to affirm the reality no less of the higher system than of the underlying manifold." CWL 3 (*Insight*), 230.

Now I know that I reach beyond from within as a part of history's mystery; not as relativist or dogmatist, but *as a knower*. Besides my comfort with intelligibility, I know a different dimension of what Lonergan meant by a radical clarification: "the elimination of an exceedingly stubborn and misleading myth concerning reality, objectivity, and human knowledge."

Before I had "stubbornly," without clarity, held to the outsider view (the devil I knew); whereas *now* I could compare the new with the old. I felt a deep sense of satisfaction as a good amount of anxiety left my psychic scene and, in my way, I felt I had come home. That "way" was undergoing a multi-faceted shift in my philosophical comportment coming to fruition. That shift also brought into high relief the import of my moral-ethical-spiritual life.³⁵

Over time, the complex of shifts enabled me to understand (a) the philosophical effects of early-learning; (b) the inevitability that, with old imagery and subsequent self-to-world assumptions gone unquestioned, thinkers will "automatically" have trouble understanding *why* Lonergan so-pressed *subjectivity*. From that old view, agreements come from logic or, at best, a vague resonance with a deeper reality that we fail to "bring up." In the West, too easily, we are early-conditioned to *neglect the subject*; and so start by requiring no ground for concepts or theories.³⁶

The Second Objectification

Now and the Future

Many in the human sciences, besides forays into statistics, remain uncritical and so adopt an aura of empty faith. The implications are enormous for live discussions and pedagogy for philosophical concerns. Many are well-couched in counter-positional thinking of every stripe. And so I am far from expecting progress that is not rooted in long preparation, an abiding openness, and a love of self-reflective insights. I have learned to expect

³⁵ I think perhaps this later shift is a part of intellectual conversion: an inevitable extension of that earlier experience and struggle, or a writ-large version. Again, Lonergan himself waited for his own conversion away from his classical training to the fullness of his own historical consciousness; as "repositioning" himself in and as history. Now I understand how theory relates to that new view.

³⁶ We have been long-engaged with positivist forces. Though varied from person-to-person, aspects of this and other views (counter-positional) have been purveyed in academia for centuries now.

"automatic resistance."³⁷ Though each journey differs, seen in the context of Lonergan's work, I think my experiences hold some general implications.³⁸

The downside: I feel like Cassandra.³⁹

The upside: "We" are increasingly aware of the epochal change we are involved in; of "resistance to enlightenment"; of cosmopolis; and of the inevitability of decline, coupled with foundations born of what is already given to us; and so, reasonably, hope persists. Lonergan does say that dialectic AND commonsense sanity are our allies.⁴⁰

What to do? . . . work on my ethical-moral-religious meaning as I live. In my dreams, *WE* will *systematically*, with funding, tech support, and long-term planning, approach educational fields and institutions for implementing comprehensive change.⁴¹

C. Paul St. Amour

The First Objectification

Dialectic has as its central task not merely to criticize, but also "to add to the interpretation that understands a further interpretation that appreciates."⁴² Dialectical criticism and appreciation are not a 'view from nowhere,' but arise only as stances taken by concretely situated subjects. Dialectic indispensably engages fourth-level conscious intentionality in its practitioners. Perhaps because I am cognizant of a deep indebtedness to the achievement of Lonergan, I find my particular scales weighed down far more with appreciation than with criticism. While there is little room for

³⁷ I have long-thought that classrooms, though not perfect, are best for inspiring openness to self-reflective thought.

³⁸ Not everyone needs the corrective elements of intellectual conversion. Some are educated towards conversion early on. Such a movement is slow, experienced as a part of our well-being. Some undergo conversion without knowing what has occurred; though, to be critical, we need that knowing and that our flow of meaning may differ from many who have little or no self-awareness.

³⁹ This is an irony considering my earlier outsider image and view.

⁴⁰ See CWL 3 (*Insight*), 267.

⁴¹ Circa 2009, I attempted an approach in Catholic education. After some good dialogue, I was ignored if not rebuffed, even after later follow-up requests for explanation. The upside: it's still there to do.

⁴² Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972, 1979), 246; CWL 14, 231.

explication of my grounds for particular appreciations, or even to list all specific points I regard as positional and important, I can at least briefly indicate several specific emphases that I regard as particularly worthy of wider appreciation.⁴³

- Section 8 of Chapter 7 of *Insight* compactly presents Lonergan's conception of the dialectic of history, central to which are the dynamics of general bias and the longer cycle of decline, and their reversal as potentially mediated by cosmopolis. My appreciation of the significance of *what is at stake* in this positional passage might tersely be sketched in an interrogative mode. Is there a *normative* orientation to human praxis and history, or does history occur such that only merely factual (but never evaluative) statements might truly be predicated of it? Human deliberations undoubtedly occur, but in principle have such deliberations the capacity either to actualize or fail to actualize value, what is truly worthwhile? Or is deliberation merely instrumental in the pursuit of individual and group satisfaction? Do "contrary styles of evaluation" make a valuational difference?⁴⁴ Contrary styles of evaluation give rise to "contrary horizons." While *perspectival* differences of horizon may be complementary and *genetic* differences of horizon may be developed, with respect to *dialectically* "contrary horizons," are we restricted merely to uncritical acceptance? Is there any real import to the terms "progress" and "decline," or are these terms merely rhetorical instruments in the service of some group's will to power? Is there some standard by which past, present, and future human performance can be appreciated, criticized, and responsibly guided? Or are we condemned merely to 'muddle through as best we can' — where the term "best" remains semantically vacuous?
- I appreciate (spiritually, existentially, psychologically) Lonergan's explication of the possibility of "surds" being present in social and historical contexts. Though basic sanity indispensably requires

⁴³ I can also explicitly relay that I speak from a background of prior concerns related to the issue at hand, i.e., the dialectic of history — most notably those of my dissertation (which explicated the problem of the integration of ethico-religious and cognitional consciousness in the context of Kierkegaard's polemic against Hegel), and more recent attempts to understand Lonergan's macroeconomic theory in a manner that engages pressing contemporary issues such as income inequality and globalization.

⁴⁴ "Contrary styles of evaluation" is Lonergan's rubric for conflicts within dialectic itself. See *Method in Theology*, 235; CWL 14, 221.

deference to the factual, an inhuman oppressiveness follows from the assumption that the factual constitutes an absolute and final horizon. There exists a deeper sanity of which we are deprived when we lack a basis for asserting that some events which (f)actually occurred *ought* never to have happened, and for denying that what has happened was *eo ipso* destined to be. Dialectical criticism of praxis and history is impossible in the absence of inverse insights capable of detecting surds in the factual.

- “The totalitarian has uncovered a secret of power. To defeat him is not to eliminate a permanent temptation to try once more his methods. Those not subjected to the temptation by their ambitions or their need will be subjected to it by their fears of danger and by their insistence on self-protection.”⁴⁵ This cautionary reminder seems especially pertinent in our post-9/11 world of ‘enhanced interrogation,’ drones, and perpetual wars on terror; data-mining and voter profiling, scapegoating of immigrants, weakening of the free press, ever-widening circles of policing and surveillance. It is a salutary admonition for any who blithely assume we have outgrown the possibility of Orwellian dystopia.
- In his account of cosmopolis, Lonergan takes a stand that places integrity above effectiveness, and in light of this priority repudiates reliance on force. “So far from employing power or pressure or force, it [cosmopolis] has to witness to the possibility of ideas being operative without such backing. Unless it can provide that witness, then it is useless.”⁴⁶ This insistence on a self-consistent witnessing to the immanent transcendental norms of consciousness constitutes a bold and admirable stance in opposition to the Machiavellian-Hobbsian horizon that (I believe) has corrupted modern political discourse at its roots.⁴⁷
- Bias has recently become a significant topic in cognitive psychology, and has led to insights and applications in subfields such as criminal

⁴⁵ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 257.

⁴⁶ Lonergan, CWL 3 (*Insight*), 264.

⁴⁷ Elsewhere I have argued that the Machiavellian horizon is reflexive, and reinforces a spiral of decline precisely by cultivating persons whose character is consistent with its own low assessment of the human capacity for moral self-transcendence. See Paul St. Amour, “Moral Realism, Reflexivity, and the Abdication of Virtue,” *Contemporary Philosophy*, vol. XXII (2000), 37–45.

justice, research methodology, behavior finance, etc., 50 years prior, Lonergan provided a generalized account of bias as involving, subjectively, a four-fold refusal of questioning, and objectively, resulting distortions in existential, social, and historical situations. While dramatic, individual, and group biases are partially understood and widely appreciated (although not typically in terms of a refusal to question), Lonergan's account of "general bias" is particularly distinctive, inherently hidden from common sense modes of understanding, gravely important (as general bias combines with group bias to generate a longer cycle of decline), and widely unacknowledged.

There is in Section 8 a compact yet incisive critique of the human sciences. Failing to adequately self-differentiate from the natural sciences, the human sciences have been prone to materialist and determinist presuppositions. Their explications of the human have tended not to emphasize the centrality of human self-understanding and self-determination in a context of emergent probability. Bound by an empiricist notion of objectivity that rejects as legitimate the data of consciousness, access is barred to the realm of interiority and its potential disclosure of normative transcendental principles. Lacking such principles, the human sciences often yield results that seem less than human. They are not yet in possession of a fundamental critical basis from which authentic liberty can be distinguished from bias and progress can be differentiated from decline.

The Second Objectification

What would result from development of these positions, i.e., from widespread understanding of the basis of a genuine distinction between progress and decline, from future human sciences that methodologically affirm a potential for self-transcendence rooted in the dynamic structure of conscious intentionality, from political orders that proscribe biases and affirm liberty, from broader appreciation of the relevance of theory to practice, from adequate concern for long-term problems, from a future disdain for general bias no weaker or less popular than is the current disdain for individual bias, from the effective witness of a non-forceful yet spiritually compelling cosmopolis? Such an emergence would entail the longer cycle of decline grinding to a halt. As the "major surrender" of disinterested and critical intelligence unravels, religion, culture, and philosophy would be liberated from the Procrustean bed of practicality, and their potential to illuminate would be restored. Conditions would progressively become more favorable for the "control of the emergent

probability of the future."⁴⁸ Humankind could more luminously take responsibility for its own self-making.

Third Objectifications

A. Pat Brown

"Every scotosis puts forth a plausible, ingenious, adaptive, untiring resistance. The general bias of common sense is no exception."⁴⁹

"Dialectic asks people to select fundamental positions and name the counterpositions that guide their thinking. It is to encourage each individual to bring out into the open his horizon, his fundamental horizon."⁵⁰

Introduction

This is the third of three objectifications involved in an exercise in Dialectic.⁵¹ In the present compressed exercise, those objectifications regard the views the three of us hold on the nature of the general bias, its reality within us, and at least some of its implications. The objectifications also involve (inevitably) the unobjectified influence of the general bias on our present understandings of the general bias.

Dialectic places us under the pressure and challenge of 'learning to stand where we have not stood before.'⁵² That is neither easy nor pleasant. The long struggle of serious horizon-shift can be difficult, disturbing, and "unpleasantly existential."⁵³ It is not only someone struggling to move beyond the classicist mentality who "in the process of learning ... will often have the feeling that he has nowhere to stand, that he is sacrificing his roots,

⁴⁸ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 252.

⁴⁹ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 266. It is worth noting that the word "resistance" in this passage has explicitly psychotherapeutic overtones.

⁵⁰ 606BCDTE070/BC70-9A, at 12 (Boston College Institute on Method in Theology, lecture nine, June 24, 1970). These and other materials from the Lonergan Archives may be found online at <https://bernardlonergan.com>.

⁵¹ *Method in Theology*, 250; CWL 14, 235.

⁵² 85400DTE060, at 16 (lecture notes for the Method in Theology Institute, Georgetown University, 1964). The attribution of origin is mine. One can verify the origin of these notes by comparing them with CWL 22 (*Early Works on Theological Method I*), 377–387.

⁵³ See 85500DTE060, 1 (lecture notes for Method in Theology Institute, Georgetown University, 1964) ("Method is unpleasantly existential.")

becoming uprooted, and slipping into the abyss.”⁵⁴ The world of explanation, too, seems “a sheer leap into the void for the existential subject”⁵⁵ that is me, at least in contrast to the seemingly unproblematic world disclosed by commonsense understanding and commonsense language—even the understanding and language of that species of sophisticated common sense called scholarship.⁵⁶ That tells us something about the general bias.

The general bias is not just an affliction of those unfamiliar with Lonergan’s thought. For that reason, it is perfectly possible for us to tacitly “refuse the invitation to conversion” even while thinking and talking about conversion, and our “refusal will take the form of rationalizations.”⁵⁷ Conversion disrupts present routines of thinking and speaking, feeling and acting, and we prefer the soothing and familiar pre-disrupted routines. Conversion disrupts on the personal level for me but also on the communal level for us. Not surprisingly, we prefer pre-disrupted routines to the feeling that we are slipping into the abyss or leaping headlong into it. Even the suggestion that we may be in thrall to merely initial meanings when we utter the familiar—too familiar—word “conversion” is disruptive. It cuts against the grain of the usual routines we have by now established in Lonergan studies.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ 85400DTE060, at 16 (lecture notes for the 1964 Georgetown Institute).

⁵⁵ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 562.

⁵⁶ Scholarship involves a long apprenticeship, typically but not always beginning with a Ph.D. program or a similar period of long and intensive study. But there is another, longer, and altogether more difficult apprenticeship described by Lonergan with “the greatest brevity” and brutality in the second paragraph on page 260 of *Method in Theology* (CWL 14, 244). The post-systematic consciousness of Augustine, Descartes, Pascal, or Newman “vastly enlarges” “the capacities of ordinary language” and can “contribute enormously to our understanding of ourselves,” all the while “remain[ing] within the world of commonsense apprehension and speech.” *Method*, 261; CWL 14, 244. But commonsense apprehension and speech also embody commonsense expectations, and those expectations can embody subtle and undiagnosed versions of the general bias.

⁵⁷ 85400DTE060, at 16; CWL 3 (*Insight*), 253 (“The general bias of common sense involves sins of refusal as well as of mere omission.”)

⁵⁸ See James Duffy, “The Joy of Believing,” *Himig Ugnayan: A Theological Journal of the Institute of Formation and Religious Studies*, vol. 16 (2016), special edition, *Reshaping Christian Openness: A Festschrift for Fr. Brendan Lovett*, 201–227, and see especially Part B: “Gathering Fifty Years of Lonergan Studies

The general bias and its "untiring resistance" allow and encourage us to tacitly carry our commonsense expectations into the struggle of reading Lonergan and ourselves adequately and accurately. To put the same point another way: Each of us is permanently in danger of cutting Lonergan down to our own size⁵⁹ without ever really noticing that we are doing so. It takes exercises, like the present one, to bring that danger into the light of day and into the context of heightened self-scrutiny.⁶⁰

The Third Objectification of the Investigators' Horizon

The second objectification left the three of us with our views concerning the views that would result from developing what each of us regarded as positions and reversing what each regarded as counterpositions concerning the general bias.⁶¹ The third objectification is another turn of the screw: here the *results* of each investigator's prior struggles are subjected to the same process. In other words, the results of the prior steps are themselves regarded as materials for the third. In effect, in the third objectification the investigators become the investigated.

1. Regarding my own views as materials

"A word is a bud attempting to become a twig."⁶²

My prior effort began with an attempt to formulate, and to start to reverse, a fundamental counterposition on interpretation that once guided my thinking, a counterposition that is regularly and almost ritually reinforced by the general bias. The counterposition stems from the conceptualist

(1965–2015)," 204–227. See also *ibid.*, 216 (describing the shift from his extensive data-gathering exercise concerning fifty years of Lonergan studies "to evaluation, with an eye for the unsettling good or notably bad within our inadequate viewpoint.")

⁵⁹ CWL 18 (*Phenomenology and Existentialism*), 296.

⁶⁰ *Method*, 253; CWL 14, 238.

⁶¹ *Method*, 250; CWL 14, 235. Lonergan refers to those engaging in the exercise of Dialectic as "investigators." *Method*, 250; CWL 14, 235. He also refers to them as "evaluators." *Method*, 331, CWL 14, 308. The process is, in effect, "a projective test" in which the investigators cumulatively reveal to others, but also to themselves, what they consider a position, what they consider a counterposition, and why. Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," CWL 17 (*Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*), 403.

⁶² Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Reverie: Childhood, Language, and the Cosmos*, trans. Daniel Russell (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 17.

illusion that arises when one's implicit or explicit view of human knowing centers on concepts and overlooks the role of insights in the very genesis of concepts. In my view, the view that results from reversing this counterposition is the recognition that the meaning of concepts varies with the acts of understanding uttering the concepts.⁶³

Both the position and its counterposition have implications. If one tacitly accepts some version of the conceptualist counterposition on interpretation, one is left wide open to a general-bias-based view of interpretation, even regarding texts that are the product of commonsense understanding.⁶⁴ One implication: the counterposition leads to drastically underestimating the difficulty of adequate interpretation, and this 'underestimating' is aided and abetted by the general bias. To take one example, the general bias generates untiring resistance to the complications and implications of explanatory hermeneutics. Under its sway, one cannot but regard the canons of explanatory hermeneutics formulated by Lonergan as needlessly obscure and otiose.

This position and its implications suggest a diagnostic exercise for those interested in Lonergan's thought. In all honesty, do I treat those strange canons as somehow centrally relevant to Lonergan's project? My personal answer is that I do; but in all honesty, I have difficulty doing so. Lonergan's new science of interpretation⁶⁵ is difficult and remote. But I can at least grasp that Lonergan was quite serious in formulating an explanatory hermeneutics⁶⁶ and so, though the canons and their full implications are well beyond the range of my current knowledge—I find it difficult to imagine the science at its inception stage, never mind how it will operate as a mature science—at least those canons are not beyond my continuing interest and effort. I cannot in good conscience simply ignore

⁶³ For nuances concerning the genesis and public meaning of ordinary language and sedimented usage at any given socio-historical cross-section, see *Method*, 254–57; CWL 14, 238–41; CWL 3 (*Insight*), 269 (last sentence of Chapter 7); CWL 25 (*Archival Material: Early Papers on History*), 44.

⁶⁴ See CWL 22 (*Early Works on Theological Method I*), 648, 651.

⁶⁵ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 587–88, 592 (referring to “the problem of scientific interpretation”); *ibid.*, 609 (contending that “as long as interpretation remains on the descriptive level,” it basically “excludes the possibility of scientific collaboration, scientific control, and scientific advance towards commonly accepted results.”)

⁶⁶ See CWL 3 (*Insight*), 585–616, especially 608–616; CWL 22 (*Early Works on Theological Method I*), 635–653, especially 645–653.

the canons, despite the fact that my personal edition of the general bias invites and encourages me to do so. It may even allow me to feel justified when I do and to resent, to varying degrees, anyone who calls me to account.⁶⁷

Second, I attempted to formulate a counterposition relating to the general bias that involves the flight from explanatory understanding. In the process of attempting an initial reversal of that counterposition, I expressed my view on the necessity of the heuristic turn. I can push that reversal process a little further here. In my view those interested in Lonergan's thought, and those dedicated to promoting it, should attempt to position themselves seriously, one way or the other, with regard to the need for the heuristic turn.

Lonergan formulated the basic position this way: "All empirical inquiry that reaches scientific status proceeds within a heuristic structure."⁶⁸ Do I take that basic position as my own, and attempt to embody it, at least in some initial and inadequate way, in my attempts to move beyond the limited zone of commonsense understanding? Or do I merely endorse it notionally from within my sophisticated commonsense apprehensions, post-systematically,⁶⁹ but with a sincere long-term aspiration to better understand and appreciate the basic position? Or — another

⁶⁷ See the first epigraph above. I have no idea how contemporary psychotherapeutic notions map onto the "ingenious" and "untiring resistance" put up by the general bias. But at least on Lonergan's authority, the general bias is a form of scotosis with its own unique and extremely strong patterns of resistance. I am not aware of any study of the general bias that focuses on its dynamics of resistance in the sense given the term by Freud, Jung, Stekel, or Horney.

⁶⁸ "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," CWL 16 (*A Third Collection*), 173. As James Duffy has noted, "In Lonergan's thought, and in scientific method generally, 'a full understanding of the object' is a very remote achievement, one approached only through the narrow gate of adequate heuristics." James Duffy, "The Joy of Believing," *ibid.*, 223. The internal quotation refers to Aquinas' and Lonergan's positionings regarding adequate what-asking. "According to St Thomas there is a strong sense of the Aristotelian *ti esti, quid sit?* what is it? that refers to a full understanding of the object." CWL 10 (*Topics*), 30.

⁶⁹ *Method*, 304–05; CWL 14, 284 (describing "post-systematic literature" as produced by "the educated classes" that accept the "cultural patrimony" of prior systematic thinking but noting that the producers of such literature "are not systematic thinkers" and that "their whole mode of thought is just the commonsense mode.")

option—do I performatively reject the basic position but in an oblique and never-self-objectified way, wrapping the rejection in “a hullabaloo of starry-eyed praise” for Lonergan’s project, “along with an insecure resentment of everything else,” where the ‘everything else’ includes the hard work of hard science?⁷⁰ Self-diagnostic questions such as these, however variously formulated, help us to objectify our own positioning regarding the flight from explanatory understanding.⁷¹

In the earlier phase of this exercise, I used as an example of that fundamental position on heuristics Philip McShane’s first “metaphysical word,” a symbolic expression he named “ W_1 ”: $f(p_i ; c_j ; b_k ; z_l ; u_m ; r_n)$.⁷² Each

⁷⁰ CWL 3 (*Insight*), at 405.

⁷¹ My personal answers to these questions are (1) I hope so, (2) as to endorsing the basic position in a merely notional way, I hope not; as to the rest, I hope so, (3) I definitely hope not. I’ve been able to notice at least an echo of the insecurity in my own struggles. But that minor achievement of self-honesty hardly means that I have done the requisite hard work of hard science. My rough passage through the academic world did not include the luxury of sabbaticals. Even if it had, I’m not confident I would have used the opportunity to initiate a serious and sustained apprenticeship in a modern science. All I can appeal to in my own experience are high school mathematics, geometry, physics, chemistry, and biology. And those are decades old. That’s really not good enough for anything but a primitive and minimal intimation of the basic position on heuristics. So my current grasp of the basic position on heuristics really is at the level of fairly primitive initial meanings. I am an aging beginner. I currently make my living by the sweat of my non-academic brow, which leaves me little time or energy for further endeavors. Perhaps when and if I retire I will be able to make further progress.

⁷² See McShane, “Epilogue,” *Wealth of Self, Wealth of Nations: Self-Axis of the Great Ascent* (Landham MD, 1975), 106–07; McShane, *Brief History of Tongue* (Halifax, Canada: Axial Press, 1998), 119. The symbolism appears intimidating on its face, as does the periodic table for those who have never struggled through a course in chemistry. Like the periodic table, though, the value of the heuristic increases in proportion to the labor one puts into successfully understanding it. “A beginner should think of W_1 mainly as a help to remember that the human, oneself, is a layered reality of physical, chemical, botanical, zoological, rational and supernatural actualities. As one advances the meaning of the symbols complexifies in a manner that parallels the student advancing in, say chemistry: the periodic table means massively more to a graduate chemist. The really important and difficult part of the symbolism is the semicolon that separates the layers. It points to the difficulty of coming to grips with aggreformisms, a massively difficult personal struggle quite beyond the beginner.” McShane,

of us can ask whether we have the intellectual drive, the patience, and the corresponding existential stance to follow-up on this or similar symbolisms in some serious way. And the answer may well be, "Honestly, maybe not."

Complex symbolism is off-putting, which is another way of saying that it is a *prima facie* affront to my general bias. Even if we get past the initial resistance generated by the general bias, the struggle seems a long one, with incremental progress measured in months, years, or even decades. In addition, the habit of patience required to continue grappling with any serious heuristic is a form of antecedent willingness I may not yet have sufficiently developed. Here the W_1 symbolism itself sheds some light on the issue; it implies that the virtue of patience, like other virtues, is not a simple reality but instead involves complexly interrelated layers of conjugate forms constituting flexible circles of ranges of schemes of recurrence.⁷³

But if our answer is "honestly, maybe not," is it because we are under the mistaken impression that an even lesser standard of patience will somehow suffice for successfully reading *Insight*, because after all it is written in words? We are back, perhaps, at the illusion that the conceptualist illusion is something we transcended once and for all when

Prehumous 2: "Metagrams and Metaphysics," available at:

<http://www.philipmcshane.org>. Is there a reason we might spontaneously think that Lonergan's "new science" should be less complex and perplexing than the older explanatory sciences, and if so, might the reason have something to do with the tacit expectations built into the general bias of common sense?

⁷³ A tangent self-diagnostic test: Do I read "flexible circles of ranges of schemes of recurrence" as a phrase familiar from Lonergan studies? Or do I read it as naming what is for me a known-unknown? Do I bring commonsense expectations to the task of investigating that known-unknown, or something more? For that matter, do I spontaneously assume I know what "habit" means? I certainly know what it means within my commonsense knowing; I would be a fool not to. But notice how far it is from that commonsense position to adequately understanding habit along the lines of "successive levels of interrelated conjugate forms that are more familiar under the common name of acquired habit." CWL 3 (*Insight*), 501. More familiar? At least less frightening. Familiarity can breed contempt for more remote meanings, perhaps because those meanings are not readily accessible, as common sense demands, albeit *sotto voce*. See the following footnote. It is a good bet that the general bias within each of us is wiliier than we currently know. Now extend that principle to the aggregated general bias of a group, with all its dangers of peer pressure, legitimation rituals, shunning, etc.

we became able to name the correct order of genesis as between insights and concepts.⁷⁴

Does this heuristic expression, W_1 , have anything to do with the universe I inhabit? Not, perhaps, if that universe is limited only to the range of meanings mediated by the potentialities of commonsense language and commonsense understanding. Do the semi-colons in this heuristic expression have anything to do with Lonergan's notion of cosmic "zeal"?⁷⁵ Not if I think Lonergan was indulging in mere metaphor when he wrote of it. But let's say each of us manages to get past the mistaken belief that Lonergan's writing about the universe's "zeal" was merely metaphorical—an effort that will be resisted by the general bias in us every step of the way—and we also get past the mistaken belief that W_1 is some willfully obscure and otiose idiosyncrasy.

We will still be faced with the problem of assessing, for ourselves and in ourselves, just how much general bias infests our present beliefs, our present horizon, and just how much that requires in the way of revising not the mistaken belief but the mistaken believer. How large and long a project does that call for? There is no short or easy answer. But for an intimation, read the following sentence with the general bias in mind.

Until his fault is corrected, until his bias is attacked and extirpated, he [the mistaken believer] will have little heart in applying an efficacious method, little zeal in prosecuting the lesser culprits, little rigor in pronouncing sentence upon them, little patience with the prospect of ferreting out and examining and condemning still further offenders.⁷⁶

In short, the general bias infects me, the mistaken believer, and each of us, in ways we do not yet glimpse, infects us not only cognitively but also on the level of antecedent willingness, or perhaps a self-disguising lack thereof.

⁷⁴ Counterpositions, too, dwell in "the twilight of what is conscious but not objectified." *Method*, 34; CWL 14, 34. We may also be back at the issue of an unself-objectified insecurity or resentment produced by the general bias, or reinforced by it.

⁷⁵ CWL 3 (*Insight*), at 722 ("But good will wills the order of the universe, and so it wills with that order's dynamic joy and zeal.")

⁷⁶ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 738–39. Another self-diagnostic: extend the phrase "an efficacious method" to include functional specialization and functional collaboration.

Third, I attempted to state a position regarding cosmopolis, reflex history, and the importance of functional collaboration. I will attempt to develop that position briefly below in relation to the need for the heuristic turn when I regard Paul's contributions as materials.

2. Regarding Catherine's views as materials

Catherine's anamnestic effort concerning her break from conceptualism towards historical consciousness is positional in that it showcases the importance of autobiographical living and reflecting for the whole project of self-appropriation, of self-and-world-alignment. Her effort illustrates well the "stresses and strains in" one's current achievement of self-knowledge "that will lead to its replacement by a more adequate account"⁷⁷ of who we are—or rather, the what-in-the-world that we are.

These stresses and strains are recurring facts of every person's individual history and concrete quest, and the climb to a more adequately thematized account of human knowing is also ineliminably personal and concrete—as well as uncomfortable. In strange and unpredictable ways, that climb can lead to quest-aligning images and insights which may then prompt the further questions that "gradually" —*very* gradually—can move us "round and up a spiral of viewpoints with each complementing its predecessor and only the last embracing the whole field to be mastered."⁷⁸ It is also possible, though, that we can rest content too soon at an early stage in the spiral of viewpoints. This possibility becomes more probable the greater the extent to which the general bias is at work within us. After all, "the whole field" is beyond our ken until "the last embracing" at the top of the spiral. It is easier than we suppose, I believe, to mistake the map for the mountain, or progress on the mountain for the distant summit.

While Catherine's contribution does not draw an explicit connection to the general bias, her autobiographical account of her own shift out of something like classicism towards something like historical consciousness brings into greater clarity the fact of development. That fact, recognized and affirmed as a fact, ultimately gives the lie to a dogmatic relativism. But at the same time it also gives the lie to a dogmatic absolutism. As Catherine seems to imply, critical historical consciousness does something like the same thing vis-à-vis classicism. Critical historical consciousness makes both the dogmatic absolutism of some species of classicism and the dogmatic relativism of some species of historical consciousness closed options. But

⁷⁷ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 583–84.

⁷⁸ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 210.

critical historical consciousness does this in a different way and on a larger and more detailed scale than the anamnestic exercises Catherine recounts. And it is perhaps here that her account connects with the general bias.

While the general bias of common sense is apt to reinforce the false alternatives of absolutism and relativism, intelligently affirming the fact of development leads eventually instead to rejecting both false alternatives. That achievement in turn leads to the kind of reorientation Catherine writes about. Still, the fact of development is not obvious after the manner of Dr. Johnson's famous general-biased-based attempt at refuting Bishop Berkeley's ingenious acosmic idealism. Development is not something you can stub your toe on. Specifying development in any serious or systematic context—for example, the context of genetic method—seems to require moving beyond merely commonsense apprehensions of development. The empirical inquiries named biology and botany reach scientific status only by proceeding within precise and sophisticated heuristic structures.

Catherine recounts a long struggle with identifying various ambiguous images that generate or reinforce a series of mistaken and misleading assumptions about knowing, reality, and objectivity. As she recognizes, such images and assumptions can "live in deep conflict with our more basic method of mind." Yet if one practices self-attentive method with sufficient skill, diligence, and patience, it is possible to identify recurring misleading images within one's own experience, to notice their conflicts with our conscious performance as adequately thematized and reasonably affirmed, and to use that noticing to damp the oscillations of polymorphic consciousness to which our untutored conscious spontaneity might otherwise be simply hostage.

I would note, finally, that the meaning of the phrase "historical consciousness" varies with the act of understanding uttering it. If the understanding is in the style of common sense, so too will be the meaning of the phrase for the speaker or writer. When Lonergan wrote of "historical consciousness," his meaning was backed by an extraordinary development of understanding such that the phrase compendiously included, for example, everything he had thought and written about genetic method. In a very real and important sense, then, what he meant by "historical consciousness" remains to be discovered.

3. Regarding Paul's views as materials

My first positioning with respect to Paul's contribution is that I agree with almost all of what he has to say. It's what he doesn't say that I don't agree with, so to speak. Paul rightly highlights Lonergan's notion of cosmopolis,

as well as his analysis of the longer cycle of decline, as contributions to the great task of assisting humankind to become better able to "more luminously take responsibility for its own self-making." It would be too easy to say that it is too easy to say that. But nonetheless there is something missing in Paul's brief account of cosmopolis and the general bias, and it is possible that what I think is missing is not caused by the necessary brevity of the present format. That brings me to my second point.

"Cosmopolis" in the Lonergan tradition seems to me to get reified into something vaguely resembling an institution as apprehended or imagined by common sense. Eventually it will do something good about the intolerable mess we have made of history so far by rectifying in some way the recurrent, cumulative effects of the general bias in history. The means by which it will accomplish this have something to do with an empirical and critical human science founded on generalized empirical method. Appropriate levels of scholarly detail are added, but all in all that's about as far as it goes. I have myself written papers on cosmopolis and the longer cycle within this mode.

But it would be better, I think, to take Lonergan's tack and call it X: "it is in the first instance an X, what is to be known when one understands. Like every other X, it possesses some known properties and aspects that lead to its fuller determination."⁷⁹ Solve for X.

But what we have to solve for are, in fact, two Xs: X₁ and X₂. The first is the solution Lonergan has in mind in *Insight* for the problem of the longer cycle, as well as the related problems associated with humans somehow developing the capacity to lean into the vast task and responsibility of directing and in some manner controlling future history.⁸⁰ X₂ is the solution Lonergan has in mind in *Method* for both problems, a solution he associates, I think, with functional collaboration in relation to "collective practicality and coresponsibility."⁸¹ Again, it is too easy to say these things as though they were more than a relatively initial way of naming Lonergan's solution, as though we knew what Lonergan had in mind in those two contexts by virtue of our giving it a name, for example, "the attainment of a higher

⁷⁹ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 263.

⁸⁰ See CWL 3 (*Insight*), 258 (describing "the vastly more ambitious task of directing and in some measure controlling ... future history" in the section of Chapter 7 titled "alternatives to the longer cycle"). Cosmopolis is complexly woven into the moving viewpoint of *Insight*. I cannot enter into that complexity here, so please be tolerant of the brusque generalization.

⁸¹ *Method*, xi; CWL 14, 3.

viewpoint in man's understanding and making of man" or "a practical theory of history."⁸² We are back at the problematic gap "between an understanding of verbal usage and an understanding of what names denote," and we are once again confronted with the fact that "names and heuristic anticipations can be mistaken for insights" and "partial insights have the same generic character as full understanding."⁸³

Take the word "history." In my view, we have to rescue it from its usual crypto-literary level of expression and instead place its meaning, so to speak, in the pulsing flow of an adequate set of heuristics. The young Lonergan thought it necessary to climb long and hard to arrive at an "analytic concept of history." Did he mean something different after that achievement when he uttered the word "history"? For decades Lonergan took very seriously the question, What stands to general history as mathematics stands to physics? What will provide "history with heuristic structures,"⁸⁴ as mathematics provides heuristic structures for physics?

Take another example. Cosmopolis "is an open heuristic structure."⁸⁵ Its role in creating "a human contribution to the control of human history"⁸⁶ is mediated by the development of a critical human science which is, whatever one means by it, a development not unconnected to functional collaboration. Similarly, the longer cycle is "a general ... theorem"⁸⁷ or, as Lonergan later put it, "essentially a heuristic structure."⁸⁸ The generality of the general theorem "has to be mediated by a vast accumulation of direct and inverse insights and by a long series of judgments of truth and value before any concrete judgments can be made."⁸⁹ It is too easy to utter the

⁸² CWL 3 (*Insight*), 258.

⁸³ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 565–66. Notice that Lonergan's caveat that "partial insights have the same generic character as full understanding" occurs on the page before Lonergan discusses "initial meanings." As he notes, "an accurate statement on initial meanings would be much more complex," and he then footnotes a long section from Langer's *Feeling and Form*. CWL 3 (*Insight*), 567; *ibid.*, n.5. His caveat is not unrelated to the general bias, I believe.

⁸⁴ *Method*, 141; CWL 14, 135.

⁸⁵ 27890DTE070, at 2.

⁸⁶ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 253.

⁸⁷ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 712 (noting that the idea of a succession of lower syntheses in the longer cycle of decline is "a general ... theorem").

⁸⁸ Lonergan, "A Requested Review of the Writings of Frederick Lawrence," *Divyadaan: Journal of Philosophy and Education*, vol. 19 (2008), 277.

⁸⁹ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 712.

phrase, "the longer cycle of decline," and mean by it only the stereotyped tacit images one associates with the phrase from one's exposure to Lonergan studies—something analogous, perhaps, to learning how to use the phrase appropriately in a sentence of conventional Lonergan scholarship.

Or take the general bias. If one can apprehend it with relative adequacy by giving it a name and an apt description, why does Lonergan write near the end of Chapter 7 about "the almost insoluble problem of settling clearly and exactly what the general bias is"?⁹⁰ A few pages after suggesting a few determinations for his X named cosmopolis, why does Lonergan say of the problem to which cosmopolis is a solution that "so far from solving it in this chapter, we do not hope to reach a full solution in this volume"?⁹¹ To put it all too briefly, the turn to heuristics is a massively difficult and important shift, not a series of minor repairs within the present configuration of Lonergan studies.

B. Catherine King

"The idea of the third objectification is to identify what, in the attached" (first and second objectifications), "merits further development and what should be reversed" (e-mail, J. Duffy, 11-25-19).

I preface this narrative with two related and abiding questions about: (a) the meaning, place, and import of the concrete and (b) the distinction not only between the general bias of common sense and theory, but also between those and the meaning of *self-affirmation*--questions that must remain open for now but impinge on the meaning of this exercise.⁹²

Below, however, I offer a read-and-respond to two of the contributions. Though I offer *further developments*, I find nothing that calls for *reversal*.⁹³

1. Contribution 1: Pat Brown

Reading 1: ". . . a spontaneous tendency to think that you know all about everything Why is that so?⁹⁴" And: a "state of premature satisfaction with initial meanings."

⁹⁰ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 266.

⁹¹ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 267.

⁹² CWL 3 (*Insight*), 357.

⁹³ The established word limit of this part of the exercise precludes my adding my later thoughts about my own contribution.

⁹⁴ CWL 10 (*Topics*), 168.

Response: As spontaneous, the tendency points to a study of *interior dialectics*:⁹⁵ to account for our fear of not knowing; and our development towards openness to understanding and knowing as difficult. The *dogmatic attitude* so easily precludes that openness. Such attitudes themselves require dialectic. With *dogmatism*, for example, we rightly desire to know but wrongly desire to know so badly that we easily jump to judgment while avoiding questions for meaning that would inform those judgments. Our judgments are empty but we love to think and say “I know.” Brown’s narrative about our interpretive laziness resounds.

The problem as dialectical rests in our *real developmental need for security* (meaning) and *certainty* (truth) as scaffolding to stand on (in momentary judgments) while our learning proceeds. The foundational pedagogy, then, is to promote mediated understanding of ourselves as involved in *cumulating* and *scaffolding* knowledge, but in the immediate context of our need to live well in the present while remaining open to new understanding, knowing, and creating.

Reading 2: “If you start and end in the mode of scholarship, which is a sophisticated development of commonsense understanding, and yet the thing to be understood is explanatory system, your interpretation cannot be fully successful. Your effort may end up falling into ‘the large but commonly obscure gap’⁹⁶ between accurate verbal usage and the nature of the ‘what’ denoted by the words. . . . The world of explanation is not the same as the commonsense world of familiar words and objects, and . . . is not entered by the simple expedient of re-describing explanatory terms within the mode of common sense.”

Response: *First*, system always has an “out.” *Second*, can we do theory correctly while being unaware of the difference between scholarship and critical theory? (This is the *positioned* dialectician’s work?) Even *Insight* was

⁹⁵ Anything here named *attitude*, e.g., a *dogmatic attitude*, is developed in Emile Piscitelli, “The Fundamental Attitudes of the Liberally Educated Person: Foundational Dialectics.” *The Lonergan Workshop 5* (1985), 289–342. The substance of the work also appears in his *Philosophy: A Passion for Wisdom* (Frederick MD: American Star Books, 2010); and in my “*New Wineskins: Foundational Dialectics and the Functional Specialties*,” a paper given at West Coast Methods Conference, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA; April 19–21, 2018. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/36479631/New_Wineskins_Foundational_Dialectics_and_the_Functional_Specialties

⁹⁶ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 565.

written from a pedagogical and so bifurcated view? Then there is *metaphysical equivalence* (if I am understanding it correctly?).⁹⁷

Reading 3: "Lonergan provides a crucial context for those determinations when he writes of how humans 'can discover how present insights and decisions influence through emergent probability the occurrence of future insights and decisions,' and when he draws attention to how this discovery is relevant to 'the vastly more ambitious task of directing and in some measure controlling [humanity's] future history.'" ⁹⁸

Response: I would emphasize "in some measure," and follow and further develop narrative and theory around this thought to avoid the totalitarian implications of making such statements. Also, in my images (my essay), I suggest a correct historical, as distinct from a mistaken "outsider" viewpoint. I still question how such a view relates to the general bias that is our concern. Perhaps at least we can see a relationship of mutual "reinforcement" here? However, a "complacent practicality" concerning initial meanings can balloon into rejecting philosophical self-reflection, even after becoming aware of our potential for receiving and thinking with inherited philosophical oversights, omissions, and errors of the past. Perhaps we can see at least a relationship of commonsensical reinforcement here?

Perhaps the "crucial context" refers to that same change of view? If different, both are "crucial" because both open the way for us to understand our *virtually unconditioned* knowing as true-reality flowing into a metaphysics concerning our historical intimacy (oneness?) with emergent probability. (My earlier questions emerge here also.)

Reading and Response 4: What, if anything, can be said of (1) pre-theoretical history and (2) beyond-theoretical understanding of history as including the theoretician not only as a knower, but also as decider-actor in history?

2. Contribution 3: Paul St. Amour

Reading 1: "Dialectical criticism and appreciation are not a 'view from nowhere,' but arise only as stances taken by concretely situated subjects."

Response: Yes; and sometimes OF ongoing historical events. However, currently social scientists might interpret that point this way: (a) concrete data remain particularized and/or *only* organized statistically; and (b) the

⁹⁷ See CWL 3 (*Insight*), 595–600 (the "Limitations of the Treatise").

⁹⁸ CWL 3 (*Insight*), 258. Also, the images in my essay are about a change of viewpoint *as existential*.

foundations of scientists *and* their human data are overlooked. From that horizon, (a) description need not move towards explanation; and (b) surds are tacitly interpreted as normative.⁹⁹ Take internal medicine as an analogy: natural scientists/physicians would consider the data of disease as normative to healthy human living and theorize accordingly.

Reading 2: “Is there a *normative* orientation to human praxis and history, or does history occur such that only merely factual (but never evaluative) statements might truly be predicated of it?”

Response: Does “merely factual” account for the counter-positional view of “factual,” or do you mean that evaluative statements can also be factual “truly” (the positional view)? Also, how does “what is good is always concrete” relate?¹⁰⁰

Reading 3: “Human deliberations undoubtedly occur, but in principle have such deliberations the capacity either to actualize or fail to actualize value, what is truly worthwhile? Or is deliberation merely instrumental in the pursuit of individual and group satisfaction? Do “contrary styles of evaluation” make a valuational difference?¹⁰¹

Response: See note 3. Also . . . only insofar as deliberations end in now-type speech and actions—the core question that, from the point of view of history, we all have to answer for ourselves? It helps to know that all history is a response to the good/bad/worthwhile-question that inhabits human consciousness and that drives human living; and that there is a direct relationship between potency, freedom, and our own self-creating in that now.

Reading 4: “Bias has recently become a significant topic in cognitive psychology, and has led to insights and applications in subfields such as criminal justice, research methodology, behavior finance, etc.”

Response: I see this movement as (a) uncritical but also as (b) movement towards discovering the place of interior development in otherwise-hyper-objective treatments. As uncritical, it seems the many problems that still inform the social sciences (as above) are not yet worked out.

⁹⁹ See CWL 3 (*Insight*) Chapter 7, section 8.2 (“Implications of the Longer Cycle”), 254.

¹⁰⁰ *Method*, 27; CWL 14, 28.

¹⁰¹ Note in discussion 3: “Contrary styles of evaluation” is Lonergan’s rubric for conflicts within dialectic itself. See *Method*, 235; CWL 14, 221.

C. Paul St. Amour

1. With Respect to Patrick Brown's Contribution

Dialectic is a method for the elucidation and resolution of conflicts that arise in the development of theology, philosophy, and the human sciences, due to the presence or absence (in eight possible permutations) of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion in the culturally, historically, and existentially situated practitioners of those disciplines. Such conflicts "may regard contrary orientations of research, contrary interpretations, contrary histories, contrary styles of evaluation, contrary horizons, contrary doctrines, contrary systems, contrary policies." Patrick Brown has focused on a fundamental counterposition with respect to interpretation that is, at root, the counterposition of conceptualism. In contrast to an intellectualism that would emphasize development in understanding as dependent upon an unrestricted asking and answering of all further relevant questions (including those pertinent to explanatory relations and their systemization), conceptualism (ironically) lacks an adequate concept of the emergence of concepts from acts of understanding. Implicated in (and perpetuating) the neglect of the subject, conceptualism fails to recognize that concepts are expressions of understanding, and consequently downplays a dynamic exigence for the broadening and deepening of understanding—an exigence concretely facilitated only by the willingness of persons and communities to sustain questioning.

Brown is right to point out that merely nominal understanding constitutes a constricted horizon, that the height of epistemic success is not attained by any combination of verbal and logical facility, and that there can exist a "moral counterposition that opts for the satisfactions of verbal facility over the value of putting in the labor of enormously developing one's understanding." He suggests that heuristic symbolism instrumental to explanatory understanding is often encountered with fear and hostility. Brown laments the pervasiveness of the conceptualist illusion in academia. Academic scholarship is a "sophisticated development of common sense understanding" and in itself is not up to the task of properly theoretic understanding. In its "operative conventions of communication, publication, and conferencing" scholarship has been involved in a flight from the explanatory viewpoint. To the extent that there exists tacit or explicit resistance to the explanatory viewpoint (particularly among Lonergan scholars—who presumably should know better) scholarship is complicit with general bias. To reverse this counterpositional state of

affairs Brown calls for individual and communal self-reassessment and for “failure analysis”: “You want to find out what’s wrong so you can fix it.”

While I am in general agreement with Brown’s critical assessment of the “conceptualist illusion,” its capacity to kneecap the unrestricted desire to know, and its infiltration (to some extent I am not entirely comfortable estimating) of the academy, I also feel there is need for reflection on a) the difference between criticism and dialectic, especially as applied to concretely situated persons and communities, b) the fact that general bias involves a tension with common sense, which in itself remains a legitimate good, and c) the insufficiency of dialectical analysis alone to establish positive and motivating foundations for advancement of positions going forward.

General bias is truly pernicious, but any critique of general bias must be cautious neither to denigrate common sense as such, nor to disparage scholarship in principle. Lonergan made considerable efforts to clarify the legitimacy of common sense as a pattern of experience, and of scholarship as a distinct differentiation of consciousness. Dialectic must proceed in a dialectical manner; it is a sorting of wheat from chaff—not merely a torching of chaff. Fully-developed dialectic involves moments not only of criticism but also of appreciation. Brown’s contention is surely not with scholarship as such, but with scholarship insofar as it is under the sway of the conceptualist illusion. But are there instances of scholarship not under the sway of conceptualism, which might be held up appreciatively as positive exemplars?

In the context of functional specialization, dialectic is historically informed. Brown rightly seeks to defend and promote the explanatory viewpoint. But that viewpoint was itself a momentous and hard-won intellectual achievement of a strange and precarious community over a period of centuries. Lonergan’s explication of the explanatory viewpoint was facilitated by his broad and deep study of the history of mathematics and modern science. As the relevance and value of the explanatory viewpoint is not self-evident (not even within all parts of academia), might further explication and promulgation of this particular history be instrumental in efforts to convincingly communicate the significance of explanatory terms, relations, and systemization?

Another implication of historical contextualization—specifically in light of the history of difficulty in breakthrough to explanatory systemization in the natural sciences—is that present anticipation of a potential future extension of the explanatory viewpoint into the human sciences ought to be accompanied by a considerable dose of patience. This

remains a long-term project, with additional complications, and is not merely a "scaling up" of prior achievement.

Consideration should also be given to the transition from dialectics to foundations. I am in agreement with Brown regarding the need for reversal of the conceptualist illusion, the importance of explanatory terms and relations in the human sciences (most especially economics), and the need for a future cosmopolis to adopt functionally-specialized procedures. Critical exposure of counterpositions however, while necessary, is not sufficient to bring about these ends. Furthermore, mishandling of the dialectical stage could jeopardize the foundations needed for moving positions forward—for it is not unusual for criticism to result merely in discouragement and division.

"Never has adequately differentiated consciousness been more difficult to achieve. Never has the need to speak effectively to undifferentiated consciousness been greater." With an eye toward establishment of positive foundations acknowledging these facts, we ponder the following: How might the desiderata mentioned above be communicated in a manner that cultivates hope in those who might possibly play a role in bringing them about? How can competence, collaboration, genuine community, and prudential concern be cultivated in ourselves, in colleagues, in students—despite less than "ideal conditions"? And how might those conditions themselves be more forthrightly acknowledged, better understood, and strategically responded to? What might be done, on the philosophical front, to explicitly differentiate conceptualism from intellectualism, not merely that the currency of the former might be shown up as the counterfeit that it is, but that the latter might come to be appreciated as an intriguing alternative? Brown incisively suggests that the conceptualist illusion supplies a kind of false satisfaction, a socially and egoistically gratifying feeling that one is already in possession of knowledge. And indeed it does, perhaps mainly in the dramatic pattern. But if we take ourselves seriously as vitalized by an unrestricted desire to know, conceptualism's gift is thereby exposed as a radical frustration of that fundamental desire. So how might intellectualism be presented as an authentic alternative to conceptualism's forgery, an adventure drawn forth by wonder, a gentle invitation into the mystery of being? How might the possibility of Lonergan and Brown's "long-term growth in meaning" be presented more convincingly as an enticing joy worthy of pursuit?

2. With Respect to Catherine King's Contribution

Loneragan's philosophy is distinctive in its insistence that "genuine objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity." Catherine King speaks of making this emphasis her own, of the experience of a pivotal shift in her understanding of subjectivity, and a dawning appreciation of its relevance. While it was not immediately clear to me how this experience related to Lonergan's conception of the dialectic of history, King suggests that the shift is relevant to self-appropriation, intellectual conversion, and differentiation of realms of meaning, all of which are indeed pertinent to dialectical analysis. King further proposes her experiential shift was analogous to the cultural shift from classicism to historical consciousness.

King's problematic and counterpositional stance, prior to the shift, was similar to what Lonergan described under the rubric of "the neglected subject," and was attended by conceptualism, insufficient intentionality at the level of judgment, and an unreflective objectivism. The shift itself was not merely philosophical, but psychological as well; it involved a substitution of images, indeed of self-images. The initial self-image was that of an outsider looking at objects, and concepts, and the world from a stance tacitly assumed to be apart from these. This self-image was problematic not merely philosophically but affectively as well. Images mediate feelings. The looker, on the outside, is in a state of separation from life, and the separated state is not one of wholeness.

King's breakthrough involved a shift in self-understanding, from an extroverted looker, to an engaged questioner: "I question being from within." This is an important point; all distinctions (including the distinction between subject and object) are distinctions within being. There is no looking at being from a position outside of being. It is merely our spontaneous biological extroversion that makes this seem plausible. Questioning is itself an event within the world order of emergent probability. If questioning-events did not occur (in concrete subjects) there could arise no insights, and hence no concepts of objects. Furthermore, there is no looking at being at all; adequate insight into insight (precipitating in intellectual conversion) demotes looking from the presumed status of full knowing, to the humbler role of merely providing visual data about which there might possibly occur questions.

The shift had profound implications for King. It not only established a basis for cognitional judgment, but also provided a foundation in subjectivity that grounded King in her developing philosophical, moral, and spiritual horizons. As the neglect of the subject remains operative in

the human sciences, in education and pedagogy, and in philosophy, King suggests her “unearthing [of] distorted images” might be relevant to transformation in those areas as well. I fully agree, and suggest that what is needed is clear and incisive analysis aimed at specific issues in those fields. I would encourage preserving, clarifying, and further developing the emphasis above (upon the way images can tacitly perpetuate powerfully operative counterpositional assumptions and feelings), but focus equally or more so on the positive differences enabled by breakthrough to adequate imagery, that is, imagery congruent with positions arising from intellectual conversion.

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