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**THE TWO WAYS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT ACCORDING TO
BERNARD LONERGAN. ANTICIPATION IN *INSIGHT***
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INTRODUCTION

Bernard Lonergan (1904-84), Canadian philosopher and theologian, is « widely regarded as one of the most significant thinkers of the twentieth century »¹. His original and coherent philosophical investigations focusing on human knowing as a dynamic event and a philosophical field have led him to elaboration of cognitional theory, epistemology, ethics, metaphysics, and philosophy of God. The same philosophical investigations and the intellectual force of his literary output also brought him to address fundamental questions that pertain to human development. His exploration of the two ways of human development constitute a major theme in his post-*Method* articles, written during the final stage of his career, namely, between 1974 and 1980.

In his May 15, 1975, article entitled “Healing and Creating in History”, Lonergan asserts that authentic human development follows two fundamental and complementary ways, an ascending one, the way up from below upwards, the way of achievement, and a descending one, the way down, from above downwards, the way of heritage:

For human development is of two different kinds. There is development from below upwards, from experience to understanding, from growing understanding to balanced judgement, from balanced judgement to fruitful courses or action, and from fruitful courses of action to new situations that call for further understanding, profounder judgement, richer courses of action. But there also is development from above downwards. There is the transformation of falling in love: the domestic love of the family; the human love of one’s tribe, one’s country, mankind; the divine love that orientates man in his cosmos and expresses itself in worship².

Lonergan’s description of two ways of human development is based on his cognitional theory composed of four levels of conscious and intentional operations. Thus development from below upwards begins with an attentive experience of data, then evolves from an understanding of the data to critical

¹ M. MORELLI-E . MORELLI, *The Lonergan Reader*, 3.

² B. LONERGAN, « Healing and Creating in History », 106.

reflection on this understanding, and from this critical reflection to responsible decision. Development from above downwards, on the other hand, begins with which one better apprehends the meaning of responsible decision, critical reflection, intelligent understanding and attentive experience.

Lonergan, however, did not elaborate a systematic study of the ways of human development, even if they constitute a major theme in his later writings. Neither did he show any historical progress in his thought concerning the two ways. We have noticed throughout our research that very few commentators on Lonergan, philosophers as well as theologians, considered this theme in depth as the fundamental subject of their investigations. Thus, Frederick Crowe states rightly that the two ways of human development are an important, unexplored theme in Lonergan's philosophy.

I underline the need to appropriate one's interiority in two directions, which Lonergan calls "the way down" [...] the second way has its source in gift, but the first is the way of achievement [...] this double way is an important unexplored idea in Lonergan. Neglect of it is bound to result in distorted interpretations³

In order to grasp Lonergan's understanding of the two ways of human development and to show their anticipation in *Insight*, his philosophical masterpiece, I use as method "an intellectual hermeneutics" which, according to Lonergan, is "a matter of understanding the thing, the words, the author, and oneself, of passing judgement on then accuracy of one's understanding, of determining the manner of pressing what one has understood"⁴.

As defined, this intellectual hermeneutics includes then two first functional specialities of which Lonergan speaks in *Method in Theology*, namely, research and interpretation. Our research is not general but special because it endeavours to gather Lonergan's writings relevant to the two ways of human development. Our interpretation aims at understanding the meaning of these writings in their proper context.

The book is entitled "The Two ways of Human Development according to Bernard J.F. Lonergan. Anticipation in *Insight*" (*De duabus viis progressionis humanae secundum Bernard J.F. Lonergan. Anticipatio in libro Insight*). From the title, the two mains parts of our study emerge, structured around the two following questions: 1. What does Lonergan mean by the two ways of human development? 2. Can we find an anticipation of the two ways in *Insight*? Each part of the dissertation has two chapters. In the first part, chapter one deals with

³ F.E. CROWE, *The Lonergan Enterprise*, 72-73.

⁴ MIT, 245.

development from below, chapter two with development from below (chapter three) and of development from above (chapter four) in *Insight*.

PART I: TWO WAYS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 1972-1980

1. DEVELOPMENT FROM BELOW UPWARDS

In *Method in Theology* (1972) as well as in the eleven post-*Method* articles (1972-1980), Lonergan conceives of human development from below upwards as a dynamic process which proceeds from an experiential infrastructure to responsible decision by passing through intelligent understanding and rational judgement. Nevertheless, in the eleven post-*Method* articles there are various and complementary connotations which enrich Lonergan's understanding of development from below upwards.

In the article "Mission and the Spirit", 1974, Lonergan looks at development from below in the context of vertical finality, understood as identical with self-transcendence. A year later, in 1975, he published two articles, namely "Christology Today" and "Healing and Creating in History". In the first, he maintains that the way up is articulated in the world mediated by meaning, and this is effected by means of self-transcendence. In the second article, development from below is explained as analogous to the creative process that unfolds in our historical and social context, marked by biases.

In 1976, Lonergan wrote five articles "Religious Experience" (March 2), "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods" (March 4); in 1976, Lonergan Workshop (June 14-18), "The Human Good" (September), and the "Questionnaire on philosophy" (September). In all of them but "The Human Good", development from below upwards is closely connected to human authenticity which sublates the cognitive operations of experience, understanding, judgement and decision. This human authenticity promotes both individual and social progress, while unauthenticity, characterised by biases, leads decline. When decline sets in, the dialectic must be called upon in order to deal with unauthenticity and thereby to restore the process of human development.

In "The Human Good", Lonergan's understanding of the development from below upwards is in general similar to that in "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections" to the extent that, in both articles, human development from below upwards emerges and unfolds within the world mediated by meaning and values. More specifically though, "The Human Good" discusses human development in terms of personally appropriating the operations of one's own experience, insights, judgements of fact and of value.

In 1977, Lonergan re-examines the theme of human development in two articles: “Natural Right and Historical Mindedness” and “Theology and Praxis”. In the former, he conceives of human development from below upwards in terms of questions for intelligence, reflection and deliberation. This conception is taken up again in “Questions with Regard to Method” of March 1980. In “Theology and Praxis”, the way up is presented as a process which, with the help of intelligence, rationality and deliberation, enables a person to develop and grow within the world mediated by meaning and values.

2. DEVELOPMENT FROM ABOVE DOWNWARDS

Development from above downwards is a matter of gift, tradition, heritage, reception, human love, divine love or grace. But the aim of truly human development does not consist exclusively in a cumulative progress or in an achievement of self-transcendence. It consists neither only in an effective transformation of love in its triple manifestation, nor in the faithful transmission of the value carried out by tradition. The aim of human development comprises in the complementary of the two ways of human development, in their integration: “both ways are normal, one to achievement, the other to reception; and since we are all our lives receiving and achieving, the full normality is the complementarity of the two”⁵.

An intrinsic demand connects the two ways and ideally leads them toward full human development: “*ex partita vita in unitam consurgere*”. Indeed the way up and the way down of development constitute two processes of one and the same reality called “the truly human development”. Furthermore, “the truly human development is of conscious subjects moving cumulatively through their operations to the self-transcendence or truth and love”⁶. In his book, *Old things and New*, Fred Crowe affirms that “as progress must take its start from tradition, so tradition must submit to the critique of progress. But, in principle, the development achieved through personal experience and the development based on accepting heritage can be conceived as complementary to one another”⁷. Therefore, it seems appropriate to highlight this unity and complementarity as appears in *Method in Theology* and in post-*Method* articles.

⁵ OTN, 166.

⁶ « Christology Today », 76

⁷ OTN, 24.

COMPLEMENTARITY OF THE TWO WAYS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

IN METHOD IN THEOLOGY

In *Method and Theology* the unity of both ways is required to achieve authentic human development. In fact, just as “the way up” rises from experience to understanding, judgement and decision, similarly the way down “*descends*” from decision to judgment, understanding and to experience. “As the many operations are conjoined in a single compound knowing, so too the many levels of consciousness are just successive stages in the unfolding of a single thrust, the eros of the human spirit. To know the good, I must know the real; to know the real, it must know the true; to know the true, it must know the intelligible; to know the intelligible, it must attend to the data”⁸.

Chapter One of *Method in Theology*, dealing exclusively with development from below, remains absolutely incomplete without development from above of chapters 4 (religion) and 10 (dialectic) of the same work. Thus, the four transcendental precepts (be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible) which structure development from below are completed by the fifth one: “be in love”, of development from above.

When Lonergan discusses the two phases of theology, *in oratione abliqua* and *in oratione recta*, he speaks of a reciprocal dependence: “there is, then, reciprocal dependence within each of the two phases, and this was only expected since the four levels of conscious and intentional operations (which determine the four specialities in each phase) are themselves interdependent. There is dependence of the second phase on the first for the second confronts the present and the future in the light of what has been assimilated from the past”⁹.

IN THE ELEVEN POST-METHOD ARTICLES

In all eleven post-*Method* articles, Lonergan highlights the complementarity, symbiosis and interdependence of the two ways of human development. The article “Mission and the Spirit” deals with the proximity of the two modes of development: “Besides *the fides ex auditu* there is *fides es infusione*”¹⁰. In “Christology today: Methodological Reflection”, “the ordinary process i.e. from below upwards is not the exclusive process”¹¹, because there also exist development from above downwards.

⁸ MIT, 13.

⁹ MIT, 142-143.

¹⁰ « Mission and the Spirit », 32.

¹¹ « Christology Today », 76

In “Healing and Creating in History”, Lonergan stresses the interdependence of the creative process and the healing process. “Intrinsic to the nature of healing, there is the extrinsic requirement of a concomitant creative process. For just as the creative process, when unaccompanied by healing, is distorted and corrupted by bias, so too the healing process, when unaccompanied by creativity, is a soul without a body”¹². In “Religious Experience”, he insists on the coexistence of the two paths of human development: “Besides development from below upwards there also is development from above downwards”¹³.

In “The Ongoing Genesis of Methods”, the process of socialization, acculturation and education from above constitutes a solid base for the development from below. “By that process there is formed our initial mind-set, worldview, ... horizon. On that basis and with its limitation we slowly begin to become our own masters, think for ourselves, make our own decisions, exercise our own freedom and responsibility”¹⁴. In the 1976 Lonergan Workshop, Lonergan affirms that the higher developments from above sublate the innovations from below. “In other words, the higher integrations are integrations of what is below and it is from below that big innovations are going”¹⁵.

In “The Human Good”, “there is a symbiosis between immanently generated knowledge and belief”¹⁶, an interdependence between “vertical development” or the transmission of tradition and “horizontal development” or personal appropriation. This symbiosis and interdependence between the two ways of development are explained in the “Questionnaire on Philosophy”. “The two modes of development are interdependent. But only through the second does the first take one beyond the earliest stages of development. Only through the first is there any real assimilation and appropriation of the second”¹⁷.

In “Natural Right and Historical Mindedness”, there exists a strict complementarity between development and the handling on of development. One is incomplete without the other and vice-versa. They call on each other in a complementary way. “Development is incomplete when it does not go the whole way upwards [...]. The process of handling on can be incomplete”¹⁸, if it is not accompanied by the process of development.

In “Theology and Praxis”, Lonergan comes back to the mutual dependence of the two phases of development by affirming that “the structure of individual

¹² « Healing and Creating in History », 107.

¹³ Religious Experience », 126.

¹⁴ « The Ongoing Genesis of Methods », 156.

¹⁵ The LoWo Transcripts, 78.

¹⁶ « The Human Good », 120.

¹⁷ « The Questionnaire on Philosophy », 10.

¹⁸ « Natural Right and Historical Mindedness », 180-181.

development is twofold”¹⁹. In the last article, “Questions with Regard to Method”, Lonergan states “besides the horizontal process, there is being in love”²⁰, i.e., the vertical process. In the light of what has been said, we confirm the thesis according to which the ideal of truly human development consists in the integration and complementarity of the two ways of development.

For a human being develops from below upwards through his creativity and self-transcendence, but he also develops from above downwards by accepting God’s love that sublates his desire for creativity and for self-transcendence. Given this complementarity, one can ask about the specific relationship between the two ways of human development. The complementarity of the two ways seems to be the chief fruit of Lonergan’s thought.

Of his post-*Method* works most students of Lonergan would probably agree with Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., that the chief fruit is his ever shaper elucidation of the two complementary rhythms of development with the healing vector moving from above downwards (i.e., of being-in-love with God, believing, evaluating, judging, understanding, experiencing), and the creative vector moving from below upwards (i.e., experiencing, understanding, reflecting, believing and loving)²¹.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO WAYS

On the basis of this complementarity between the two vectors of human development, we can ask ourselves, in a specific way, what type of relationship exists between these two vectors. In “Christology Today: Methodological Reflections”, Lonergan maintains that if the transformation by God’s love is real then “development becomes not merely from below upwards but *more fundamentally* from above downwards”²². “Human development more commonly is from below upwards but *more importantly* it is from above downwards”²³. Indeed, “a life has begun where the heart has its reason which reason ignores. A yields to a new truth, *nihil cognitum nisi prius amatum*”²⁴

In the article “The Ongoing Genesis of Methods”, “the way down” is the foundation for “the way up”. In the 1976 Lonergan Workshop, development from above is seen as higher integration of the innovations produced by development from below. In the “Questionnaire on Philosophy”, the relationship between the two process is discussed in terms of their mutual enrichment

¹⁹ « Theology and praxis », 196.

²⁰ « Questions with Regard to Method », 310.

²¹ F. LAWRENCE, « Bernard Lonergan », 263.

²² « Christology Today », 77, my emphasis.

²³ « Christology Today », 79 my emphasis.

²⁴ « Christology Today », 77.

because it is only through the second mode of development that one can transcend the initial stages of development, and it is only through the first that the assimilation and appropriation the second become effective.

In “Natural Right and Historical Mindedness”, development from above is given a chronological priority over development from below. Indeed, “on affectivity rests the apprehension of values”²⁵. Why? Because the second phase, which basically rests on love and trust, contributes to the emergence and development of the first phase.

Thus in *Method in Theology* as well as in the eleven post-*Method* articles, there is both complementarity and integration between the “way up” and “the way down”, between tradition and innovation, between the gift of love and its reception, between healing and creativity. Nevertheless, in *Method in Theology*, as in these articles, human or divine loves from above both grounds and sublates the creative process from below. So, “love, then, as it was the original gift in the way of heritage, is also the crowning element in the way of achievement”²⁶. Human or divine love from above integrates and unifies progress from below. Through the various conflicts inherent to existence, love promotes the emergence of a new style of human development.

PART II: THE ANTICIPATION OF THE TWO WAYS OF DEVELOPMENT IN *INSIGHT*

From the introduction, Lonergan qualifies *Insight* work as a moving viewpoint: “not only are we writing from a moving viewpoint but also we are writing about a moving viewpoint”²⁷. This moving viewpoint is required by the process of development: “As it is clear a book designed to aid development must be written from a moving viewpoint”²⁸.

This moving viewpoint structures the articulation of the parts and chapters of *Insight*. As a philosophical work, *Insight* is composed of two main parts: insight as activity (chapters 1 to 10) and insight as knowledge (chapters 11 to 20). The two parts are so strictly connected that one can not methodically reach to a personal appropriation of insight as knowledge if one does not first come to a grasp of insight as activity. Insight as activity and insight as knowledge are epistemologically connected.

²⁵ « Natural Right and Historical Mindedness », 181.

²⁶ « Theology and Praxis », 196, my emphasis.

²⁷ *IN*, 20. That means “earlier statements are to be qualified and interpreted in the light of the later statements” (*IN*, 19).

²⁸ *IN*, 18.

“In the first part, insight is studied as an activity, as an event that occurs within various patterns of other related events. In the second part, insight is studied as knowledge, as an event that, under determinate conditions, reveals a universe of being. The first part deals with the question, what is happening when we are knowing? The second part moves to the question, What is known when that is happening?”²⁹

ANTICIPATION OF DEVELOPMENT FROM BELOW IN *INSIGHT*

One can find, in *Insight*, neither the application of the metaphor from below upward and from above downward to the process of the human development as whole, nor the expressions development from below upwards and development from above downwards. Nevertheless, despite the lack of these expressions, we maintain the following thesis: Lonergan’s meaning of the two ways of human development, operative in *Method in Theology* and explicit in post-*Method* articles, are anticipated in *Insight*.

In *Insight*, development from below corresponds to human knowing which, as a dynamic process, explicitly consists in experiencing, understanding, and judging. These three cognitive operations find their anticipation mainly in chapters 9 (the notion of judgment) and 10 (reflective understanding) of *Insight*. Though not as explicitly analysed, decision finds its anticipation in chapter 18 (the possibility of ethics) of *Insight*.

ANTICIPATION OF DEVELOPMENT FROM ABOVE IN *INSIGHT*

In the first part, development from above downwards comes about with the transformation of love in its threefold manifestation, i.e. the domestic love of the family, the love of one’s country and the love of God. We have considered God’s love as a gift as religious conversion and as a dynamic state. Religious conversion, as foundation of cognitive and moral self-transcendence, transforms the knowing subject and establishes him in a dynamic state of being in love with God. The subject realises, therefore, in his existence that *nihil cognitum nisi prius amatum*. In *Method in Theology* and in post-*Method* writings, God’s love is conceived as a new higher integration which promotes development from below.

²⁹ *IN*, 16. In *Insight* (1957), Lonergan speaks of two questions. Ten years later, in 1967, in “Theories of Inquiry”, he comes up with three basic questions which he reaffirms in *Method in Theology* (1972). The three basic questions are : 1. “What am I doing when I am knowing ? 2. Why is doing that knowing ? 3. What do I know when I do it ? (*MIT*, 25.83.261.297.316). In applying these three basic questions to *Insight*, we affirm that the first eleven chapters deal with the first question. Chapter 12 is an answer to the second question. Chapters 13 to 17, 19, 20 answer the third question.

Can one find in *Insight* an anticipation of development from above downward, which is a matter of gift, of human or divine love, of belief, of tradition? We answer affirmatively. In *Insight*, there exists an anticipation of the development from above downwards. In order to make explicit this anticipation, we have examined the five following points: first, transcendence and the affirmation of God; second, the problem of evil; third, the notion of belief; fourth, God as supernatural solution; finally, God's love. We will mainly explore chapters 19, 20 and the epilogue of *Insight*.

If *Insight* is written "not from above downwards, but from below upwards"³⁰, how can we justify the anticipation of development from above downwards? The fourth chapter attempts to elucidate this question, by showing its anticipation in chapters 19 (general transcendent knowledge), 20 (special transcendent knowledge), and the epilogue of *Insight*. In considering the problem of evil, we argue that God's love is not only its supernatural solution, but equally the topmost integration of development from below.

As a philosophical work, *Insight* is "an invitation to know oneself in the tension of the duality of one's own knowing"³¹; Lonergan's main concern is to promote upward human development conceived as a process that the reader will reach through self-appropriation. "More than all else, the aim of the book is to issue a personal, decisive act"³². This personal and decisive act is that of a self-appropriation of the dynamic structure of cognitional operations. "We are concerned not with the abstract properties of cognitional process but with a personal appropriation of one's own dynamic and recurrently operative structure of cognitional activities"³³.

In *Insight*, Lonergan's main interest is to invite his reader to the self-appropriation of the dynamic structure of his cognitional operations.

The dynamic structure to be reached is not the transcendental ego of the Fichtean speculation, nor the abstract pattern of relations verifiable in Tom and Dick and Harry, but *the personally appropriated structure of one's own experiencing, one's own intelligent inquiry and insights, one's own critical reflection and judging and deciding*³⁴.

Self-appropriation deals not with abstract notions but the dynamic structure of our cognitional operations. It means that we need to discover, to identify, to actualise, and to be familiar with his cognitive operations that make us human

³⁰ IN, 17.

³¹ IN, 13.

³² IN, 13.

³³ IN, 17.

³⁴ IN, 13.

beings capable of attentive experiencing, of intelligent understanding, of critical reflection and of responsible decision. So, “our goal is the concrete, individual, existing subject that intelligently generates, and critically evaluates”³⁵. Nevertheless, the appropriation of the cognitional operations is not as easy as one would like it to be. It is a conquest, a long process, a laborious development: “the labour for self appropriation cannot occur at a single leap. Essentially, it is a development of the subject and in the subject, and like all development it can be solid and fruitful only by being painstaking and slow”³⁶.

CONCLUSION

In *Method in Theology* and in post-*Method* articles, between the thesis of progress and the antithesis of decline, the redemptive love of Christ is presented as the dialectical synthesis which allows individuals to seek for their personal value and to live in authenticity. This redemptive love of Christ saves individuals from decline and sin, reverses biases and restores their quest for human development. The redemptive love of Christ, in challenging to put into practice the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, empowers intelligence and will towards the intelligible, the true, the good and the love for God and for one’s fellow creatures.

The movement from below must go together with the movement from above. There exists thus an integration and a complementarity of the two ways of authentic human development. But this integration is not a given but rather a task, a challenge. According to Frederick Crowe,

The upward way of development enjoys a luxurious growth, like that of vegetation in the rain forests of tropical lands, takes on as many exotic forms. The downward way of development has not had time to adapt to the new situation, or to bring the moderating influence of a valid tradition into union with the critical spirit of times, so that together they might create a new and viable set of values³⁷.

In today’s world, overwhelmed by science and technology, the upward way of development enjoys enormous progress. But, does this upward development move ahead parallel to a downward development, characterised by the promotion of human and religious values? This does not seem to be the case. Indeed, human beings are discovering that our scientific and technological progress is not always proportionate to our moral development. “He has discovered that the advance of human knowledge is ambivalent, that it places in

³⁵ *IN*, 91.

³⁶ *IN*, 17.

³⁷ *ALI*, 358.

man's hands stupendous power without necessarily adding proportionate wisdom and virtue"³⁸.

The upward way of development, illustrated by scientific and technological progress, must be completed by the downward way development, by the creation and the transmission of corresponding values. The two movements of human development must be unfolded in complementarity and interdependence. For it is only through the upward movement that there is an assimilation and an appropriation of downward movement. And it is only through downward movement that there is a valorisation and sublation of upward movement.

In the Epilogue, Lonergan writes that "however indispensable this work (*Insight*), it is vain unless it is complemented by further labour"³⁹. As *Insights* is written from a moving viewpoint, not aiming at communicating ready-made results, it conveys an invitation for further developments. During 1974 interview, Lonergan reveals that after *Insight*, the moving viewpoint still continues: "I've learnt a lot since. It's still a moving viewpoint after *Insight*. I kept on moving"⁴⁰.

"Your interest may quite legitimately be to find out what Lonergan thinks and what Lonergan says, but I am not offering you that, or what anyone else thinks or says, as a basis. If a person is to be a philosopher, his thinking as a whole cannot depend upon someone or something else. There has to be a basis within himself; he must have resources of his own to which he can appeal in the last resort"⁴¹.

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³⁸ *IN*, 572.

³⁹ *IN*, 769.

⁴⁰ *2C*, 220.

⁴¹ *UB*, 25.