

## Lonergan's Early Essays on the Redemption of History

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This essay was published in *Lonergan Workshop*, vol. 10, 159-177, but I do not have it as scanned from there. Since it was published, the early essays to which it refers have been published in volume 25 of the *Collected Works*.

This year's Workshop is devoted to "The Legacy of Lonergan," and most of the presentations have been devoted to the legacy Lonergan left behind and to some assessment of the state in which it exists today. I would like to offer a reflection, under the same title but reversing the metaphor, that will speak of the legacy that Lonergan himself received. I will concentrate on three of the pieces that were found posthumously in "File 713--History."<sup>1</sup> Two of them have now been edited and published;<sup>2</sup> the third, which I will cite from a photocopy, is entitled "Philosophy of History."

As Fred Crowe has observed, these essays are likely to surprise those who have thought of Lonergan principally as a cognitional theorist or as a methodologist, whose attention was concentrated on the structure and dynamics of individual consciousness. Here one finds a Lonergan who is interested in a general theory, a metaphysics of history, and whose abstract lines are regularly illustrated by references to contemporary events and figures. Crowe asked some questions that might arise in any reader:

...one wonders what became of this work of Lonergan's youth, how he turned from what was so topical to what was so remote, and why he kept these papers all his life, if he had abandoned the direction he seemed to have taken in them. Or *did* he abandon it, did it endure as an underlying purpose, and can one find it all-pervasive in his later work?<sup>3</sup>

I am myself inclined to answer that he did not abandon this interest and that it endured as an underlying, if not necessarily all-pervasive purpose. One may cite Chapters VI and VII and the Epilogue of *Insight*; the lectures on the Philosophy of Education; the recurrence of the dialectic of progress, decline and redemption in *Method in Theology*, and many other references. To these I would add some incidental comments. At the end of the twelfth thesis of his *De Verbo Incarnato*, Lonergan wrote five lines for a *scholion* "De potentia Christi hominis," the last two of which were: "We also need a treatment of the historical causality which Christ the man manifestly exercises."<sup>4</sup> One day when I asked him about the theology of redemption, he disabused me of the idea that Aristotle's four causes were adequate and sent me instead to the idea of historical causality.

I don't think that Fr. Lonergan would object to the effort to uncover his debts. He himself remarked that "ninety-eight per cent of what a genius knows, he believes."<sup>5</sup> And in one of these early essays he remarked that "whether rightly or wrongly, [men] think in a herd. The apparent exception

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<sup>1</sup> For a brief description, see Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992) 24-27.

<sup>2</sup> "Lonergan's *Pantôn Anakephalaiôsis* [The Restoration of All Things]," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 9 (1991) 134-72; "Lonergan's 'Analytic Concept of History,'" *Ibid.*, 11 (1993) 1-35.

<sup>3</sup> Crowe, *Lonergan*, 27.

<sup>4</sup> "Uterius desideratur consideratio de causalitate historica quam Christus homo manifeste exercet;" *De Verbo incarnato* (Gregorian University Press, 1961) 362.

<sup>5</sup> *A Second Collection*, ed. W.F.J. Ryan and B. Tyrrell (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974) 219.

is [the] genius, who however is not the fine flower of individuality but the product of the age and the instrument of the race in its progress."<sup>6</sup> In the two published early works on history, the idea is powerful that "Quidquid movetur ab alio movetur." I am interested here in some of the things that may have moved Lonergan to interest himself in history. The result, I hope, will not be a diminishment but an identification and fuller characterization of Lonergan's originality.

### THREE CONTEXTS

Lonergan began his philosophical studies at Heythrop between 1926 and 1930; after three years of regency back in Canada, he did his theological studies in Rome from 1933 to 1937, returning after a year's tertianship in France, to work on his doctoral dissertation. The early papers on history appear to date from the time in Rome before he undertook his study of St. Thomas on operative grace.

The years Lonergan spent in England, France, and Rome were ones of great world-historical drama, of significant ecclesiastical development, and of major breakthroughs in Catholic thought. I wish to say a few brief things about each of these contexts.

#### The General Crisis

By the mid-1930s the sense that the world, or at least the western world, was in a state of acute crisis was very widespread. The First World War had been fought, Americans were told, for two connected purposes: to end all wars by making the world safe for democracy. But 1935 saw the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, and a year later the Spanish Civil War would break out. Long before then totalitarian regimes had consolidated their power in Russia, Germany, and Italy, and a great debate was underway about the future of democracy. The League of Nations, created to promote international cooperation, had already proven its inability to inhibit a recrudescence of nationalism all over Europe. And all these political developments were matched by a now global economic crisis that brought into question the other great engine of modern progress, liberal capitalism. Christopher Dawson summed up a not uncommon view:

Western civilization to-day is passing through one of the most critical moments in its history. In every department of life traditional principles have been shaken and discredited, and we do not yet know what is going to take their place.<sup>7</sup>

This sense of crisis made Oswald Spengler's The Decline of the West more than an isolated expression of pessimism on a grand scale. The literature of crisis is very extensive: N. Berdaiev, The New Middle Ages (1924); J. Benda, La trahison des clercs (1927); S. Freud, The Future of an Illusion (1927), Civilization and its Discontents (1930); K. Jaspers, Die geistige Situation der Zeit (1931); R. Niebuhr, Moral Man and Immoral Society (1932); Beyond Tragedy (1936); Ortega y Gasset, The Revolt of the Masses (1930); J. Huizinga, The Crisis of Civilization (1935); E. Husserl, The Crisis of European Sciences (1936). People were thinking on a grand scale.

#### The Church's Response

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<sup>6</sup> "Lonergan's 'Analytic Concept of History,'" 12.

<sup>7</sup> Christopher Dawson, "General Introduction," in J. Maritain, et al., Essays in Order (New York: Macmillan, 1931), v.

The period during which such works were being published coincided with the pontificate of a remarkable man, Pope Pius XI (1922-1939). His reign is often seen as a recovery and extension of the great effort, initiated by Leo XIII, to accomplish what had formed the motto of Pius X, Instaurare omnia in Christo: To Restore All Things in Christ. Pius XI's own motto was Pax Christi in Regno Christi, The Peace of Christ in the Reign of Christ. From his first encyclical, through the establishment and spread of the Feast of Christ the King (1925), his condemnation of Action française (1926), his great social Encyclical, Quadragesimo anno (1931), his condemnations of nationalism, fascism, nazism, and communism, Pius XI set out a grand vision of a Catholic solution to the great crisis of modern civilization. It would represent a third alternative to the discredited alternatives of a liberalism that was so individualistic that it could not ground a common culture and a collectivism that left no room for the person.<sup>8</sup>

In the mind of the Pope, here echoing commonplaces of modern Roman Catholicism, the root of modern evils was located in man's "lamentable separation from God and Christ": "Neither God nor Jesus Christ being recognized by the law or by the state, and authority claiming to be derived from man alone, the very foundations of authority have been destroyed." There no longer existed an international institution similar to "that true society of nations which was the community of Christian peoples" in the Middle Ages; only the Church has the teaching that can bring a remedy so that "all things shall be fully subjected to God, who 'beholds the heart,' and shall be inwardly informed by His teachings and laws, with the result that all things, the minds of all men, private individuals and rulers, even the public institutions of society, shall be penetrated by the sense of religious duty, so that 'Christ is all things and in all' (Col. 3:11)." Pius XI identified in those who pay no heed to the Church's social teaching "a kind of moral, judicial, and social Modernism, and We condemn it as strongly as We do dogmatic Modernism."<sup>9</sup>

In 1925 the Pope gave devotional and liturgical force to his vision by instituting the feast of Christ the King. Relating this action to the basic orientation he had given his pontificate, he offered a biblical and theological exposition of Christ's Kingship, insisting that it applied not only to individuals and the Church but to all of society and its rulers: "When once men recognize, both in private and in public life, that Christ is King, society will at last receive the great blessing of real liberty, well-ordered discipline, peace, and harmony." The new feast would be a yearly reminder of the root cause of modern evils:

In ordaining that the whole Catholic world shall revere Christ the King, We minister to the need of the present day, and at the same time provide an excellent remedy for the plague which now affects society. We refer to the plague of secularism, its errors and impious activities.

This evil spirit...has not come into being in one day, it has long lurked beneath the surface. The empire of Christ over all nations was rejected. The right which the Church has from Christ Himself, to teach mankind, to make laws, to govern peoples in all that pertains to their eternal salvation, that right has been denied. Then gradually the religion of Christ came to be likened to false religions and to be placed ignominiously on the same level with them. It was then put under the power of the state and merely tolerated more or less at the

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<sup>8</sup> For a contextualization of this view, along with ample bibliography, see Yvon Tranvouez, "Du Christ-Roi aux prêtres-ouvriers," in Catholiques d'abord: Approches du mouvement catholique en France (XIXe-XXe siècle) (Paris: Ed. Ouvrières, 1988) 107-31; Daniele Menozzi, "Percorsi della 'società cristiana': Da Leone XIII al concilio Vaticano II," in La Chiesa cattolica e la secolarizzazione (Torino: Einaudi, 1993) 136-97.

<sup>9</sup> For the Pope's first Encyclical, Ubi arcano, see Social Wellsprings, II: Eighteen Encyclicals of Social Reconstruction by Pope Pius XI, ed. J. Husslein (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1942) 5-26.

whim of princes and rulers. Some men went even further, and wished to set up in the place of God's religion a natural religion, consisting in some instinctive affection of the heart. There were even some nations who thought they could dispense with God, and their religion should consist in impiety and the neglect of God.

The rebellion of individuals and states against the authority of Christ has produced deplorable consequences.... They are the seeds of discords sown far and wide; those bitter enmities and rivalries between nations which hinder so much the cause of peace; that insatiable greed which is so often hidden under a pretense of public spirit and patriotism, and gives rise to so many private quarrels; a blind and immoderate selfishness making men seek nothing but their own comfort and advantage and measure everything by these; no peace in the home because men have forgotten or neglect their duty; the unity and stability of the family undermined; society, in a word, shaken to its foundation and on the way to ruin.

We firmly hope, however, that the Feast of the Kingship of Christ, which in future will be yearly observed, may hasten the return of society to our loving Savior.... [If] the faithful were generally to understand that it behooves them to fight courageously under the banner of Christ their King, then, fired with apostolic zeal, they would strive to win over to their Lord those hearts that are bitter and estranged from Him and would valiantly defend His rights.

Moreover, the annual and universal celebration of the Kingship of Christ will draw attention to the evils which secularism has brought upon society in drawing men away from Christ and will also do much to remedy them. While nations insult the beloved name of our Redeemer by suppressing all mention of it in their conferences and parliaments, we must all the more loudly proclaim His kingly dignity and power, all the more universally affirm His rights.<sup>10</sup>

To these grand articulations of principle corresponded a new movement of practical Christian engagement. Pius XI was the great pope of "Catholic Action," praised by him in his first Encyclical. New specialized forms of this apostolate began in Belgium where in 1924 the Abbé Cardign had received approval of the Young Christian Workers. The movement quickly spread into France and elsewhere and soon received the enthusiastic support of the Pope. As one historian puts it, "The Young Christian Workers were for the generation of the 1930s at once a symbol and a sign. Symbol of a grand hope, the Christian reconquest of the popular masses, the alliance of the Church with the people drawn to communism against the liberal bourgeoisie. Sign of a new method, of the new and twofold strategy on which Emile Poulat has insisted, that moved from works (*oeuvres*) to movements and from the powerful (*notables*) to militants."<sup>11</sup> The YCW was paralleled by other apostolic movements that involved students, farmers, sailors, and others in a new apostolate to milieux, an apostolate of "like to like." These movements of popular lay engagement were outwardly directed; they were not simply parish societies designed to protect people from infection by modernity, but apostolic movements engaged in the various circumstances of the modern world world in order to save them by winning them back to Christ.

I think it important to stress the sense of identity and purpose that Pius XI's vision inspired and the enthusiasm that the apostolate he encouraged evoked. In part this was a reaction to the

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<sup>10</sup> Encyclical *Quas primas*, in *Social Wellsprings*, 30-46.

<sup>11</sup> Y. Tranvouez, "Entre Rome et le peuple (1920-1960)," in *Histoire des catholiques de France du XVe siècle à nos jours* (Paris: Privat, 1980) 464.

largely defensive posture that Pius X had favored, both in thought and in practice. (Benedict XV was almost wholly preoccupied by the Great War.) The Non possumus which that Pope imposed in the realm of Italian politics might also sum up his response to the efforts to reach some sort of accommodation with modern world, what he labelled "modernism." But the sense of identity and the enthusiasm surely also corresponded to the real needs of the time. Modern society and culture had almost defined themselves by their separation from traditional Christianity. Many Catholics saw in the multiple discrediting of almost all of the assumptions of liberal progress--by the Great War, by the Depression, by the failure of democracy and the rise of totalitarianism--a confirmation both of their judgement on the course of history since the Reformation and of their conviction that the only adequate remedy was to bring western society back to its foundations in Christ. The older ones among us will remember how sodalities and other movements and organizations were inspired by this goal; they even had their own battle-hymn, composed by Daniel Lord: "An Army of Youth."

### The Revival of Catholic Thought

Little of all this was evident, however, in the typical textbooks in theology. Apart from an occasional corollary on liberalism or the chapter on Church-State relations, treatises on revelation, on Christology, on redemption, on the Church, on grace, on eschatology reflected very little of the public, historic role which Leo XIII and Pius XI had urged upon Catholics. The textbooks were structured by questions that were asked, it seemed, simply because they had been asked before. Theology was no part of the intellectual worlds that were shaping the course of history. It was what Henri de Lubac called a "separated theology," and theologians were off in their own world, all the more content and confident there because an extrinsic understanding of the relationship between nature and grace had taught them not to look for links between ordinary human experience and the supernatural realm on which they reflected. It was indicative that, in his first important published article, in which he argued that theology and apologetics were intrinsically connected and that theology had to be not only an understanding of the faith but also an understanding of all other things by the faith, de Lubac anticipated objections that he was confusing distinct orders of reality, indulging in naturalism, and replacing divine authority as the motive of faith with intrinsic evidence.<sup>12</sup>

There was, of course, also the caution that the anti-modernist repression had imposed on Catholic theologians in the second two decades of the twentieth century. It was only at the beginning of the 1930s that a few of them began to stick their heads out of the bunkers. Two courageous articles attempted to take stock of the modernist crisis. Bruno de Solages, rector of the Catholic Institute in Toulouse, traced the extent of that crisis to the low state of clerical studies in the nineteenth century. He also noted that the suppression of modernism had had a dampening effect on Catholic scholarship and argued that another, similar crisis could only be prevented by raising the level of Church education.<sup>13</sup> M.-D. Chenu, master of theology at Le Saulchoir, drew a parallel between the modernist crisis and the crisis at the University of Paris in the thirteenth century. He departed from the canonical demonization of the problem by arguing that it represented a normal crisis of growth, provoked this time by the arrival of historical consciousness, just as the importation of Aristotelian philosophy and Arabic science had provoked a crisis of growth in the thirteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Henri de Lubac, "Apologetics and Theology," in Theological Fragments (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989) 91-104.

<sup>13</sup> Bruno de Solages, "La crise moderniste et les études ecclésiastiques," *Revue Apologétique*, 51 (July 1930): 5-30.

<sup>14</sup> M.-D. Chenu, "Le sens et les leçons d'une crise religieuse," La vie intellectuelle (10 Dec. 1931): 356-80.

If such essays were signs that a genuine theological revival was perhaps now possible, the call of Pius XI that Catholics engage themselves in the larger social and cultural context suddenly triggered a veritable explosion of Catholic thought in the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s. I wish to give some illustrations of this dramatic development, of which the theological revival is only a part and without which the achievements of the Second Vatican Council would not be conceivable.

The most important figure in the English-speaking world was Christopher Dawson. From his first published articles in the early 1920s, Dawson had been interested in the sociology of religion and in the relations between religion and culture; in 1922 he published a critique of Spengler's Decline of the West. In 1928 his first book appeared, The Age of the Gods, a book which Lonergan was later to say "introduced me to the anthropological notion of culture and so began the correction of my hitherto normative or classicist notion."<sup>15</sup> A year later Dawson's Progress and Religion initiated a series of books in which he continued to explore the relations between religion and culture and to argue the necessity of recovering, in forms adapted to new conditions, the Christian culture which had inspired the formation of Christendom. In 1930 he began to edit Essays in Order, a series of works, many of them translations of books by European Catholics, that addressed the larger social and cultural crisis.

Perhaps the most important European figure was Jacques Maritain. Maritain's conversion to the Catholic Church had been mediated by a French Dominican of intransigent theological and political views and a sympathizer of Maurras' Action française. Two early works of Maritain, Antimoderne (1922) and Trois Reformateurs (1925), reflect these influences. But when, in 1926, Pius XI condemned the integral nationalism of Maurras' movement, Maritain submitted; in fact he wrote several pieces to defend the papal action. One of them, Primauté du spirituel, began a series of new reflections on the relation between Christianity and culture that were to reveal him increasingly open or at least less indiscriminate in his criticisms. He too began to explore the relations between Christianity and progress and to argue the Christian origins of some modern movements, such as democracy. By 1935 he was able to present a sustained argument that Christendom could take many different forms and that under the new historical ideal of pluralistic and democratic society, it would take a "profane" form, bringing the light and grace of Christ to the world not through political structures but through the conscience and commitments of Christians. The ideal of Christendom remained powerful, but it was now a "new" Christendom that was to be sought.

But Maritain's proposal, while perhaps the most famous, was by no means the only Catholic effort to think grandly about Christian responses to the contemporary challenge. Emmanuel Mounier's personalism inspired the foundation of the journal Esprit in the early 1930s. Etienne Gilson published a small book entitled Pour un ordre catholique in 1934 and in 1939 wrote an article that was still inspiring seminarians twenty years later, "The Intelligence in the Service of Christ the King."<sup>16</sup> Under a pseudonym Marrou published a work entitled Fondements d'une culture chrétienne (1934), while Eugène Masure offered L'humanisme chrétien (1937) and de Solages, after co-authoring Le christianisme dans la vie publique (1938), published, on the eve of World War II, Pour rebâtir une chrétienté (1939). There were differences in the approaches and proposals of these various works, but they were at one in the conviction that the Church was the bearer of a message and grace that were absolutely necessary for the redemption of society and culture from the crisis in which it stood.

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<sup>15</sup> Lonergan, "Insight Revisited," A Second Collection, 264.

<sup>16</sup> E. Gilson, Christianity and Philosophy (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1939) 103-25.

Three other figures must also be mentioned, not least of all because of the influence they were to have on the theological revival. M.-D. Chenu, a formidable Thomist scholar in his own right, had turned down an invitation to become an assistant to his doctoral mentor, Garrigou-Lagrange, and returned to Le Saulchoir. There he founded a center for Thomist studies that differed from all others at the time by its commitment to what would become known as the Annales school of historiography. Aquinas would be studied with all philological and exegetical rigor, but as a participant, not in a history of disembodied ideas, but in a historical, social and cultural encounter that for Chenu was paradigmatic. The intellectual courage of Aquinas and the evangelical creativity of the mendicant orders became models of what the Church most needed to display in the face of twentieth-century challenges. Chenu saw in the Young Christian Workers movement a contemporary example of the Church's ability to adapt itself to new exigencies, and from the middle of the 1930s he began to propose a notion of theology which, with complete theological strictness, recognized the Church's life in the world as a locus theologicus.<sup>17</sup> Echoing Maritain, he entitled one of the earliest of these essays, "Dimension nouvelle de la chrétienté" (1937) and in it argued for the need for the Church to become incarnate in milieux from which it had too long been absent, particularly the world of the workers.<sup>18</sup>

Chenu's student and colleague, Yves Congar, also reflected these interests and commitments. In 1935 he published a theological commentary on a survey conducted in La vie intellectuelle on the reasons for unbelief in contemporary France. Congar offered as an explanation that over the last three centuries a modern world had emerged in independence from and even in opposition to the world of the Church. The embodiment in society and culture (Christendom) that the Gospel naturally produces was now lacking to great numbers of contemporaries. And faith would not become a genuine possibility for them unless and until a new incarnation of the Church had been effected.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, in the mid-1930s Henri de Lubac began to publish the articles that in 1938, under Congar's urging, would appear as his book Catholicisme: Les aspects sociaux du dogme. The volume was a sustained argument that the central Christian dogmas of sin and redemption, of Christology and ecclesiology, of sacraments and eschatology, should not be reduced to the confines of isolated individuals, but that they provided a vision which illumined both the depth of the person and the breadth of the human community. It was a betrayal of the integration that defines Catholicism to restrict it to a private, interior sphere: the central dogmas had social implications. Two years later, de Lubac's Corpus mysticum would take its honored place in a the abundant literature which for some twenty years had restored a sense of the organic nature of the Church.

The 1930s were an exciting decade in the Catholic Church, the break-through decade in the history of Catholic thought in this century. By the end of the decade almost all of the movements to which the achievements of Vatican II are often traced were already underway: the biblical renewal, the liturgical revival, historical studies, especially in the Fathers and in medieval thought, the ecumenical movement, the rise of the laity, the rethinking of Church-world relations, etc. It is important to note that many, if not all, of these were interrelated; people passionately interested in one tended to be interested in the others. For example, the liturgical movement, which since the Council is often associated chiefly with internal Church renewal, was considered to be an essential part of the movement for the redemption of society and culture. In other words, the movements that

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<sup>17</sup> M.-D. Chenu, "Position de la théologie," RSPT 2 (1935) 232-57; Une école de théologie: Le Saulchoir (1937). Paris: du Cerf, 1985.

<sup>18</sup> M.-D. Chenu, "Dimension nouvelle de la Chrétienté," La vie intellectuelle 17 (1940) 133-46.

<sup>19</sup> Yves Congar, "Une Conclusion théologique à l'Enquête sur les raisons actuelles de l'incroyance," La vie intellectuelle 37 (July, 1935) 214-49.

were to revitalize the Church aimed also to address the general context in which the Church was to accomplish its purpose. It was not an introverted Church that was at the center of preoccupations, but a Church that needed to be renewed and reformed precisely in order effectively to bring its unique contribution to the common historical project.

This is all a larger context in which to place the early essays of Lonergan on history. Its pertinence is reflected in an argument found in the Epilogue to Insight:

[While] the Scriptural, patristic, and dogmatic materials for a treatise on the Mystical Body have been assembled, I would incline to the opinion that its formal element remains incomplete as long as it fails to draw upon a theory of history. It was at the fullness of time that there came into the world the Light of the world. It was the advent not only of the light that directs but also of the grace that gives good will and good performance. If its principal function was to carry the seeds of eternal life, still it could not bear its frutis without effecting a transfigura-tion of human living and, in turn, that transfiguration contains the solution not only to man's individual but also to his social problem of evil. So it is that the Pauline thesis of moral impotence of Jew and Gentile alike was due to be complemented by the Augustinian analysis of history in terms of the city of God and the city of this world. So it is that the profound and penetrating influence of liberal, Hegelian, Marxist, and romantic theories of history have been met by a firmer affirmation of the organic structure and functions of the Church, by a long series of social encyclicals, by calls to Catholic action, by a fuller advertence to collective responsibility, and by a deep and widespread interest in the doctrine of the Mystical Body. So too it may be that the contemporary crisis of human living and human values demands of the theologian, in addition to treatises on the unique and to treatises on the universal common to many instances, a treatise on the concrete universal that is mankind in the concrete and cumulative consequences of the acceptance or rejection of the message of the Gospel. And as the remote possibility of thought on the concrete universal lies in the insight that grasps the intelligible in the sensible, so its proximate possibility resides in a theory of development that can envisage not only natural and intelligent progress but also sinful decline, and not only progress and decline but also supernatural recovery.<sup>20</sup>

Nearly every theme we have seen emerge in the movements of Catholic thought and practice in the 1930s are reflected in these lines, but it took the discovery of the file on History to show how long Lonergan had been thinking about this issue and how his first efforts were influenced by that milieu. In the still unpublished paper, "Philosophy of History," there is a section that removes all doubt. Addressing "the antimony between a merely traditional mentality and a mentality that is thinking in terms of the future and of problems of which the mere traditionalist has not the ghost of a notion," Lonergan criticized a merely reactionary attitude on the part of Catholics:

You can protect the good either by simply sitting back or by advancing with the good; but to advance with the good you have to have a theory of progress and a will to progress; these were lacking. Thus it is in the theory of social order, in the re-establishment of all things in Christ, in the leadership of Christ, King of the historical process, Prime Mover of the new order, that Pope Pius XI has laid the foundations for a triumph over an old, inevitable, and regrettable antimony. For it is only in the philosophy of the church that can be attained the realisation of that conception which Plato could not realise. It was true when Plato penned his Republic but it is even more manifestly true to-day that "Men and cities can not have happiness unless philosophers are kings." To the world in its present plight of economic distress and political insecurity the Church offers not philosophers but philosophy,

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<sup>20</sup> Bernard Lonergan, Insight: A Study of Human Understanding (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1958) 742-43.



nay, hê hagia Sophia, the Word made flesh, Truth consubstantial with the Father and the Spirit, as eternal King, as ruler of the historic process now that history has entered on its final stage of realising abstract ideas.

The same context is also apparent in his essay on the restoration of all things in Christ:

In the first place, any reflection of modern history and its consequent 'Crisis in the West'<sup>21</sup> reveals unmistakably the necessity of a Summa Sociologica. A metaphysic of history is not only imperative for the church to meet the attack of the Marxian materialist conception of history and its realization in apostolic Bolshevism: it is imperative if man is to solve the modern politico-economic entanglement, if political and economic forces are to be subjected to the rule of reason, if cultural values and all the achievement of the past are to be saved both from the onslaughts of purblind statesmen and from the perfidious diplomacy of the merely destructive power of communism. But to establish the intellectual unity of men by appealing to reason is impossible; men refuse to be reasonable enough to take the League of Nations seriously, and that is too elementary a notion to be called a metaphysic. The only possible unity of man is dogma: the dogma of communism unites by terrorism to destroy; the dogma of race unites to protect, but it is meaningless as a principle of advance, and it is impotent as a principle of human unity; in plain language, it is not big enough an idea to meet the problem; it is a nostrum that increases the malady. There remains only the dogma of Christ. We have here the significance of Pope Pius XI's proclamation of Christ as King, King as the rallying point for all men of good will, King of the historic process. We have here the significance of Pope Pius XI's proclamation of Catholic Action, for Catholics are the leaven that leaveneth the whole mass. Finally, we have here the significance of Pope Pius XI's command that 'all candidates for the sacred priesthood must be adequately prepared ... by intense study of social matters.' This command has not yet been put into effect, nor can it be till there is a Summa sociologica: without that we would only flounder in the blundering and false science that created the problem.<sup>22</sup>

A few other indications that place elements of Lonergan's early thought in a larger context. He shared with most of the Catholic thinkers of the time the genealogy of evil that had brought about the contemporary crisis, as in this anticipation of his idea of "successive lower viewpoints":

The unity of human nature and operation--a unity that unfolds through a material to an intelligible plurality--is the connatural instrument for a victory over sin: for in this one nature and operation sin is not an isolated and instantaneous emergence of evil; it dilutes itself in time and spreads out into a reign of sin till sin culminates in monstrosity and topples over from its own enormity. Thus the antimony of church and state, in modern times, through the dialectic of sin, became first the heresies, then the liberal states, and finally Bolshevik Russia where sin in its pure form is organized by error, rules by terrorism, and attains security by the perversion of youth: the Bolshevik is ridiculous in his premise that man is

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<sup>21</sup> The editors confess ignorance of Lonergan's reference here; it would seem to be to an essay, "Crisis in the West," by Peter Wust, a German Catholic philosopher (1884-1940), which appeared in Essays in Order, 95-152. Wust was a friend of Jacques Maritain, who reports on a conversation between Wust, Berdaiev and himself in the late 1920s: "We wondered how to reconcile two apparently contradictory facts: that modern history seems to be entering, in Berdaiev's words, a new Middle Ages where the unity and universality of Christian culture will be rediscovered and this time extended to the whole world, and that the general movement of civilization seems to be dragging it towards the universalism of the Antichrist and of his iron rod rather than towards the universalism of Christ and of his liberating law and to be forbidding in any case the hope that the world will be unified in a universal Christian 'empire'"; Oeuvres complètes, IV (Paris: Ed. Saint-Paul, 1983) 91.

<sup>22</sup> "Lonergan's Pantôn Anakephalaiôsis," Method 9 (Oct. 1991) 156-57.

merely an animal, but he is terrible in his power to make man merely an animal; and, if you blame the Bolshevik, you are blind: for Bolshevism is the social consequent of liberalism, and liberalism is the social consequent of heresy, and heresy in the social consequent of the opposition of church and state, and the opposition of church and state is inevitable as long as men are children of Adam--a predication that neither churchman nor statesman can avoid.<sup>23</sup>

Lonerger also shared with most other Catholic thinkers in an unrelenting critique of liberalism. He understood it to be "the effective negation of the control of reason as right reason." As such, it tended to collapse either into what Lonergan called "modernism," the identification of knowledge with positive science, or into Bolshevism, which substitutes power for theory. Liberal modernism has nothing to offer of its own; it is a pawn between Bolshevism and Catholicism, and can rely only on unintelligible principle of national sovereignty--Lonergan here echoing the vigorous suspicion of nationalism of Pius XI and of some, but by no means all, Catholics.

Finally, Lonergan also shared the view that only in Christianity could an answer be found for the modern social crisis:

'Without me you can do nothing'. This is true not only of the supernatural order of attaining the beatific vision. It is equally true of the social order; all things must be restored in Christ or there can be no restoration.... Man can choose only between the service of reason and of passion, only between the service of God or of sin, only between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan.<sup>24</sup>

In fact, one could argue that the purpose of these early essays was to show how and why this was true, to outline a metaphysics of human history and of human solidarity that would explain the need for a new head of humanity and the operations of his causality upon history.

The editors of Lonergan's early essays have attempted to identify references left unspecified in the typescripts. I have one or two notes that may be of help. The first is the origin of the German word Zersplitterung, used several times by Lonergan, with atomisation as an English translation. I have not located a use of the German term, but simply point out that the idea of the shattering by sin of the original divinely created unity of the human race and of Christ's reintegrating work is a central theme in the early chapters of de Lubac's Catholicisme. It appears that this section was first published in articles that appeared in April and May 1936 and shortly afterward as a pamphlet. It is possible, then, that Lonergan was familiar with it. On the other hand, as de Lubac's pages reveal, the idea was quite traditional.

Perhaps more important is a lead provided by Lonergan's referring in "Pantôn anakephalaiôsis" to a work entitled "Crisis in the West." As noted above, this appears to be a reference to an essay by Peter Wust, a German Catholic philosopher, that was published as the second of the Essays in Order edited by Christopher Dawson. Wust was the author of several works, among them Die Auferstehung der Metaphysik, Die Ruckkehr aus dem Exil (on the Catholic revival in Germany), and Die Dialektik des Geistes. Elements of the argument of the last of these appear in

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<sup>23</sup> "Lonergan's Pantôn Anakephalaiôsis," 161-62. See also "Pantôn anakephalaiôsis," 145: "...the theory of liberalism is a consequent of the sixteenth-century heresy with the consequent religious wars while the theory of communism is a consequent of the pharisaical religiosity of capitalist exploitation and oppression."

<sup>24</sup> "Lonergan's Pantôn Anakephalaiôsis," 159-60.

Wust's essay, and they lead one to ask whether Wust's own project might not have had some influence on Lonergan.

For example, the second part of Wust's major book offers what he himself calls "a metaphysics of history," in which the metaphysical unity of the human race plays a major role, the idea of objective Geist as embodiment of acts of meaning is developed, a distinction between the ideal case and the factual development of humanity is argued, and the co-dependence of human beings plays a central role. On the last point, Wust makes much of the community of spirit among them. For Wust, as summarized in E.I. Watkin's introduction:

This community, "nexus animarum," is constituted by three factors. There is a "commercium spirituale," or "intellectual intercourse," mediated by a common world of expression and significance, mankind united by common languages and art-forms, by a common logic and corpus of sciences; in general, by mutual understanding, its methods and its instruments. There is a "motio physica," a nexus of physical inter-relationship--men share a common physical environment which makes them physically dependent one on another. And there is a "motio metaphysica" or inter-relationship of wills. No man can achieve any purpose whatsoever by himself. The volitions of other men, either in present actuality or in their effects, condition mine. For in these three forms this bond of souls embraces time as well as space, binding one generation with another as well as the members of each generation among themselves. In virtue of this triply-constituted communion of spirits, the free choices of the individual become for good or evil the objective destiny of his fellows. After his death not only do the effects of his choices remain, but insofar as they are incorporated in objective works--institutions, writings, works of art, speculative systems, etc.--they constitute an "objective spirit or mind," which, when brought into contact with the living intelligence and will of others, lives again for them as a force influencing for good or evil their own deeds and achievements."<sup>25</sup>

This idea of the community of spirits that constitute the human race enters into Wust's idea of redemption in ways that are startlingly similar to Lonergan's. Let me simply quote a central section that follows a reference to acknowledgements, even in pagan antiquity, of the dark and evil side of human nature:

Now, when the decline of the earliest type of Western civilised humanity set in, or to all intents and purposes had become an accomplished fact, there suddenly occurred in the very midst of this decadence the most astounding miracle of all time--the appearance of the homo perfectus, the homo absolutus, the spiritual progenitor (Stammvater) of humanity. Halfway through the decline of classical civilisation that event took place, which, seen with the eyes of faith, must be regarded as the most revolutionary occurrence in the entire history of the world.

We are to-day, one and all, too apt to forget the fact that history, in its deepest sense, does not consist merely of secular happenings, but that it is always at the same time a sacred process, a spiritual happening. For it is only on the surface that history is a motio physica of wars, battles, national disorders, political catastrophes, and so on. Below, in the depths that are accessible to the mind alone, it is a truly majestic motio metaphysica voluntatis, a passionately stirring will-drama of the spirit. And, if this is so, then the really decisive factor

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<sup>25</sup> Essays in Order, 80-81. Compare "Lonergan's 'Analytic Concept of History,'" Method 11 (1993) 12: "We make ourselves out of our environment: the physical environment that makes the geographical differentiations of men and manners and customs; the social environment of the family and education, the race and tradition, the state and law."

in this will-drama will be that tremendous tension which continually exists in one form or another between the whole organism of wills that is the human race and the absolute will of God.

Now we learn from revelation that in the dimness of remote antiquity human history began with just such a grave tension, revealing precisely that dialectic movement which we experience today. As a result of the first transgression, the spirit of discord suddenly precipitated itself into the head of the human organism. At the same time a tremendous upheaval of the human organism as a whole occurred, which effected a sweeping change in the aboriginally clear and straightforward relation between God and man. As a result, a greater atonement became necessary, an anakephalaiosis or reintegration of the race under a new head, that the disharmony arising out of the first fault might be removed.

The most truly epoch-making occurrence of that sacred history which is wrought in the depths of the human spirit, the action that was to bring this state of tension to an end, took place in the midst of time. It was Christ's act of redemption. Since, however, we have lost our understanding of the metaphysics of history, this fact of redemption--in reality of central historical importance--will scarcely appear to us as historical. At first, of course, in the actual moment of its accomplishment, this spiritual and sacred event was recognised in an act of faith by but a few people. Yet this handful immediately began to diffuse such a glow of faith that, as if by a single great miracle, henceforth continually operative, the sun of Christianity rose out of the dark night of paganism, and an entirely fresh chapter of history was begun....

Christian self-knowledge meant the discovery for the first time of the complete extent of man's metaphysical structure, and of the entire actual and potential range of his history.<sup>26</sup>

The idea of Christ's redemption introducing a new organic community of wills is central in Lonergan's early essays, and it rests on a metaphysics, which, if more dependent on Aquinas than Wust's seems to have been, contrasts Adam's historical causality and Christ's in terms of pre-motions and of the solidarity of human beings. This leads me to suggest that perhaps anakephalaiôsis should not simply be translated as "restoration," but at least as "recapitulation," or by a paraphrase to indicate that it means that humanity has now been given a new head, a new originating principle.

I offer these comparisons in the hope that someone might be able to follow them up, both by a consultation of Lonergan's papers to see whether there is any other evidence that he knew Wust's work and also by a closer reading of Wust's metaphysical dialectics of history to see whether there are any other points of similarity.

I have not included in this paper a discussion of the particular ways in which Lonergan pursued his sketch of a theology of history, which is where his originality lies. Like Wust, he attempted to provide a metaphysical basis, elaborated through several dialectics, for the historical redemptive significance of Christ; but his approach seems to have been more Thomist than Wust's Augustinian approach. It is significant, however, that Lonergan even made the effort, because the generality of Catholic thinkers who tried to think out the implications of Pius XI's teaching about the Kingship of Christ or to provide a theory for the practical redemptive efforts of Catholic Action were

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<sup>26</sup> Wust, "Crisis in the West," 101-104. In the last pages of Die Dialektik des Geistes, a similar reference to the anakephalaiôsis appears, "eine vollkommene Neu-Behauptung der menschlichen Gattung," in virtue of which Christ is "die sichtbare Achse der Weltgeschichte;" Die Dialektik des Geistes (Gesammelte Werke, III/2; Münster: Regensberg, 1964) 387-88.

often content to argue on the level of dogmatic assertion. Lonergan's effort, before he sat down to a close study of Aquinas, already shows the concern to give concrete substance to the dogmatic assertions.

On the other hand, by comparison with his later work, these early essays are clearly works of Lonergan's youth. The epistemological basis on which he builds differs from that of the full-blown theory of Insight. And the argument is constructed primarily by way of metaphysics; it would only be much later that Lonergan would come to recognize something which perhaps is already present in Wutz, the need for the transposition of the question into terms of interiority and of the worlds constituted and mediated by meaning and value.