of moral principles has a relatively unimportant role. Indeed, in view of the way in which men can be hounded by their moral principles into spurious, though guilt-ridden, admissions of weakness, they are often a positive menace. In the meantime, in a culture dominated by the morality of moral principles, it is perhaps just as well that men often fail to live by them. For most of us it is only by this Kierkegardian route that we have a chance of learning what we might come to enjoy, as best answering to what we are, have been and might yet come to be.

Objections to Lonergan's Method

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Looking at Lonergan's Method is a collection of thirteen papers issuing from a conference held at Maynooth in the spring of 1973 at which scholars from differing traditions and disciplines gathered to assess the significance of the recent work of Bernard Lonergan.[1]

These are not the papers written for the meeting; they represent the authors' reflections after it, in the light of the discussions that took place. Perhaps the momentum for the book was the convergence of fundamental doubts about the viability of Lonergan's method. At any rate, for all the respect and gratitude that some of the Catholic contributors voice for what Lonergan has done over the years to loosen the hold of a certain way of doing theology, it is very striking that all but one or two of these papers make what seem such irreparably damaging criticisms of his recent work that it becomes very difficut to regard it any longer as a promising trail in the reconstruction of Catholic theology

[1]*Looking at Lonergan's Method*, edited by Patrick Corcoran SM. The Talbot Press, Dublin, 1975. 193 pp., £3.

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which is now so urgent a task. The book thus marks a watershed in the history of Lonergan congresses.

That Bernard Lonergan is the only figure in the English-speaking world whose achievement in Catholic theology ranks, in influence and reputation, with that of the leading theologians of our time, cannot be disputed. The years he spent lecturing at the Gregorian University in Rome (1953-1965) afforded him a unique opportunity to reach the minds of a whole generation of candidates for the priesthood—either directly or through the countless future seminary professors whom he must have taught (he sometimes had classes of 650 students!). When he first started teaching in Rome he must have belonged enough to the dominant neo-Scholasticism of the day to have secured the job; but by the close of his career there he had sapped the foundations of the whole theological style which he inherited. Vatican II was no doubt the turning-point, but he was soon free to retire, and has since then tried to crystallise his ideas in numerous publications, culminating in 1972 with *Method in Theology*. All his work, tapes of lectures, together with private papers, notes and sermons over the past forty years, are deposited in the Lonergan Centre in Regis College, Toronto.

The style of theological practice which Lonergan has been instrumental in dislodging may be characterised—caricatured—as that highly deductivist and proposition-cased neo-Scholasticism that persisted, incredibly, until Vatican II—incredibly, because for all the halo (or miasma) of Roman-curial endorsement which it acquired as an anti-Modernist device, it owed most to Christian Wolff, the Protestant mathematician of the Baroque period in Germany (cf. 'Vérité évangélique et métaphysique wolffienne à Vatican II', by M. D. Chenu, *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques,* October 1973). Two features of this tradition have always been its metaphysical-ontological reference to the objective reality of 'Being', and its tendency, at least in practice, to include particular theological opinions in what it would regard as the only orthodox way of stating given doctrinal beliefs. Against both of these Lonergan has reacted, first by his adoption of a subject-centred approach and then by his distinction between faith and belief(s); but it is precisely those two strategies that raise the most fundamental doubts.

Over against neo-Scholastic ontology, with its stress on objects rather than on persons, the advance and the advantage of Lonergan's method has seemed to stem from his choice of a thoroughly anthropocentric and subjective startingpoint. He wants to clear the way to saying that nothing is known unless it is first loved—a deliberate reversal of the 'nihil amatum nisi praecognitum' axiomatic for Thomas Aquinas—because he wants to ground all theological reflection in the theologian's personal experience of *conversion:* conscious entry into a new horizon of meaning, but effected by the gift of God's love. This is what makes possible the distinction between faith and belief; but the first call is to examine this appeal to the subject's experience of conversion. This shift from cosmology to subjectivity is Lonergan's response to Kant, and in this he is simply continuing the tradition of 'transcendental Thomism'

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that began with his Jesuit confrère of a previous generation, Joseph Maréchal (1878-1944), and of which a clear and sympathetic account was given by Eric Marcall in his Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh (*The Openness of Being,* 1971).

It is no longer the objective reality of Being but the subjective experience of knowing that becomes the point of departure for theological reflection. This is emphasised by several of the contributors to *Looking at Lonergan's Method:* 'the shift to interiority being axial', page 23; 'the Kantian polar shift from object to subject', 'the knowing subject is his startingpoint, standpoint and centre of reference', page 45; 'the modern turn to a phenomenological approach and indeed to an anthropological and subjective startingpoint', page 102; etc. But at least four of the essayists go on then to make havoc of this subject-centred approach.

In the first place, Patrick McGrath is able to show that Lonergan makes exactly the kind of mistakes that Wittgenstein should have taught us to watch out for in philosophical use of the concepts of knowing and understanding. *Method in Theology* rests upon *Insight,* the 750-page philosophical essay which Lonergan published in 1957. Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* appeared posthumously in 1953, and the significance of his ideas would not have reached Rome by the time that *Insight* was ready for the press. But, as McGrath shows, page after page of *Insight* would provide exercises for a student who was making his acquaintance with the *Investigations* for the first time.

The main purpose of *Insight* was to enable us to know what it is to know, to understand what it is to understand, to gain insight into insight; but at no point does Lonergan ever engage in even the most elementary analysis of these central concepts of his philosophical and theological method. Worse than that, and because of that no doubt, he systematically misunderstands the character of these concepts. The aim of his 'transcendental method' is to 'bring to light our conscious and intentional operations', a programme that is not necessarily alarming in itself, except that it is expected to lead to our being able to answer questions about what we are doing when we are knowing, why doing that is knowing, and what it is that we know when we are doing it—fishy questions to a Wittgensteinian nose.

The game is already given away in the famous slogan in the Introduction to *Insight:* 'Thoroughly understand what it is to understand and not only will you understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood, but you will have a fixed base, an invariant pattern, opening upon all further developments of understanding' (page xxviii). But how, simply by understanding what it is to understand, could one understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood? What sense does it make to say that, by understanding what it is to understand, one could understand the broad lines (say) of the Theory of Relativity or of how to cook spinach? Surely a smattering of physics would be more use in the first case than any amount of understanding what it is to understand? And in the second case a lesson

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in cookery? How could understanding what it is to understand help us to understand the broad lines of anything at all? Can everything that ever will or could be known be understood even in its broad lines just by our thoroughly understanding what it is to understand?

A few pages earlier Lonergan writes as follows: "The crucial issue is an experimental issue, and the experiment will be performed not publicly but privately. It will consist in one's own rational self-consciousness clearly and distinctly taking possession of itself as rational self-consciousness' (page xviii). The whole argument of *Insight* is offered as 'an invitation to know oneself in the tension of the duality of one's own knowing'. The 'scraps' (his own word) of mathematics, science, common sense and metaphysics which he says the book contains are to be left behind, perhaps in the way Wittgenstein's propositions were to be in the *Tractatus*, so that the reader may grasp 'the dynamic, cognitional structure that is exemplified in knowing them'. The private experiment just mentioned is the appropriation of the dynamic, cognitional structure of one's own experiencing. As Lonergan insists: 'it is not any recondite intuition but the familiar event that occurs easily and frequently in the moderately intelligent, rarely and with difficulty only in the very stupid' (page ix). This would be the disclosure of the fixed base, the invariant pattern, which would open upon all further developments of understanding. But what reason is there for thinking that it is the same dynamic structure that is exemplified in our knowing scraps of mathematics and (say) scraps of common sense (if common sense is something of which one can know scraps)? Isn't Lonergan assuming all the time that understanding is one homogeneous and uniform kind of activity? Doesn't the whole notion of human understanding upon which his theology rests turn out to be another version of the mistake in logical grammar which Wittgenstein has identified? McGrath seems to have established this, and the radical incoherence it entails for Lonergan's subject-centred method cannot be conjured away.

Secondly, in a paper that seeks to make the best of the subjective startingpoint though it clearly would not be the writer's own approach, Noel Dermot O'Donoghue interprets *Method in Theology* as 'primarily a practical manual of self-appropriation for the theologian' (page 51). He argues that the process of self-appropriation in Lonergan 'is not mere introspection but a vital dynamic process, a process in which the operations as intentional are applied to the operations as conscious'. What that turns out to mean, so it appears, is that the dynamism of the will is what moves the process (though Lonergan has denied that it is 'the transcendental ego of Fichtean speculation' that he is offering us). Despite his rejection of Lonergan's startingpoint it seems to me that O'Donoghue does not sufficiently underline the perversity of the position as he has expounded (and exposed) it. For if Lonergan were right, then 'when we come to examine the method of theology, we must look not at the subject-matter of theology but at the mind of the theologian', and is this not very strange? The shift from object to subject as one's startingpoint means a shift from the operation to the operator, from the visibility of the practice to the interiority of the thinker: 'Instead of

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looking at the kind of work that theologians do, we are asked to look at the theologian at work, and to situate this work in relation to the basic structures of his personality. We are asked especially to pose the crucial question of the theologian's person-to-person relationship with the God he interprets' (page 52). But why should the intention—even the state of grace or otherwise—of the theologian have such priority over the stuff of theological argument? Isn't this a shift from struggling with the materiality of the text towards some kind of intuitive encounter with the author? But isn't it a system of texts and monuments that we seek to understand as we practice theologian reflection?

It is lamentable that this resort to the inner life of the theologian should count as a methodological advance when literary criticism (for instance) is freeing itself from an equivalent sort of personalist-idealist preference for 'genius' and 'inspiration' on the part of the author. The 'personality' of an author is of very little significance compared with the 'intertextuality' of his work (to borrow Julia Kristeva's word). In the amateurish and belles-lettristic tradition of writing and reading that comes down from the leisurely cultivation and appreciation of 'personality' and 'sensibility' of a previous generation (and a certain class), it is true that the intentionality of the author remains central. But it is far more important to give priority to the text: to see it as a tissue of codes that draw it into the whole order of meaning (which itself is, of course, interwoven with a whole form of life). Isn't it theology as a practice, as an institution, that we seek to understand, and not the inward states of theologians?

Thirdly, for Wolfhart Pannenberg: 'it constitutes a problem" (page 90) that Lonergan pays no attention either to the later Wittgenstein or to hermeneutical philosophy (= Heidegger and since). What happens, in effect, is that Lonergan remains under the spell of the theory of meaning as intentionality which can be traced to Edmund Husserl (referred to approvingly in *Method*): 'Thus we have in Lonergan as in much contemporary sociology (following Weber) a psychologising interpretation of Husserl's idea of meaning as intentionality' (page 90). The alarming feature of this, so Pannenberg argues, is, in Lonergan at least, that it engenders the idea that meaning is constituted by decision: 'The result seems to be a well-known combination of subjectivism and authority which is characteristic of so much of Protestant theology, specially in a more conservative brand of the pietistic tradition' (page 98). In failing to allow for the priority of the order of meaning over against the individual subject who goes in for the manifold practice of meaning—in ignoring what Wittgenstein called 'language' and what a hermeneutical philosopher would call 'world'—Lonergan leaves himself wide open to the charge that it is within the power of the individual to decide what is to mean what ('When *I* use a word', Humpty Dumpty said, 'it means just what I choose it to mean', *Through the Looking-Glass,* Chapter 6). Isn't it to ensure that we understand the priority of the order of meaning over the experience of the individual that Wittgenstein developed his case against the possibility of a 'private

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language'? And isn't Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism* making the same point?

What is so destructive theologically and ecclesiologically about Lonergan's subjectivist option is, as Pannenberg suggests, that the truth of authority in the realm of Christian doctrine becomes a function of more or less arbitrary subjective decision—not at all what a Catholic would like to think, indeed what he would regard as the 'private judgment' which vitiates Protestantism, but perhaps only too like the disseminated-ultramontanist mythology which makes the Pope's 'hot line to God' the ultimate guarantee if not the principal source of Catholic truth.

It is left to a fourth critic, another distinguished Protestant theologian, to press home the analogy between Lonergan's 'neo-Catholic theology" and "neo-Protestant *Glaubensverständnis* or *Glaubenslehre,* in which a reflection upon inward religious experience or the truths of the faith, abstracted from material conditions of space and time, replaces classical objective theology' (page 121). This is T. F. Torrance who, paradoxically and maybe even perversely preferring Duns Scotus to Thomas Aquinas, and referring characteristically to 'the immense revolution in the foundations of thought that has come to light with relativity theory', aligns Lonergan with Schleiermacher—for whom 'the Word became not flesh but meaning' (page 122). With his Barthian suspicions of 'the modern turn to a subjective startingpoint' Torrance is able to ferret out a 'voluntarist intentionality' in Lonergan which is 'like the conative and pragmatic form which the stream of consciousness takes in the thought of William James' (one of Wittgenstein's main targets in the *Investigations,* he might have added), all of which, for Torrance, leads to anthropological reductionism on Lonergan's part. As indicated in the quotation above, Lonergan's theological method thus becomes indistinguishable from (what seems to Torrance) Bultmann's conception of theology as reflection on one's own experience of faith, or any conception of theology as reflection on the timeless essential truths of faith (Tillich perhaps? I don't know).

The difficulty about this, for Torrance, is that theology, instead of issuing from an objective and material word grounded in the interaction of God as God with the world he has created, becomes no more than reflection upon affections (religious affections, of course) which derive from God's love immanent in the 'convert'. That this might, or even should, be part of theology may be conceded; but once again the sheer materiality of the religious tradition and the whole context of the human world seem to disappear into oblivion.

As if such objections to Lonergan's subject-centred approach were not sufficient to damage his method, Torrance and some of the other contributors also turn a very critical eye upon his famous distinction between faith and belief. It is clear enough that less (perhaps much less) of what Catholics (and other Christians) regard as part of their *belief* is actually part of their *faith* than would have been supposed in an older, more absolutist and totalitarian theology. As Catholics learn to cope with a legitimate pluralism in theological practice they are obliged

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to work with some such distinction as that between faith and belief. The idea would be that a certain diversity in belief need not destroy a faith held in common. Indeed, according to Lonergan himself, one reason for making the distinction is to facilitate ecumenical discourse. But there is a difficulty about the way he formulates the distinction.

Lonergan holds that 'there is a realm in which love precedes knowledge' (*Method,* page 213), and it is this which generates the distinction. He invokes Pascal's remark that the heart has reasons which reason does not know. What reason can know would be 'the factual knowledge reached by experiencing, understanding, and verifying'; but what he takes Pascal to mean is that 'there is another kind of knowledge reached through the discernment of value and the judgments of a person in love' (page 115). The whole notion of conversion upon which he places such weight is regularly glossed as 'falling in love', as 'the dynamic state of being in love', *scil.*, with God. It may be doubted if the model or the metaphor of falling in love is the only or even the commonest one that would occur to people who have had the experience of religious conversion; but there is surely no doubt that being in love reveals to us values that we had not appreciated, and this is what Lonergan wants to assert and exploit. As he says: 'falling in love is a new beginning, an exercise of vertical liberty in which one's world undergoes a new organisation' (page 122). That is a matter of experience. In Lonergan's terminology, the person who is in a dynamic state of being in love has feelings which are intentional responses to values. Now, when the love in question is God's love flooding one's heart, these discernments of values are *faith*: 'Faith is the knowledge born of religious love' (page 115). Faith, then, as defined by Lonergan, is the pre-cognitive and indeed non-cognitive response to the unmediated experience of God's flooding the heart with love.

There is a word which God speaks to us by flooding our hearts with his love—a word that pertains, 'not to the world mediated by meaning, but to the world of immediacy, to the unmediated experience of the mystery of love and awe'. In other words, 'the prior word, *scil.* which God speaks, though it differs in intensity, though it resonates differently in different temperaments and in different stages of religious development, withdraws man from the diversity of history by moving out of the world mediated by meaning and towards a world of immediacy in which image and symbol, thought and word, lose their relevance and even disappear' (page 112). Faith is thus defined by its immediate correlation with God's love flooding the heart. This is the theological version of the fixed base mentioned above: a transcultural and metahistorical moment determined by God's gift of love. And as soon as this enters the world mediated by meaning it becomes belief, 'the outer word of the religious tradition' (page 119). Beliefs will differ, then; but 'behind this difference there is a deeper unity'. As Lonergan says, 'beliefs result from judgments of value, and the judgments of value relevant for religious belief come from faith, the eye of religious love, an eye that can discern God's self-disclosures' (a reminiscence there, surely, of Pierre Rousselot).

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But isn't there something rather odd about an eye that can discern God's self-disclosures—an unmediated experience of the mystery of love—which belongs to a world of immediacy in which image and symbol, etc., lose their relevance and even disappear? What sort of judgments of value could come from the eye of religious love? Agreed that falling in love is a new beginning, etc., how can love reveal values that derive from a world of immediacy prior to the world mediated by meaning? Agreed that the judgments of a person in love may see more deeply (though some say that love is blind), how are such judgments possible except in the world mediated by meaning? The distinction between faith and belief, at least as Lonergan makes it, seems to rest on a dichotomy between experience and language which again brings him very close to Bultmann. Surely a distinction that makes faith an act, or an experience, outside the order of meaning, in a world of immediacy, is operating with a Bultmannesque disjunction between *Historie* and *Geschichte* which is only a recrudescence of the old Platonic dichotomy between the sensible and the intelligible realms? It is a weakness in much modern theology that Professor Torrance has traced elsewhere (cf. *God and Rationality,* 1971).

To return to *Looking at Lonergan's Method.* This account of faith, as Elizabeth Maclaren shows in her paper, though it may be partly designed to facilitate ecumenical agreement, actually makes theological disagreement at any serious level impossible. There is nothing 'neo-Protestant' for her about Lonergan's account of theological disagreement; rather it 'has some affinities with a Vedantist account' (page 83). As Lonergan himself says, even atheists may love God in their hearts while not knowing him with their heads. Fair enough, perhaps; but as Elizabeth Maclaren says, 'It may indicate the subtle and eirenic ecumenicism of Lonergan's position that it is so comprehensive. . . . Such generous pluralism is a welcome change from the rigid exclusiveness of many theologies of the past, but as a method of identifying theological truth it is impotent' (page 81). She questions his conviction that there are differences of belief but identity in faith. In fact, of course, if language is admitted to be a dimension of any human experience, it is hard to see how the experience of faith can always be precisely the same. Has it always been over relatively trivial matters that theologians have disagreed? What she is asking is whether Lonergan's distinction does not lead to a pluralism which no longer distinguishes between truth and error.

It appears from Nicholas Lash's contribution that, for all his declared concern about the profound mutation which Western culture is at present undergoing, Lonergan fails to take seriously the problems generated by discontinuity between different ways of life (whether synchronic or diachronic). Clearly, his insistence on the fundamentally unrevisable and invariant cognitional structure of the human subject, irrespective of epoch, class or culture, would be inclined to push him in that direction. Certainly, if the cognitional structure and performance of all those whom we recognise as human beings were not the same we should not be able to identify them as such in the first place. If a lion

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were able to speak, Wittgenstein said, we should not be able to understand him. The system of reference by means of which we interpret a different language from our own is always the way of behaving that human beings have in common (*Investigations,* I, 206). But by concentrating (unwittingly) on the cognitional structure of the individual, Lonergan has been led largely to ignore the way of behaving, the context, in which the individual's knowing occurs. Thus he plays down the difficulty of understanding a different culture, and of entering into a society whose remoteness in time or strangeness of presuppositions makes it very alien to us. Yet the element of discontinuity between different epochs and different cultures is so central in many different ways and domains that a theological method which fails to treat problems of intercultural and intercontextual understanding seriously must be inadequate.

The root of the inadequacy, as Lash suggests, is the concentration on the individual person at the expense of the social order of meaning (language). That links up again with the dualistic conception of thought and language (first I have thoughts but without words, then I put my thoughts into words), which allows Lonergan to speak of theological pluralism as 'a pluralism of communications rather than of doctrines' (*Method,* page 276). But is that a genuinely *theological* pluralism at all? Isn't it at the level of *thought* that we want to say theologies differ —not just at the level of *language,* if language is to be regarded as little more than the clothing of thought?

And that connects in a roundabout kind of way with an ecclesiological weakness that Lash detects in the very peculiar (at least very *clerical*) way in which, by drawing a one-to-one analogy between 'policy-making, planning, and the execution of plans' in society at large and 'doctrines, systematics, and communications in theological method' (*Method*, page 365), Lonergan seems to leave theology firmly in the hands of 'experts'. His wish to have theology integrated with scholarly and scientific human studies stems partly from his belief that such integration would 'generate well-informed and continuously revised policies and plans for promoting good and undoing evil both in the church and in human society generally' (page 366), but also because he thinks 'it will bring theologians into close contact with experts in many different fields; it will bring scientists and scholars into close contact with policy makers and planners and, through them, with clerical and lay workers engaged in applying solutions to the problems and finding ways to meet the needs both of Christians and of all mankind' (page 367). Isn't this to think of theologians as 'policy makers and planners', with the rest of the Church ('clerical and lay workers') ready to execute their plans?

J. P. Jossua, towards the end of his paper in *Looking at Lonergan's Method,* points out that 'the university status, which (Lonergan) sees as belonging naturally to the theologian, poses some serious problems concerning identity, money, caste, mentality, and power' (page 172). The problem is that, considering theology as a scientific discipline on the model of other university disciplines, Lonergan becomes 'a prisoner

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of university schemes that do not work any more'. The point is expanded by John Coulson who asks whether theology is not an interdisciplinary activity: 'The reason why a purely systematic theology is no longer possible lies in the existence of the plural society, which has as many ways of life as there are meanings and values' (page 188). The theologian, *qua* theologian, is always a jack of all trades, and master of one only to the extent that, *qua* scholar, he is philosopher, historian or exegete. Theology requires to be practised within the widest possible context, 'being compounded as it is of many disciplines, the absence of any being destructive of the range and accuracy of the others' (page 192). As Jossua says, 'our scientific friends, our political scientists, our psychoanalysts do not expect our theological dicourse to offer a methodology similar to that of their disciplines; they will take us seriously as believers and theologians, if we give evidence of an experience which is lived and reflected on, in confrontation with their approach, and which itself remains beyond this confrontation' (page 173).

In a footnote, Nicholas Lash refers to the work of the French philosopher Michel Foucault; it would certainly be to him that a theologian should turn who cannot understand what is wrong with being subject-centred or what the problems of mutation and discontinuity are. For the dislodgement of the sovereignty of the human subject which Foucault arranges in the wake of Marx, Nietzsche and Freud, interlocks with a dismantling of the entire conceptuality that ensures the continuing presence of the Logos as the identity into which all difference always collapses. Foucault shows how the configuration of knowledge which privileges questions about human subjectivity has given way; there is a crisis concerning that transcendental reflection with which philosophy since Kant has identified itself; a crisis affecting all anthropocentric discourse that arranges questions around the question of the nature of man, and thus allows us to avoid an analysis of practice; a crisis that affects all humanist ideologies (a certain Marxism as well as transcendental Thomism); a crisis which, above all, concerns the status of the human subject. It is simply too late in the day, now, not to have 'to reveal the limitations and necessities of a practice where one is used to seeing, in all its pure transparency, the expression of genius and freedom' (*The Archaeology of Knowledge,* page 210). Even the stories that we were told in our childhood are governed by rules that are not all given to our consciousness. The subject has been decentred in relation to the games of his mythical discourse, but also in relation to the laws of his desire (Freud), the forms of his language (linguistics), the rules of his class (Marx). The subject-centred standpoint in theology now must be the standpoint of the decentred subject. And the reason that we minimise and neglect discontinuities, so Foucault makes out, is precisely that mutations and revolutions must never be allowed to disturb the sovereignty of consciousness. It is so frightening to realise that one may be other than one imagines, since one's consciousness is governed by the laws of one's desire, the forms of one's language, and the rules of one's class, that one insists that one is nevertheless the same. What is the fear that drives us back to exalting the sovereignty of con-

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sciousness when somebody talks to us about such laws, forms and rules? As Foucault says, 'the only reply to this question is a political one'. But, leaving that aside for another day, what he tries to do is to trace the whole chain of concepts, from consciousness to continuity, from self to same, that preserves the dream of knowledge-union with the transcendental Logos revealed in the already ordered universe of the cosmos.

It is apparently from another direction, however, that J. P. Mackey, in what proves to be the most radical and subversive essay in *Looking at Lonergan's Method,* manages to include Pannenberg and Torrance as well as Lonergan in his attack on theologians who have not yet questioned the credentials of the 'God' who is the Logos of the cosmos: 'He was conceived at that period of Graeco-Roman civilization which witnessed intercourse between the late Stoic/Middle Platonist theology and the creation motif of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. At birth he was seen to be a divinity who created this empirical world out of nothing and whose immutable mind contained the plan or law which would guide the world through all stages and vicissitudes to his final goal. He was, of course, of the male sex and he was generally reputed, by Christians, naturally, to have become Christian at the incarnation. Around the time of the Arian heresy he achieved undisputed lordship of the West' (page 144-5). There may be some other way of using the Logos conception of divinity (as perhaps occurs in the Fourth Gospel), but the trouble with the way in which it has ordinarily been employed is that, if there is in the mind of God a truth or a plan for reality which is partially visible in our empirical world, and which our empirical world successively *expresses,* but in no way *alters* by its own random elements or creative forces, there would be no real discontinuities. There would only be apparent discontinuities, simply because in our present state of knowledge we could not see the whole plan. The 'thought' of the universe and of history is pictured as locked up in reserve as the precious original in the transcendent and ideal order, and only *expressed* in the 'language' of the material and empirical world. But the good news that sings out today, as Gilles Deleuze writes, is that meaning is never that kind of ultimate source, it is something *produced:* 'le sens n'est jamais principe ou origine, il est produit' (*Logique du Sens,* XI).

Now, as Mackey indicates, Lonergan's treatment of cognitive activity remains 'too rationalist, too Platonic' (page 150). His demand is that there should be total intelligibility *now,* even if it is not in practice available at present to any human being. But this again rests on the picture of transcendental truth as immutable plan hidden in the reserve of the divine realm but intelligible potentially to a (transcendentally) methodical approach by stages, by 'abstraction'. The context is always a dualist transcendentalism that treats human life and the search for God as a process of gradually appropriating this already existing and completely realised 'truth' by learning to trace a series (or hierarchy) of clues planted in the cosmos (with the avatar of the Logos definitively, if not in the somewhat unlikely form of a Jewish prophet, at any rate in the appropriately cosmologised Pantokrator of liturgical and iconographical representation). This leads to Mackey's final point, his in-

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sistence that theologians (and others) must learn to live in the newly discovered world of radical historicity: 'Theology must learn to recover the past or that part of the past which men of faith are convinced is God's special gift—not in order to read God's mind but in order to receive the spirit by which to build the future, in the hope of an absolute destiny which as yet exists neither in reality nor in mind' (page 163). To admit, in any shape or form, some immutable and predestinating plan for the world that exists ready-made either in the cosmos itself or in the mind of God is to reduce history to mere conformity and imitation, and thus to conceal and deny the real creativity—the power of making things new—which is displayed, with even terrifying effects, in the actual production of history and knowledge, but which the New Testament itself attests (cf. Cornelius Ernst, *New Blackfriars,* October 1969). And as far as the Platonic-metaphysical tradition is concerned (the varieties of idealism that continue to dominate), it is worth noting that the gravamen of Heidegger's critique is precisely that the tradition persistently dispels any real sense of the discontinuity of innovation and of the human power to produce (not only to express) meaning (cf. Werner Marx, *Heidegger and the Tradition*).

According to Mackey, then, all those who use 'revelation' as a primary category in theology sooner or later find themselves dealing in truth(s) as something transcendent, inevitably in a crypto-Platonic fashion. So when Pannenberg, who pins so much on the category of revelation, says that the totality of meaning has been revealed by anticipation in Jesus Christ must he not mean either that all the meaning there is, *or ever will be,* is deposited already in the past of Jesus and can in principle be dug up from there, or that only part of the total meaning appeared in Jesus and the rest exists in the mind of God. Either way, there is a fullness of meaning already established, a reservoir for us to draw upon, something we may make our own but not something that we make. As Mackey says, 'There is no truth or plan, to our knowledge, which transcends history; but creative beings in history, supported by trust in a ground of being, and by the hope which their commitment brings, can creatively transcend every condition which the structures of the past or the rigidity of the present imposes on them. Meaning, always, is at one and the same time present and in the making' (page 161). And he invokes the example of William Blake, but what will perhaps comfort the theologian more is that he also promises us a book in which he hopes to show that faith, not revelation, is the fundamental category for theology, and that it allows full scope to human freedom and creativity in our radically historical form of existence.

In conclusion, if, after this set of essays, Lonergan's method looks very ramshackle, there would not have been, but for his mistakes, so valuable a dossier of current theological problems. As Heidegger appropriately says, 'Wer gross denkt, muss gross irren'.

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