Faith and Reason in the First Vatican Council’s
_Dei Filius_ and the Writings of Bernard Lonergan

by

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Abstract

This study explores the ways in which presuppositions about human knowing influence stances on faith, reason, and the relationship between them. Such a topic is important not only to scholars in theology, religious studies, and philosophy, but to anyone who wishes to develop a greater awareness of the philosophic assumptions that underlie disputes.

The catalyst for this study is an under-investigated connection between the German philosopher Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, the Roman Catholic thinkers Louis-Eugène-Marie Bautain and Anton Günther, and the First Vatican Council’s 1870 constitution Dei Filius. In an effort to refine Immanuel Kant’s account of human knowing such that it will permit knowledge of God’s existence, Jacobi reconceptualizes the cognitive faculty Vernunft (reason) and its relation to Verstand (understanding). Bautain and Günther find appeal in Jacobi’s project and integrate his view of these faculties into their stances on faith, reason, and the relationship between them. The resulting stances are sufficiently unorthodox that they elicit ecclesial responses. The responses anticipate the structure and content of Dei Filius. Such are the topics of interest in chapter one.

Chapter two unpacks passages in Dei Filius that pertain to Bautain and Günther, most of
which treat natural knowledge of God, the acts that lead to faith, and faith itself. Chapter
three introduces Bernard Lonergan, whose critique of knowing-as-taking-a-look refutes
Jacobi’s account of human knowing. Insofar as this undermines the views of Bautain and
Günther, Lonergan supplements a venture of the authors of *Dei Filius*. Yet Lonergan is a
thinker with his own stances on natural knowledge of God, the acts that lead to faith, and
faith itself, each of which can be tested for compatibility with *Dei Filius*. Chapter four
shows that Lonergan’s stance on natural knowledge of God is wholly compatible with
*Dei Filius*. Chapter five shows that Lonergan’s early stances on the acts that lead to faith
and faith itself are wholly compatible with *Dei Filius*, whereas his later stances are
narrowly compatible with it. The narrow compatibility results from a heightened
emphasis on the modern differentiations of consciousness and the fourth level of
consciousness.
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Introduction

In the course of this study I defend five theses: (1) Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi’s (1743-1819) epistemology heavily influences the way Louis-Eugène-Marie Bautain (1796-1867) and Anton Günther (1783-1863) characterize faith, reason, and the relationship between them; (2) Bautain and Günther’s characterizations are implicitly argued against in the First Vatican Council’s 1870 constitution, *Dei Filius*, especially in its declarations on natural knowledge of God, the acts that lead to faith, and faith itself; (3) the philosophical writings of Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984) refute Jacobi’s epistemology, and, by extension, Bautain and Günther’s characterizations; (4) Lonergan’s stance on natural knowledge of God is wholly compatible with the constitution; (5) the early Lonergan’s stance on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself is wholly compatible with the constitution, whereas the later Lonergan’s stance is narrowly compatible with it.

Before I elaborate on these highly specific theses, I want to step back and explain in more general terms why a study of the constitution is relevant and desirable—and why a study putting Lonergan in contact with the constitution is warranted and productive.

A study of the constitution is relevant only to the extent that the constitution itself is relevant. A passage in Pope John Paul II’s 1998 encyclical, *Fides et Ratio*, attests to the latter. It reads,

If the Magisterium has spoken out more frequently since the middle of the last century, it is because in that period not a few Catholics felt it their duty to counter various streams of modern thought with a philosophy of their own. At this point, the Magisterium of the Church was obliged to be vigilant lest these philosophies developed in ways which were themselves erroneous and negative. The censures were delivered even-handedly: on the one hand, *fideism* and *radical traditionalism*, for their distrust of reason’s natural capacities, and, on the other, *rationalism* and *ontologism* because they attributed to natural reason a knowledge which only the light of faith could confer. The positive elements of this debate were assembled in the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Filius*, in which for the first
time an Ecumenical Council—in this case, the First Vatican Council—pronounced solemnly on the relationship between reason and faith. The teaching contained in this document strongly and positively marked the philosophical research of many believers and remains today a standard reference-point for correct and coherent Christian thinking in this regard.¹

This passage is significant, first and foremost, for its explicit attribution of contemporary relevance to the constitution. The passage also renders relevant the nineteenth-century Roman Catholic debates over faith and reason, not only by virtue of the fact that they receive mention in a 1998 encyclical, but also because they are described as engendering the constitution. What is more, Pope John Paul II affixes a footnote to each of the four censured views. Two of the footnotes are of special import to this study. The footnote affixed to “fideism” refers to an ecclesial document pertaining to Bautain; the footnote affixed to “rationalism” refers to an ecclesial document pertaining to Günther. In a moment, I will supply my rationale for selecting Bautain and Günther as representatives of the nineteenth-century debates over faith and reason. At present, suffice it to say that a study of Bautain, Günther and the constitution is relevant.

It remains for me to explain why a study treating Bautain, Günther, and the constitution is desirable. Let me begin with the constitution. Lengthy examinations of the constitution are extant in French and German,² but not in English. The English-language examinations of the document that are available do not span beyond the length of an

article or chapter and invest little or no time unpacking its schematic development. Roughly the same situation is found with respect to studies of Bautain and Günther. Lengthy studies of these two thinkers are extant in French and German, whereas English-language treatments are—with one exception—no more than a chapter or two in length. I take all of the above as evincing the desirability of an English-language study treating Bautain, Günther, and the constitution. I can now move on to explain the inclusion on Lonergan in this study.

At first glance, a study putting Lonergan in direct contact with Bautain, Günther, and a nineteenth-century conciliar document seems peculiar, if not unwarranted. A brief historical note serves to remedy this. The surge of neo-Scholasticism in the decades following the First Vatican Council produced an environment in which the questions raised by Bautain, Günther, and other modern thinkers were not given appropriate consideration. The distance between Lonergan and the nineteenth-century Roman Catholic debates over faith and reason, then, is not as great as it first appears. Putting Lonergan in contact with this milieu is thereby warranted. I have yet to explain why doing so is productive.

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3 My bibliography includes these texts.
5 My bibliography includes these texts.
A more obvious productive aspect of putting Lonergan in contact with the constitution is that Lonergan’s writings shed light on the constitution, and vice-versa. A less obvious productive aspect, one that constitutes the novelty of this study, is as follows. Since Jacobi’s epistemology heavily influences Bautain and Günther, and Bautain and Günther are implicitly argued against in the constitution, I am able to use Jacobi’s epistemology as a hermeneutical tool to bring to light internal workings of the constitution—workings that would not appear through an analysis using only Thomistic categories. Moreover, insofar as Lonergan’s writings illuminate Jacobi’s epistemology, they also illuminate something internally at work in the constitution.

I now proceed to offer a brief outline of this study. I will note the key moves that I make in each chapter.

In chapter one I argue that Jacobi’s epistemology, which is a reaction to Immanuel Kant’s (1724-1804) epistemology, heavily influences the way Bautain and Günther characterize faith, reason, and the relationship between them. I begin by exploring Gerald McCool’s (1918-2005) contention that Joseph Wilhelm Karl Kleutgen (1811-1883), a chief author of the constitution, advances an argument similar to this in his personal writings prior to the First Vatican Council. I then exposit Kant and Jacobi’s epistemologies, attending only to features of them that are germane to this study. Next, I examine Kleutgen’s familiarity with Jacobi’s epistemology and the extent to which he associates Bautain and Günther with it. I then extensively detail the way Bautain and Günther characterize faith, reason, and the relationship between them. Lastly, I survey some pre-1870 ecclesial declarations that pertain to Bautain and Günther.
In chapter two I contend that Bautain and Günther are implicitly argued against in the constitution, especially in its declarations on natural knowledge of God, the acts that lead to faith, and faith itself. I begin with a historical overview of events leading up to the First Vatican Council. I then examine several key passages from the constitution, tracing their schematic development when it is illuminating to do so. My attention is not limited to passages pertaining to Bautain and Günther. I also reproduce passages that supply a general picture of the characterization of faith, reason and the relationship between them, found in the constitution.

In chapter three I argue that the philosophical writings of Lonergan refute both Kant and Jacobi’s epistemologies. I contend that Lonergan’s critique of knowing as taking a look is integral to the success of these refutations. The refutation of Jacobi’s epistemology severely undercuts Bautain and Günther’s stances on natural knowledge of God, the acts that lead to faith, and faith itself, for Jacobi’s epistemology is at the heart of those stances. In this narrow respect, Lonergan can be seen as assisting Kleutgen and the other authors of the constitution. Yet Lonergan is a thinker with his own stance on natural knowledge of God, the acts that lead to faith, and faith itself. The fact that Lonergan refutes an epistemology underlying the views of two thinkers implicitly argued against in the constitution provides no guarantee that his own stance on these issues will be compatible with the constitution. Testing the compatibility of Lonergan’s stance on these issues is that task that occupies me in chapters four and five of this study.

In chapter four I contend that Lonergan’s stance on natural knowledge of God is wholly compatible with the constitution. The significance of my contention is that Lonergan’s epistemology, despite differing from that of a chief author of the constitution,
namely Kleutgen, nevertheless engenders a stance on natural knowledge of God that is compatible with the constitution.

In chapter five I examine separately the early and later Lonergan’s stance on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself. I argue that the early Lonergan’s stance is wholly compatible with the constitution, whereas the later Lonergan’s stance is narrowly compatible with it. I contend that the narrow compatibility results from the later Lonergan’s heightened emphasis on the modern differentiations of consciousness and the fourth level of consciousness.

Let me conclude by listing several items that I will refrain from treating in this study. The first three items are within the scope of this study, but already receive ample exposition elsewhere; the remaining items are beyond the scope of this study. First, I will refrain from surveying biblical characterizations of faith, reason, and the relationship between them. Second, I will refrain from surveying the innumerable characterizations of faith and reason advanced by theologians and philosophers. Third, I will refrain from supplying typologies of faith, faith-reason relations, and religion-science relations. Fourth, I will refrain from addressing the relationship between Church and state in

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10 For a selection of primary sources spanning from Plato to the present day, see Paul Helm, ed., *Faith and Reason* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).


nineteenth-century Europe.\textsuperscript{14} Fifth, I will refrain from discussing contemporary religious epistemology.\textsuperscript{15} Sixth, I will refrain from treating the exact extent to which Lonergan, as a Roman Catholic, is obligated to accept the declarations made in the constitution.\textsuperscript{16}


Chapter 1
Louis Bautain and Anton Günther on Faith and Reason

In the present chapter I argue that Jacobi’s epistemology heavily influences the way Bautain and Günther characterize faith, reason, and the relationship between them. I begin by exploring McCool’s contention that Kleutgen, a chief author of Dei Filius, advances an argument similar to this in his personal writings prior to the First Vatican Council. I then exposit Kant and Jacobi’s epistemologies, tending only to features of them that are germane to this study. Next, I examine Kleutgen’s familiarity with Jacobi’s epistemology and the extent to which he associates Bautain and Günther with it. I then extensively detail the way Bautain and Günther characterize faith, reason, and the relationship between them. Lastly, I survey some pre-1870 ecclesial declarations that pertain to Bautain and Günther’s views. Bautain and Günther’s views, and the ecclesial declarations pertaining to their views, greatly anticipate the structure and content of the constitution.

1.1 The Schwerpunkt Thesis

In a sense, this entire study revolves around a single passage in McCool’s 1977 work, Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century: The Quest for a Unitary Method. The passage emerges within McCool’s effort to sketch the reaction of nineteenth-century neo-Thomists towards the flawed approaches being employed by certain Roman Catholic thinkers. In the passage, McCool contends that these neo-Thomists targeted a specific epistemology that the thinkers shared—an epistemology that engendered their flawed approaches. The passage reads,
Their attack was unerring in its aim. It went straight for the philosophical weak spot in the whole construction of post-Kantian idealism, the epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand*. The neo-Thomists saw that this epistemology was the focal point (*die Schwerpunkt*) [sic] in the determination of a philosophical and theological method.¹

In this passage, McCool contends that nineteenth-century neo-Thomists advance a specific thesis: that the epistemology of *Vernunft* (reason) and *Verstand* (understanding) is the focal point in the determination of a philosophical and theological method. Hereafter, I will refer to this thesis as the *Schwerpunkt* thesis.

Before explicating what McCool means by “the epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand,*” I must indicate two limitations of his work with respect to this passage. First, although McCool identifies Kleutgen² as one of the neo-Thomists who advances this thesis,³ he does not specify where Kleutgen does so in his writings. Later in the present chapter, I will reproduce two passages in which Kleutgen exhibits his familiarity with the epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand*, but I must forthrightly acknowledge that I simply trust McCool’s contention that Kleutgen sees this epistemology as the focal point in the determination of a philosophical and theological method. The second limitation relates to McCool’s list of Roman Catholic thinkers who allow the epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand* to determine their philosophical and theological methods: Bautain, Georg Hermes (1775-1831), “. . . the Tübingen theologians,” most notably Johann Sebastian von Drey (1777-1853), Günther, and “. . . the ontologists,” most notably Vincenzo Gioberti (1801-1852) and Antonio Rosmini-Serbati (1797-1855).⁴ McCool

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² I supply biographical information on Kleutgen in section 1.4 of the present chapter.
³ McCool, 138n19.
⁴ McCool, 141.
does not specify where, if at all, neo-Thomists such as Kleutgen advance the
Schwerpunkt thesis towards these thinkers. Later, I will reproduce a passage in which
Kleutgen associates the epistemology of Vernunft and Verstand with Günther, but I am
not in possession of a text in which Kleutgen charges Günther with allowing such an
epistemology to determine his philosophical and theological method. With respect to
Bautain, I possess no text in which Kleutgen links him to the epistemology of Vernunft
and Verstand.

McCool goes on to briefly describe the epistemology of Vernunft and Verstand
which in his assessment Bautain, Hermes, the Tübingen theologians, Günther, and the
ontologists endorse. He writes,

In all of their systems a divine intelligibility, intuited through Vernunft, was the
necessary precondition for scientific reflection. Furthermore, the all-important
distinction between faith and scientific knowledge, Glaube und Wissen, which
determined the theological method of each of these systems, presupposed the
post-Kantian epistemology of the intuitive Vernunft. Each one of the modern
theologians accepted as established fact Kant’s critical invalidation of Verstand’s
claim to metaphysical knowledge. Each of them relegated Verstand’s objective
knowledge to the world of contingent appearance. Abstraction alone, without the
intuition of Vernunft, could never confer the necessity of noumenal reality upon
an objective judgment.5

Here it becomes clear that by the expression “the epistemology of Vernunft and
Verstand” McCool means something specific: the epistemology that exalts Vernunft and
devalues Verstand. McCool correctly identifies Jacobi as the principal representative of

5 McCool, 141-142. Aidan Nichols is another contemporary Catholic thinker who makes this claim. In one
of his earlier works, he writes, “Neo-Thomists held that an epistemology of intuitive reason, the claiming of
an a priori grasp of God, was the philosophical source of the ills of nineteenth-century theology. More
specifically it lay, they said, at the root of two seemingly opposed evils, rationalism and traditionalism.”
Aidan Nichols, The Shape of Catholic Theology: An Introduction to its Sources, Principles, and History
(Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 329. In a more recent work, he writes, “‘Understanding,’ in
different senses of the word (Vernunft or constructive reason, intelligence or transempirical apprehension),
was key to, respectively, Günther and Bautain . . . .” Aidan Nichols, From Hermes to Benedict XVI: Faith
and Reason in Modern Catholic Thought (Leominster: Gracewing, 2009), 205.
this epistemology. Moreover, McCool states that it is Jacobi’s version of the epistemology that influences Bautain. In his analysis of Günther, McCool reports the influence of Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775-1854), another representative of the epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand*, but also cites a text that mentions Jacobi’s influence on Günther. Strictly speaking, the *Schwerpunkt* thesis targets the epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand* in general, but given Jacobi’s influence on both Bautain and Günther, I will henceforth take it as targeting Jacobi’s version.

McCool does not extensively elucidate Jacobi’s epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand*; I will carry out that task myself. Before doing so, I must briefly review Kant’s stance on *Vernunft* and *Verstand*, for it is his stance that provokes Jacobi to put forward a novel understanding of the terms—a novel understanding that Bautain and Günther appropriate.

1.2 Immanuel Kant on *Vernunft* and *Verstand*

In what follows, I highlight—in a cursory way—only those elements of Kant’s philosophy that help to tell the story of Jacobi, Bautain, and Günther. I appeal solely to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, for it is the text that is essential to the story.

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6 McCool, 141. For corroboration of the claim that Jacobi is the principal representative, see Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Reason, the Understanding, and Time* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), 2.
7 McCool, 48-49.
8 McCool, 88.
Let me focus on three of the cognitive faculties that Kant delineates in the *Critique of Pure Reason*: **Sinnlichkeit** (sensibility), **Verstand** (understanding), and **Vernunft** (reason).\(^{11}\) The faculty of **Verstand** produces concepts. In order for concepts not to be “. . . empty,” **Verstand** must draw upon the faculty of **Sinnlichkeit**.\(^ {12}\) **Sinnlichkeit** produces “. . . sensible intuitions . . . “\(^ {13}\) **Sinnlichkeit** is constituted in such a way that every sensible intuition is framed in “. . . space and time, the . . . forms of sensibility.”\(^ {14}\) This spatiotemporal framing proves to be epistemically dire. In the first edition, Kant writes, “. . . [A] [kind of] knowledge must be possible, in which there is no sensibility, and which alone has reality that is absolutely objective.”\(^ {15}\) Returning to the second edition, Kant denies precisely this kind of knowledge to human beings. He writes, “. . . [W]e cannot in the least represent to ourselves the possibility of an understanding which should know its object, not discursively through categories, but intuitively in a non-sensible intuition.”\(^ {16}\) Only in the mind of the primordial being is an “. . . intellektuelle Anschauung . . . “ (intellectual intuition) possible.\(^ {17}\) Consequently, the human mind does not grasp “. . . things in themselves,” but rather “. . . appearances, that is, mere representations . . . “\(^ {18}\) Even though things in themselves are genuinely real and causally

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\(^{11}\) Kant, 250 [B283].

\(^{12}\) Kant, 93 [B75].

\(^{13}\) Kant, 105 [B93].

\(^{14}\) Kant, 175 [B169].

\(^{15}\) Kant, 267 [A250].

\(^{16}\) Kant, 272-273 [B311-312].

\(^{17}\) Kant, 90 [B72]. As Moltke Gram observes, “Kant indiscriminately uses one term to include three different kinds of intellectual intuition.” The first kind, according to Gram, entails “. . . an intellect that knows things in themselves independently of any conditions of sensibility.” Moltke S. Gram, “Intellectual Intuition: The Continuity Thesis,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 42, no. 2 (1981): 304 and 288. I take this first kind to exemplify Kant’s position, as my references to “knowledge . . . in which there is no sensibility” and “non-sensible intuition” indicate.

\(^{18}\) Kant, 439 [B518-519].
responsible for one’s sensible intuitions,\(^{19}\) they elude human knowing. As Kant puts it, “What objects may be in themselves, and apart from all this receptivity of our sensibility, remains completely unknown to us.”\(^{20}\)

There remains the faculty of \textit{Vernunft}. Kant contends that \textit{Vernunft} has a descending function and an ascending function.\(^{21}\) The descending function is to link together the individual judgments that the understanding yields by way of syllogistic inferences. The ascending function is to demand “... the unconditioned,” that is, “... the \textit{totality} of the \textit{conditions} for any given conditioned.”\(^{22}\) This demand stems from the fact that the major premise of one syllogism is often dependent upon the conclusion of some other syllogism, thus \textit{Vernunft} aspires to find that which has no conditions whatsoever: the totality of conditions.\(^{23}\)

\(^{19}\) Kant writes, “We can indeed admit that something, which may be (in the transcendental sense) outside us, is the cause of our outer intuitions . . . .” Kant, 348 [A372].

\(^{20}\) Kant, 82 [B59]. As Lorne Falkenstein observes, “... [I]f things in themselves are in space or time, it is in a radically different sense from that in which the matters of appearance are in space and time, and ... even then, the spatiotemporal features of things in themselves could not be supposed to determine the spatiotemporal features of our intuitions. But this is not all that Kant wanted to claim. He wanted to assert that things in themselves are just not in space or time in any sense. That is more than his arguments are able to support.” Lorne Falkenstein, \textit{Kant’s Intuitionism: A Commentary on the Transcendental Aesthetic} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 309.

\(^{21}\) Kant, 321 [B388]. As Sebastian Gardner observes, “In the Dialectic reason refers to an independent conceptual faculty whose primary function is to engage in reasoning of a special type, namely ‘mediate’ or syllogistic inference. Syllogistic reasoning is concerned with the general conditions under which one piece of knowledge follows from another; as when ‘all men are mortal’ provides the condition under which the mortality of a particular man, Socrates, may be inferred from Socrates’ being a man. This narrow task of deducing conclusions from given premises Kant calls reason’s ‘descending’ function.” He continues, “In addition, Kant accords to reason the further, and much more interesting function of ‘ascending’ from given conditioned objects to the conditions from which they derive. Reason thus assumes its own cognitive motivation: it has to \textit{discover the conditions} under which objects are as they are, and our judgements are true. Now reason can properly fulfill this task only if it can be brought to a conclusion, which it cannot if the regress of conditions is without end. Consequently, reason must refer ultimately to the \textit{totality of the conditions} for conditioned objects, which is the same as to say that it must refer to an \textit{unconditioned totality}, since a totality of conditions cannot itself rest on any condition.” Sebastian Gardner, \textit{Kant and the “Critique of Pure Reason”} (New York: Routledge, 1999), 216-217. Italics in the original.

\(^{22}\) Kant, 316 [B379]. Italics in the original. For analysis of Kant’s notion of the unconditioned and a survey of his contemporaries’ reactions to it, see Karl Ameriks, \textit{Kant and the Historical Turn: Philosophy as Critical Interpretation} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 149-160.

\(^{23}\) Kant, 306 [B364].
Kant states that because there are three forms of syllogisms—categorical, hypothetical, and disjunctive—there arise in the course of Vernunft’s demand for the unconditioned three corresponding ideas: the soul, the world, and God.\(^\text{24}\) If these ideas could be verified in experience, then one could justifiably deem Vernunft a majestic faculty, but they cannot: “. . . we can never transcend the limits of possible experience . . . .”\(^\text{25}\) As a result, the ideas of Vernunft “. . . never allow of any constitutive employment,” but only a “. . . regulative employment, namely, that of directing the understanding towards a certain goal . . . .”\(^\text{26}\) Kant maintains that the idea of God and the idea of an afterlife issue from “. . . reason in its practical employment . . . .”\(^\text{27}\) Consequently, “No one . . . will be able to boast that he knows that there is a God, and a future life;” one can only have “. . . moral certainty . . . .”\(^\text{28}\)

1.3 Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi on Vernunft and Verstand

Jacobi’s\(^\text{29}\) novel understanding of Vernunft and Verstand emerges in a mature form only in his later writings, but it is within his early writings that he identifies what will eventually provoke his novel understanding. In the supplement to the 1787 edition of

\(^{24}\) Kant, 322-324 [B390-392]. For analysis, see Michelle Grier, Kant’s Doctrine of Transcendental Illusion (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 130-139.

\(^{25}\) Kant, 24 [Bxx]. As Paul Guyer observes, “. . . [I]deas of the unconditioned are fundamentally incompatible with the structure of our sensible intuition, which is always conditioned—remember, every region of space can only be represented as part of a larger space, and every region of time only as part of a larger time. In other words, it is the most fundamental characteristic of our intuitions that they are always conditioned by further intuitions, and so nothing unconditioned can ever be ‘given’ or represented in our sensible intuition; no representation of space or time is ever complete. Therefore nothing unconditioned can ever be an object of knowledge for us.” Paul Guyer, Kant (New York: Routledge, 2006), 133.

\(^{26}\) Kant, 533 [B672]. For analysis, see Guyer, 166-167.

\(^{27}\) Kant, 634 [B831].

\(^{28}\) Kant, 650 [B856-857]. Italics in the original.

\(^{29}\) Born in Düsseldorf (25 January 1743); took up general studies in Geneva (1759-1762); ran the mercantile house handed over to him by his father (1764-1772); served as a member in the council of Juliers and Berg and the privy council in Munich (1772-1779); served as president of the Academy of Sciences in Munich (1807-1812); died in Munich (10 March 1819). I draw this biographical information from Alexander W. Crawford, The Philosophy of F. H. Jacobi (New York: MacMillan, 1905), 1-5.
David Hume on Faith, or Idealism and Realism, A Dialogue, Jacobi contends that Kant cannot consistently hold, on the one hand, that empirical or transcendental objects bring about one’s representations, and on the other, that they are (respectively) appearances and completely unknown to us.\textsuperscript{30} He asks,

> How is it possible to reconcile the presupposition of objects that produce impressions on our senses, and in this way arouse representations, with an hypothesis intent on abolishing all the grounds by which the presupposition could be supported?\textsuperscript{31}

Jacobi interprets Kant’s notion of things in themselves as an attempt to avoid the logically consistent implication of his philosophy. He describes the implication this way:

. . . [W]hat we realists call actual objects or things independent of our representations are for the transcendental idealist only internal beings which exhibit nothing at all of a thing that may perhaps be there outside us, or to which the appearance may refer. Rather, these internal beings are merely subjective determinations of the mind, entirely void of anything truly objective.\textsuperscript{32}

In other words, all that one knows are the contents of one’s own consciousness, that is, mere representations—and these represent, quite literally, nothing.\textsuperscript{33}

In response to Kant, Jacobi contends that human beings possess an immediate certainty about the actuality—that is, the extra-mental existence—of both sensible and supersensible things. The early Jacobi invokes the terms Gefühl (feeling) and Glaube (faith or belief) in defending his view. Although he is not consistent, he usually refers to Gefühl as the faculty involved and Glaube as one’s assurance of the actuality of things.\textsuperscript{34}


\textsuperscript{32} Jacobi, 334. Italics removed. Henceforth I will not reproduce italics that appear in di Giovanni’s translation.

\textsuperscript{33} Frederick C. Beiser, \textit{The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 82.

\textsuperscript{34} Crawford, 34.
As the title *David Hume on Faith* intimates, Jacobi appropriates his terminology from David Hume (1711-1776). He cites lengthy passages from *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. In one such passage, Hume writes,

> Whenever any object is presented to the memory or senses, it immediately, by the force of custom, carries the imagination to conceive that object, which is usually conjoined to it; and this conception is attended with a feeling or sentiment, different from the loose reveries of the fancy. In this consists the whole nature of belief. For as there is no matter of fact which we believe so firmly, that we cannot conceive the contrary, there would be no difference between the conception assented to, and that which is rejected, were it not for some sentiment, which distinguishes the one from the other.\(^{35}\)

For the early Jacobi, Hume’s notion of belief has great potential for responding to Kant’s idealism. It gives a name to the conviction human beings have in the veracity of their grasp of things—a conviction that cannot be demonstrated. In actual application, Jacobi alters the meaning that Hume gives to belief in at least two ways. First, he takes belief to afford genuine certainty. He writes, “What name, I ask, should such a committed realist give to the means through which he partakes of the certainty of external objects *qua* things existing independently of his representation of them?” He continues, “Can he express himself in this regard with a more apt word than ‘revelation’?”\(^{36}\) Second, Jacobi translates Hume’s “belief” as *Glaube*. He takes advantage of the dual meaning of the German word and opens belief to a certainty about supersensible things. When both divergences from Hume are taken together, one sees the uniqueness of the early Jacobi’s notion of *Glaube*. It is not utterly distinct from knowledge, for it affords genuine certainty. What it is distinct from is discursive knowledge. For Jacobi, knowledge of the

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extra-mental existence of both sensible and supersensible things is one’s starting point, not the result of discursive thinking.  

The later Jacobi maintains his suspicion about the true implication of the *Critique of the Pure Reason*. In the preface to the 1815 edition of *David Hume on Faith*, Jacobi states that Kantian philosophy “. . . pretends to be a non-idealism,” but in fact “. . . leads necessarily to a system of absolute subjectivity.” What is new in the later Jacobi is the prominence of Kant’s terminology in his articulation of his position.

The later Jacobi contends that human beings can acquire knowledge of sensible things through a “. . . *sinnliche Anschauung* . . .” (sense intuition) and of supersensible things through a “. . . *rationale Anschauung* . . .” (rational intuition). Jacobi correlates the former kind of intuition with the faculty of *Sinnlichkeit* and the latter kind with the faculty of *Vernunft*. Now, equal in importance to Jacobi’s re-envisagement of *Vernunft*—which I will detail in a moment—is the fact that he does not re-envisage *Verstand*. Jacobi accepts Kant’s view of *Verstand*. He writes, “. . . [*T*he understanding is

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37 An encyclopedic entry puts it concisely: “Objects have to be given to us through immediate feeling or faith before thought comes into play. The task of discursive thinking is to observe, analyze, compare, and order perceptions by reducing them to their fundamental principles. But unless something real is previously given through feeling, discursive thinking cannot take place.” *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Jacobi, Friedrich Heinrich.” It is worth noting that Paul Franks finds “. . . a deep dissatisfaction with infinite regresses of justification . . .” to be a key motivation underlying Jacobi’s enterprise. Paul W. Franks, *All or Nothing: Systematicity, Transcendental Arguments, and Skepticism in German Idealism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 163.
38 Jacobi, 554.
39 Jacobi, 552.
41 Jacobi, 562.
42 Jacobi, 563.
... no more than a faculty of reflection on sense intuitions, a faculty of dividing and reuniting in concepts, judgments, and conclusions...”

Both Kant and Jacobi designate *Vernunft* as a faculty of the supersensible, but Jacobi’s envisagement of the faculty differs from Kant’s in two key respects. First, Kant denies *Vernunft* any contact with the things that its ideas refer to because it is bound to *Verstand*, which is in turn bound to *Sinnlichkeit*. In contrast, Jacobi contends that *Vernunft* does have immediate contact with the things that its ideas refer to. He affords *Vernunft* the same receptivity and immediacy that one finds in *Sinnlichkeit* and grants both of them independence from *Verstand*—from spontaneity and mediacy.44 Jacobi laments philosophers who “... subordinate immediate knowledge to mediated cognition.”45 A second respect in which Jacobi’s view of *Vernunft* differs from Kant’s lies in his association—and sometimes outright identification—with *Gefühl* and *Glaube* with *Vernunft*.46 This decision has at least one benefit and one drawback for Jacobi’s enterprise. A benefit is that the word *Vernunft* has more cognitive resonance than *Gefühl* and *Glaube*; it captures Jacobi’s view that although bare and non-demonstrable, what

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43 Jacobi, 565. I must note that the terms *Vernunft* and *Verstand* have a lengthy philosophical lineage. For instance, Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) writes, “Although intelligence and reason are not different powers, yet they are named after different acts. For intelligence takes its name from being an intimate penetration of the truth, while reason is so called from being inquisitive and discursive.” Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1947-1948), 2:1404 [II-II, 49, 5]. For analysis, see Andrew Tallon, “Péghaire on Intellectus & Ratio,” in *Head and Heart: Affection, Cognition, Volition as Triune Consciousness* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 274-278. In turn, Aquinas’s terminology reaches back to Aristotle. As Kurt Pritzl observes, “In his complex account of the intellect, Aristotle distinguishes very broadly between two types of intellection. One type (*nous*) involves the reception of what things are and is non-discursive in character, while the other type (*dianoia*) is the result of intellectual activity and is discursive in character. While Aristotle affirms that both types of thinking are distinctive and essential functions of the intellect, it is also clear that *dianoia* presupposes *nous*, insofar as *dianoia* assumes as given what *nous* has received.” Kurt Pritzl, “The Place of Intellect in Aristotle,” *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 80 (2006): 57.

44 Kant writes, “Concepts are based on the spontaneity of thought, sensible intuitions on the receptivity of impressions.” Kant, 105 [B93].

45 Jacobi, 541.

46 For example, Jacobi writes, “... [T]he faculty of feeling ... is identical with reason ...” Jacobi, 564.
humans possess via this faculty is nonetheless knowledge. A drawback of the decision is that it slants his argument for realism towards what is proportionate to *Vernunft*. One can easily overlook the fact that Jacobi also allows *Sinnlichkeit* to have contact with the real.

With the epistemological differences between Kant and Jacobi in view, I now turn to their differences with respect to knowledge of God. Jacobi contends that human beings can have “... knowledge of God ...”\(^{47}\) He goes beyond Kant’s limit of moral certainty to a kind of theoretical certainty.\(^{48}\) Again, Jacobi identifies *Vernunft* as the faculty by which one comes into possession of this knowledge. He writes,

> We have to make use of the expression ‘intuition of reason’ because language does not possess any other way to signify how something that the senses cannot reach is given to the understanding in feelings of rapture, and yet given as something truly objective, and not merely imaginary.\(^ {49}\)

I must make two points about this passage. First, Jacobi’s *rationale Anschauung* is not an attainable version of Kant’s unattainable *intellektuelle Anschauung*, for the latter is an act that would occur through *Verstand*, not *Vernunft*. Second, it is peculiar for Jacobi to claim that what feelings reach is given to the understanding. If *Verstand* is a faculty “... devoted only to nature,”\(^ {50}\) as Jacobi contends, then it would seem incapable of receiving what feelings—that is, *Vernunft*—deliver to it.\(^ {51}\) On most occasions, Jacobi exhibits an

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\(^{47}\) Jacobi, 564.  
\(^{48}\) Beiser, 125.  
\(^{49}\) Jacobi, 563.  
\(^{50}\) Jacobi, 564.  
\(^{51}\) As George di Giovanni observes, “In the [1811] essay *Of Divine Things* ... Jacobi seems to be saying both: (1) that the Science of Nature, predicated as it is on the assumption that every event is mechanistically determined, is a perfectly legitimate kind of knowledge provided that it remains neutral to the higher claims of reason regarding God and does not try either to prove or disprove that nature is the absolute; and (2) that the understanding could not produce a science without being inspired by reason’s sense of the absolute, which the understanding, however, translates into abstract, universal principles—i.e. it could not produce a science without in fact denying freedom and personality; its knowledge is therefore essentially deceptive. This contradiction is nowhere resolved in *Of Divine Things*.” George di Giovanni, “Introduction: The Unfinished Philosophy of Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi,” in Jacobi, 162. Italics in the original.
awareness of this, limiting himself to bare affirmations of God.\textsuperscript{52} For example, in the supplement to the 1789 edition of Concerning the Doctrine of Spinoza in Letters to Moses Mendelssohn, Jacobi writes,

\[\ldots [S]ince everything that lies outside the complex of the conditional, or the naturally mediated, also lies outside the sphere of our distinct cognition, and cannot be understood through concepts, the supernatural cannot be apprehended by us in any way except as it is given to us, namely, as fact—IT IS!\textsuperscript{53}\]

On some occasions, however, Jacobi goes beyond bare affirmations.\textsuperscript{54} An accurate account of Jacobi’s view, then, is that it is preferable to avoid the interaction of \textit{Vernunft} with \textit{Verstand}, and of \textit{Sinnlichkeit} with \textit{Verstand}. When such interaction does occur, one must recognize that the product is a lower grade of knowledge. As Jacobi puts it in the 1785 edition of Concerning the Doctrine of Spinoza, “Conviction by proofs is certainty at second hand.”\textsuperscript{55}

One point remains to be made about Jacobi. Recall that McCool finds Bautain and Günther to posit the intuition of a divine intelligibility via \textit{Vernunft} as a necessary condition for the acquisition of genuine knowledge. This has some precedent in Jacobi’s thought. Louis Dupré notes that Jacobi finds it necessary to posit some form of participation in the divine mind in order to avoid absolute subjectivity.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{52} Crawford, 45.
\textsuperscript{53} Jacobi, 376. Emphasis in the original. As Ameriks observes, “For Jacobi, it is . . . traditional theoretical philosophy in general that leads to pantheism because it can do nothing more than link contingent particulars together with one another as part of a necessarily connected all-inclusive whole. This conception leaves no room for thinking of oneself as a free and independent individual, related to other free individuals, or to a personal God who is beyond the world-whole.” He continues, “His alternative was to propose that this whole conception is mistaken because it is fixated on \textit{demonstration}. We should realize that we do not exist ‘only to connect’, in the sense of merely gathering contingent representations or natural beings together in one whole, however immense. We are also—when not misled by philosophy—open to the direct ‘revelation’ of intrinsically meaningful external items.” Ameriks, 171. Italics in the original.
\textsuperscript{54} Crawford, 48.
\textsuperscript{55} Jacobi, 230.
\textsuperscript{56} Louis Dupré, \textit{The Enlightenment and the Intellectual Foundations of Modern Culture} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 289.
1.4 Joseph Kleutgen on Vernunft and Verstand

It is now possible to return to the Schwerpunkt thesis—specifically, to McCool’s contention that Kleutgen\textsuperscript{57} advances it. My plan is to reproduce three passages from one of Kleutgen’s works, the first two showing his familiarity with Jacobi’s epistemology of Vernunft and Verstand, and the third showing his association of Günther with an unspecified form of that epistemology.

In Die Philosophie der Vorzeit, a two-volume work first published between 1860-1863, Kleutgen writes the following about Jacobi’s school of thought:

Denn es galt auch in ihr als ausgemacht, daß die Vernunft das Uebersinnliche nicht, wie man in der alten Philosophie geglaubt hatte, aus dem Sinnlichen erschließen könne; aber sie sollte dasselbe durch eine geistige Wahrnehmung unmittelbar erkennen, und diese Art des Erkennens nannte Jacobi Glaube. Es sprach sich hierin dem Empirismus und noch viel mehr dem Criticismus gegenüber nicht nur das Bedürfniß eines Höheren und Göttlichen, sondern auch die Ueberzeugung von der Wirklichkeit desselben aus. Aber es wurde damit auch ein Zwiespalt im Menschen behauptet; indem die Vernunft oder vielmehr die ahnende Empfindung bejahen sollte, was der überlegende Verstand fortfuhr, zu verneinen.\textsuperscript{58}

Here Kleutgen draws attention to a key feature of Jacobi’s epistemology: one knows the supersensible not on the basis of the senses, but on the basis of a spiritual perception called faith. Kleutgen also notes the propensity of Verstand to reject what Vernunft grasps.

\textsuperscript{57} Born in Dortmund (9 April 1811); studied philology at Munich (1830-1831); studied theology at Münster (1832-1833); ordained a Jesuit priest (1837); taught ethics in Fribourg (1837-1839); taught rhetoric in Brig (1840-1843); during a lengthy stay in Rome (1843-1874), taught rhetoric at the German College, served as consultor of the Congregation of the Index, served as secretary of the Society of Jesus, helped compose the constitution Dei Filius; died in Kaltern (13 January 1883). I draw this biographical information from Catholic Encyclopedia, s.v. “Kleutgen, Josef Wilhelm Karl.” For a Kleutgen text in English, see Josef [sic] Kleutgen, “Scholastic Philosophy,” in The Sheed & Ward Anthology of Catholic Philosophy, ed. James C. Swindal and Harry J. Gensler (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 270-274.

\textsuperscript{58} Joseph Kleutgen, Die Philosophie der Vorzeit (Innsbruck: Felician Rauch, 1878), 1:8.
In another passage, Kleutgen notes some of the contrasts that Jacobi posits between *Vernunft* and *Verstand*. He writes,

> Indem also Jacobi, an dem Erkennen des Uebersinnlichen aus dem Sinnlichen verzweifelnd, statt dieses mittelbaren Denkens ein Schauen, Empfinden oder Wahrnehmen des Geistigen und Göttlichen annahm; wurde es Sitte, die Vorstellungen, welche wir durch diese übersinnliche Erfahrung erhalten sollen, Ideen der Vernunft zu nennen, und als solche den Begriffen des Verstandes entgegenzusehen.\(^{59}\)

Here Kleutgen emphasizes the difference between a mediated grasp of the supersensible, which Jacobi rejects, and the alternative: a looking, feeling, or percipience by way of *Vernunft*. He also acknowledges Jacobi’s association of *Ideen* (ideas) with *Vernunft* and *Begriffen* (concepts) with *Verstand*.

In a final passage from the same work, Kleutgen links Günther with an unspecified form of the epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand*; that is, he does not invoke Jacobi’s name. Kleutgen writes,

> In einigen philosophischen Schulen der neueren Zeit wird der Verstand für ein Vermögen, das Wahrgenommene nach den Kategorien zu denken, die Vernunft aber für ein Vermögen, das Uebersinnliche zu schauen, erklärt. Aber Hermes und Günther wollen außer der Fähigkeit, die Gegenstände der Erfahrung durch allgemeine Begriffe zu denken, ein höheres Vermögen des Geistes, das über die Erfahrung hinausgreift, anerkannt wissen.\(^{60}\)

With these passages in mind, let me take a moment to review. McCool contends that Kleutgen advances what I am calling the *Schwerpunkt* thesis, namely that the epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand* is the focal point in the determination of a philosophical and theological method. With no primary source references given, I set out on my own to try to corroborate McCool’s contention. What I came across are the above three passages. In the first two passages, Kleutgen expresses a familiarity with Jacobi’s

\(^{59}\) Kleutgen, *Die Philosophie der Vorzeit*, 1:131.

\(^{60}\) Kleutgen, *Die Philosophie der Vorzeit*, 1:232.
epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand*, and in the third he finds a version of the epistemology to determine one thinker’s philosophical method, namely Günther’s.

Although the three passages fall short of solidly evincing the presence of the *Schwerpunkt* thesis in Kleutgen’s writings, they suffice to base a study around the thesis. By “around” I intimate that this study will not treat the *Schwerpunkt* thesis in particular. Instead, I want to assess the evidence for what I will call the revised *Schwerpunkt* thesis. The revised *Schwerpunkt* thesis is that Jacobi’s epistemology is the focal point in Bautain and Günther’s characterizations of faith, reason, and the relationship between them. To be clear, the revised *Schwerpunkt* thesis is a thesis that I am advancing. The revised thesis fulfills my stated interest in this study, namely faith and reason, while still approximating what Kleutgen at least appears to advance.

1.5 Louis Bautain on Faith and Reason

Published in 1835, *Philosophie du Christianisme: Correspondance religieuse de L. Bautain* is a collection of letters written by Bautain to his students. In one letter, he writes,

Vous voyez donc que la croyance en la parole humaine et la foi en la parole divine, non seulement sont compatibles avec la science, mais qu’elles en sont encore la condition nécessaire. Vous voyez que la connaissance naît de la croyance, et ne la précède jamais; et si vous avez bien compris ce que je viens de dire, si vous avez cherché à le constater en vous même, vous serez convaincu,

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61 Born in Paris (17 February 1796); studied literature at École Normale Supérieure in Paris (1814-1816); taught philosophy at the University of Strasbourg (1816-1822 and 1824-1830); taught philosophy at the School of Strasbourg, a private school run from a house (1823-1828); obtained doctorates from the University of Strasbourg in medicine (1826) and theology (1828); ordained a diocesan priest (1828); served as director of the minor seminary in Strasbourg (intermittently 1830-1841); served as Dean of the Faculty of Letters at the University of Strasbourg (1838-1849); became vicar-general for the archdiocese of Paris (1849); taught moral theology at the Sorbonne (1853-1863); died in Viroflay (15 October 1867). I draw this biographical information from Alan Vincelette, *Recent Catholic Philosophy: The Nineteenth Century* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2009), 34-35. For a Bautain text in English, see Louis Bautain, “A Letter on How God’s Existence Cannot be Proved,” in *Romance and the Rock: Nineteenth-century Catholics on Faith and Reason*, ed. Joseph Fitzer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 156-166.
Here and elsewhere, Bautain uses croyance to refer to assent to human testimony and foi to refer to assent to divine testimony as contained in the Bible. Since I will be examining Bautain’s characterization of reason first, I will for the time being focus on Bautain’s account of croyance.

The similar epistemological function of Jacobi’s Glaube and Bautain’s croyance is difficult to miss in the passage above. This is not accidental, for Bautain is familiar with Jacobi and—as I will show shortly—especially dependent upon him in his characterization of faith. In the passage above, Bautain echoes Jacobi in stating that belief is the necessary condition of science, that knowledge is born of belief and never precedes it, and that it is pretentious to suggest that one knows, judges, or reasons before one believes. Bautain highlights some of the nuances of his notion of croyance in this passage:

Entendons-nous d’abord sur le sens philosophique du mot croire. Qu’est-ce que croire? Que faut-il pour que la créature intelligente et raisonnable puisse croire? Que fait-elle en croyant? Croire, c’est adhérer à la vérité, soit à la vérité pure, soit à ce que nous avons reconnu en nous-mêmes comme conforme à la vérité: ce qui suppose que nous portons en nous un caractère, un type, une idée pure de la vérité, idée qui est la condition absolue de tout jugement, de toute affirmation, de toute croyance. Croire, dans le sens le plus général, n’est autre chose qu’admettre la vérité, et réagir librement vers elle; croire est l’acte essentiellement vital de la créature humaine dans son état présent.

Here Bautain states that to believe is to admit the truth. The verb admettre cleverly conveys his Jacobian epistemology. On the one hand, one admits the truth in the sense of

64 Bautain, Philosophie du Christianisme, 1:293.
letting it in from the outside. On the other hand, one admits the truth in the sense of acknowledging one’s existing feeling for it. Bautain goes on to identify the deliverer of truth: society. When one is exposed to an idée (idea) by society, whether through reading or hearing about it, one can immediately detect the truth or falsity of the idea. As Bautain explains, one can arrive at “. . . l’évidence intuitive de la vérité qu’elles [les idées] renferment.”

Bautain distinguishes four faculties of the mind: sensation, imagination, reason, and intelligence. Given the Jacobian epistemological themes in the passages above, it comes as no great surprise that Bautain associates two of these faculties with Vernunft and Verstand. What might come as a surprise, however, are the specific associations that he makes. He finds Kant’s terminology to be a source of confusion. In Philosophie: Psychologie expérimentale, Bautain writes,

Kant a beaucoup contribué à cette confusion par sa critique de la raison pure, où distinguant le Verstand de la Vernunft, il attribue à la Vernunft ou raison supérieur la puissance de concevoir les idées universelles, ce qui est le propre de l’intelligence.

What Kant and Jacobi refer to as Vernunft, Bautain refers to as intelligence; what Kant and Jacobi refer to as Verstand, Bautain refers to as raison. I will keep Bautain’s associations clear in what follows by speaking of Vernunft (intelligence) and Verstand

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65 McCool, 52.
66 Bautain, Philosophie du Christianisme, 1:242. As Horton elaborates, “The real reason we are able to judge and discern between good and bad, beautiful and ugly, etc., is that we have a sort of taste or feeling for these distinctions—an évidence intuitive . . . ” Horton, 155.
67 Vincelette, 35.
69 Horton 134, 147, 157, 161.
Bautain elaborates on the operational characteristics of these two faculties. He writes,

L’intelligence et la raison diffèrent notablement par leur manière d’opérer. L’acte de l’intelligence est simple comme l’âme dont il émane; c’est le regard de l’âme percevant ou appréhendant la vérité instantanément et aussi simplement qu’il est possible, c’est la vision pure: on l’appelle contemplation. L’acte de la raison au contraire, ou la pensée, est toujours complexe, successif, fractionné. Elle part de données contingents, de phénomènes, de faits, d’observations qu’elle compare pour en faire ressortir les rapports. Elle abstrait laborieusement, elle induit et déduit avec effort, et sa plus haute opération, le raisonnement, est le signe de son imperfection, puisqu’il procède lentement du connu à l’inconnu, empruntant le secours des moyens-termes pour unir les extrêmes don’t le rapport n’est point immédiatement saisi. La raison est à l’intelligence comme le temps à l’éternité.71

Bautain commends Vernunft (intelligence) insofar as it perceives or apprehends the truth instantly; he finds Verstand (raison) to be wanting because of its discursive characteristics.72

Bautain echoes Jacobi’s view that Verstand (raison) degrades whatever it operates on. He writes,

. . . [N]ous trouvons en effet deux manières de voir, comme dit Platon, l’une par les sens et au dehors: c’est la vision organique; l’autre par l’esprit et au dedans: c’est la vision intellectuelle ou le regard de l’intelligence. Dans l’une ni l’autre il n’y a aucune réflexion active, aucun mélange de pensée. Quand je regarde un objet, j’observe, je considère, mais je ne pense point; et aussitôt que je pense, je ne vois plus l’objet au dehors, mais son image dans mon entendement. Il en est de même dans la contemplation de la vérité ou d’une idée; je vois, je regarde, j’admire, je suis pénétré de la lumière de la chose et la sens délicieusement, mais je ne pense point; et si la réflexion intervient, la contemplation cesse et la jouissance avec elle. Rien n’est plus simple ni plus subtil que la vision de l’intelligence . . . . .73

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70 Horton contends that Bautain is fully aware of the lineage of this distinction. Horton writes, “He [Bautain] refers to the similes of the twice-divided line and the cave, in Plato’s Republic; to the dialectic of beauty, in the Symposium; to Plotinus’s distinction between the eye of the body and the interior eye; to St. Augustine’s distinction between intelligere and ratiocinari, reflected in the distinction between intellectus and ratio, made by St. Anselm, Gerson, St. Bernard, St. Thomas, and others.” Horton, 161.

71 Bautain, Philosophie: Psychologie expérimentale, 2:364. Italics in the original.

72 Vincellete, 35-36.

73 Bautain, Philosophie: Psychologie expérimentale, 2:372.
Like Jacobi, Bautain extends the receptivity characteristic of sense intuitions to one’s grasp of the truth. The spontaneity of thought yields, at best, a low grade of knowledge: “Elle ne voit en bas que les ombres, les figures ou les reflets de ce qui existe en haut . . .”\(^7\)

In *Philosophie du Christianisme*, Bautain further elaborates on the internal basis for admitting the truth. He writes,

\[\ldots [L]e \text{ principe de la certitude et la certitude elle-même sont en vous; ils sont subjectifs; nul ne peut être certain pour vous, pas plus que vous ne pouvez imposer votre certitude à un autre. Ce qui répond à ce principe, ce qui en provoque le développement, c’est la vérité, soit la vérité pure et divine, soit la vérité sous la forme du langage, ou sous les formes de la réalité et des phénomènes. C’est toujours le vrai hors de vous, qui répond au besoin du vrai en vous. C’est le principe de certitude inné à tout homme qui réclame la vérité dans l’homme et qui est la condition de toute la certitude qu’il peut acquérir, et ce principe a son siège dans l’âme, dans la racine même de notre existence. Il nous est imprimé comme un cachet divin, comme un témoignage permanent, comme le sceau de la vérité: il est la preuve vivante et incontestable du rapport intime de l’homme avec la vérité; car, comment la réclamerait-il s’il n’en sentait le besoin? comment la reconnaîtrait-il? comment dirait-il: Cela est vrai! s’il n’avait en lui le prototype de la vérité?\(^7\)

Although Bautain maintains that certitude is subjective, he does not cut off tradition, authority, or revelation as possible sources of knowledge as many Enlightenment thinkers do.\(^7\) Put differently, one does not find in Bautain the Enlightenment compulsion not to let anything outside the self determine the self. Bautain insists that the human mind stands in need of instruction from an external source. Nevertheless, there is an Enlightenment quality to his contention that the authority of an external source is not a

\(^7\) Bautain, *Philosophie du Christianisme*, 1:182. As Horton observes of Bautain, “. . . [H]is critique of discursive reason insists upon its incurable tendency to reduce concrete and organic reality to a series of disconnected abstractions. Kant’s judgment of it was quite correct; it is a purely phenomenal and subjective faculty, and its views of reality are simply convenient points of view. . . . If, therefore, we can escape from the phenomenal world, it is only by virtue of a superior faculty, the intelligence, which seizes at a glance the genetic order and nature of things. Unless reason accepts all its major premises, with unquestioning docility, on the authority of this higher faculty, it always goes astray.” Horton, 189.


\(^76\) Horton, 170.
ground for assenting to it; the source must pass the test of the internal basis for admitting
the truth. Below I examine some further nuances of Bautain’s position on this matter.

Bautain charts a course between René Descartes (1596-1650), who contends that
one is born with innate ideas, and John Locke (1632-1704), who holds that one is born a
*tabula rasa.* Bautain claims that one is born with “. . . germes qui attendent la
fécondation pour prendre vie et se développer.” The condition for the development of
these *germes* (seeds) is contact with ideas. Without such contact, “. . . le germe restera
stérile . . . .”

Closely related to Bautain’s notion of innately possessed *germes* is his critical
adoption of ontologism. Ontologism is the view that one’s very first idea is the idea of
pure being, that is, God Himself or a component of God. God implants this idea in the
soul when He creates it. In an unpublished manuscript, translated by Walter Horton,
Bautain writes,

> Every man bears in his deepest nature the idea of Being, but not every man has
> the philosophical consciousness of that idea; not every man knows or understands
> that God is the Absolute Being and that there is a necessary, permanent, and
> indestructible relation between God and the human soul—that it is only there, in
> the inner nature or in his interior sanctum, that there is found the truly irrefutable
> proof, theoretical and moral, of the Absolute, independent Being.

As the latter part of this passage intimates, Bautain, like Jacobi, rejects all arguments for
the existence of God. Bautain has both philosophical and theological reasons for

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77 Horton, 149, 187.
80 Horton, 287.
81 Vincelette, 96.
83 Horton also refers to “. . . Bautain’s doctrine that man has within him a hierarchy of innate ideas—of which
the *idée-mère* is the Idea of Being—which, when fully brought to consciousness, give him the faculty of
knowing God (and the world of the divine ideals) directly and intuitively.” Horton, 286-287.
84 Horton, 225.
rejecting such arguments. His philosophical reason stems from his acceptance of Kant’s claim that for every argument for God’s existence there exists a counter-argument. Bautain writes, “. . . [D]ans sa critique de la raison pure, il a démontré d’une manière incontestable l’impuissance de la raison à résoudre péremptoirement un seul problème de métaphysique.”

He agrees with Kant that any effort of Verstand (raison) to deal with the unconditioned results in antinomies. Bautain’s theological reason for rejecting arguments for the existence of God is that they are foreign to the Bible. He writes, “Nous ne trouvons dans l’Évangile ni système, ni théorie, ni syllogisme, ni argumentation. Dieu est annoncé par une parole simple, pleine d’âme, et qui va à l’âme.” Bautain also rejects arguments for the credibility of revelation, including those based on miracles and prophecies.

Even if arguments for the existence of God were sound, Bautain maintains that they would not lead to the true God. As Bautain states above, the only irrefutable proof for the existence of God—if it can even be called a proof—is the idea of Being in human consciousness. In order for this idea to mature into an adequate conception of the God, that is, a conception of God as Triune, there must be an act of faith that assents to the word of God as contained in the Bible. As Bautain explains, “Puisse la vertu de cette

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85 Horton, 144.
87 Horton explains, “He [Bautain] puts prophecy, miracle, and historical testimony in quite a secondary place, denying the possibility of basing a case on such evidence; and he appeals directly to the faith-awakening power of the Book which contains the revelation, and the Church which announces it—a power due to the perfect correspondence between the Gospel and the soul’s need.” Horton, 228.
89 Horton, 226.
90 Horton, 171.
divine parole féconder l’idée de l’Être dans votre esprit!”91 This is a suitable point on which to pivot into an examination of Bautain’s account of faith. Suffice it to say that the passages above evince the first element of the revised Schwerpunkt thesis: that Jacobi’s epistemology of Vernunft and Verstand is the focal point in Bautain’s characterization of reason.

Recall from the outset of the present section that Bautain distinguishes between croyance in the human word and foi in the divine word. Bautain explains the latter this way:

L’intelligence participe, par sa foi en la parole de Dieu, à la lumière surnaturelle qui y est contenue; d’abord elle la raçoit sans la comprendre, mais bientôt, si l’homme persiste, son intelligence est illuminée à mesure que son coeur est touché, et il comprend ce qu’il avait cru d’abord. Nisi crediderts, non intelligetis. Donc, si vous croyez sincèrement, vous comprendrez.92

Here Bautain associates faith—just as he does belief—with the faculty of Vernunft (intelligence).93 Notice how this makes it especially difficult to take a stance on whether or not Bautain subscribes to fideism.94 If one defines fideism as the view that faith is independent of reason, then two answers can given. On the one hand, Bautain depicts faith as prior to and free from the influence of Verstand (raison). On the other hand, Bautain finds Vernunft (intelligence) to be the very locus of faith. One discovers here the historical consequences of Jacobi’s decision to give Glaube more cognitive resonance by situating it within Vernunft. It permits thinkers such as Bautain—and Günther, as I will

91 Bautain, Philosophie du Christianisme, 1:284.
93 Horton writes, “From Jacobi must have come Bautain’s concept of faith as a cognitive faculty . . . .” Horton, 71.
show shortly—to maintain a harmony between faith and reason by re-envisioning the latter.

Another component of Bautain’s account of faith, one that he does not derive from Jacobi, is the notion of primitive revelation. Bautain writes, “La Genèse nous apprend que Dieu conversait avec l’homme.” He contends that this event of primitive revelation is the condition for each and every true idea that society communicates. As such, every true idea has its origin in Eden. This explains why only ideas—not sensations or abstractions from sensations—can satiate *Vernunft* (*intelligence*). Bautain identifies the Catholic Church as the body that protects and transmits the ideas dating back to the event of primitive revelation.

A last point to make is that Bautain mirrors Jacobi’s reluctance to move beyond bare affirmations of what *Vernunft* intuitively grasps. In an unpublished manuscript, translated by Walter Horton, Bautain states that he seeks “... to free its [Christianity’s] dogmas of all scholastic subtlety, of every historical addition, of everything that the speculative reason, depending always necessarily on the senses, on times, places, and circumstances, has added to it...” This statement, coupled with all of the material above, substantiates the second element of the revised *Schwerpunkt* thesis: that Jacobi’s epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand* is the focal point in Bautain’s characterization of faith.

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96 It also explains why those lacking exposure to the word of God in the Bible can nevertheless pursue the transcendent, albeit in a confused manner: they, too, come into contact with God’s primitive revelation through ideas that are diffused through society. Nichols, *From Hermes to Benedict XVI*, 73.
97 Horton, 205.
98 Louis Bautain, *Philosophie, théologique et mathématique* (1823-1824), §26, quoted in and translated by Horton, 218. Bautain does permit a cautious use of *Verstand* (*raison*) to better understand the content of the faith acquired via *Vernunft* (*intelligence*). Vincelette, 40.
1.6 Ecclesial Declarations Pertaining to Bautain before the First Vatican Council

In what follows I survey some ecclesial declarations that pertain to Bautain’s characterization of faith, reason, and the relationship between them. I use the phrase “ecclesial declaration” in its widest sense, including any cautionary document written by a priest, bishop, or pope. I must reiterate that these declarations significantly foreshadow the structure and content of the constitution.

On 30 April 1834, Jean-François-Marie Le Pappe de Trévern (1754-1842), Bishop of Strasbourg, posed seven questions to Bautain in writing regarding the relationship between faith and reason.99 Bautain’s replies were sufficiently unorthodox to compel Trévern to send an *Advertissement* to the clergy of his diocese, the French bishops, and Rome.100 In this document, dated 15 September 1834, Trévern poses six of the seven aforementioned questions in a slightly revised form and reproduces Bautain’s original answers. Subsequently, the questions were converted into propositions—once again receiving minor revisions—and were signed by Bautain on 18 November 1835.101 Three of the propositions are of interest. The first proposition reads, in part, “Reason can prove with certitude the existence of God and the infinity of His perfections.”102 The third

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99 These questions and all of the others that I mention here are reproduced in Poupard, *L’abbé Louis Bautain: Un essai de philosophie chrétienne au XIXe siècle*, 393-396.
101 The 1835 document is reproduced in English—with the incorrect date of 1840—in *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, trans. Roy J. Defferrari from the 30th edition of Henry Denzinger’s *Enchiridion Symbolorum* (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1957), 407-408 [DB 1622-1627, DS 2751-2757]. Henceforth, I supply Denzinger-Bannwart and Denzinger-Schönmetzer numbers. The changes made during the conversion of the questions into propositions are small but significant. For example, the first question in the *Advertissement* speaks of “reason alone,” whereas the first proposition in the 1835, 1840, and 1844 documents speaks of “reason.”
102 DB 1622, DS 2751.
proposition reads, in part, “Proof drawn from the miracles of Jesus Christ, sensible and striking for eyewitnesses, has in no way lost its force and splendor as regards subsequent generations.”\textsuperscript{103} The fifth proposition reads, “In regard to these various questions, reason precedes faith and should lead us to it.”\textsuperscript{104} In 1840 and 1844 Bautain signed additional documents, both of which contain slightly revised forms of the 1835 propositions.

On 9 November 1846, Pope Pius IX promulgated \textit{Qui Pluribus}, an encyclical on faith and reason. The encyclical is directed at philosophers who “... boldly prate that it [faith] is repugnant to human reason.”\textsuperscript{105} As such, it is not explicitly directed at Bautain, but its defense of the harmony of faith and reason—where the latter includes discursive aspects—certainly pertains to Bautain. One passage reads,

For, even if faith is above reason, nevertheless, no true dissension or disagreement can ever be found between them, since both have their origin from one and the same font of immutable, eternal truth, the excellent and great God, and they mutually help one another so much that right reason demonstrates the truth of faith, protects it, defends it; but faith frees reason from all errors and, by a knowledge of divine things, wonderfully elucidates it, confirms, and perfects it.\textsuperscript{106}

1.7 Anton Günther on Faith and Reason

Much of Günther’s\textsuperscript{107} work is energized by his rejection of pantheism. He focuses on Georg Hegel (1770-1831), who denies the gap between God and human being by stating that the world of nature and the world of finite spirit are in the process of being

\textsuperscript{103} DB 1624, DS 2753.
\textsuperscript{104} DB 1625, DS 2754.
\textsuperscript{105} DB 1635, DS 2776.
\textsuperscript{106} DB 1635, DS 2776.
\textsuperscript{107} Born in Lindenau, Bohemia (17 November 1783); studied law and philosophy at the University of Prague (1803-1809); studied theology in Raab, Hungary (1819-1821); ordained a diocesan priest (1821); entered a Jesuit novitiate in Hungary (1822), but ultimately returned to diocesan life (1824); settled in Vienna (1824 onward), working as a priest, scholar, and government censor of philosophical works; was offered teaching positions at Munich, Bonn, Breslau, and Tübingen, but declined; died in Vienna (24 February 1863). I draw this biographical information from Vincelette, 55. For a Günther text in English, see Anton Günther, “A Letter on Human Knowledge and the Divine Trinity,” in \textit{Romance and the Rock}, 138-152.
sublated by infinite spirit.\textsuperscript{108} He also finds Thomism to be pantheistic insofar as the analogy of being reduces God to the world of nature.\textsuperscript{109} To combat pantheism, Günther adopts the opposite extreme of Cartesian metaphysical dualism. He contends that the world of spirit and the world of nature are irreducibly opposed to each other.\textsuperscript{110}

Günther carries his metaphysics over into a tripartite anthropology. He envisages the human being as a synthesis of nature, which includes body and soul, and spirit.\textsuperscript{111} Günther constructs his epistemology in congruence with this anthropology. He contends that body and soul, because they are products of nature, grasp appearances; only spirit can grasp things in themselves.\textsuperscript{112}

Like Jacobi, Günther envisages Verstand as a faculty mediated by Begriffen (concepts) and Vernunft as an intuitive faculty that works with Ideen (ideas).\textsuperscript{113} Among the ideas that Vernunft can possess is that of the unconditioned. Since the unconditioned is the ground of all intelligibility, Vernunft’s grasp of the idea of the unconditioned must always precede the work of Verstand.\textsuperscript{114} As Günther puts it, “Der Geist kommt nicht zum Verstande ohne Vernunft.”\textsuperscript{115} In stating this he does not mean that Verstand can receive and expand upon the deliveries of Vernunft, but that the functioning of Verstand is dependent upon the prior functioning of Vernunft.

\textsuperscript{108} McCool, 95. I credit McCool for drawing my attention to some of the primary and secondary material that I reproduce in this section.

\textsuperscript{109} Vincelette, 267n51. As Wenzel observes, “Kant and Jacobi sind für Günther ein neuer Beweis, daß alle Begriffsspekulation für eine Erkenntnis Gottes nichts tauge und über kurz oder lang im Pantheismus verende.” Wenzel, 228.

\textsuperscript{110} McCool, 95.

\textsuperscript{111} Bernard M. G. Reardon, Religion in the Age of Romanticism (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 129.

\textsuperscript{112} Reardon, 129.

\textsuperscript{113} Vincelette, 56-57.

\textsuperscript{114} McCool, 97.

Günther’s account of the way in which the idea of the unconditioned emerges in human consciousness mirrors that given by Descartes. He contends that through Selbstbewuβtsein (self-consciousness) one becomes aware of the conditioned status of the self; this awareness produces the idea of the unconditioned.116 In his 1833 work Janusköpfe für Philosophie und Theologie, he explains:

So gewiss nun das Wissen um Mich (als ein Sein für sich) ist; so gewiß ist nun auch mein Wissen um Gott. Mit andern Worten: hat die Idee (den Ausdruck das Wort Ich ist) Realität: so muß auch der Idee des unbedingten Sein (im dem Worte Gott) Realität zukommen. Diese Realität muß zugleich eine objektive sein, eben weil die Idee der Unbedingtheit, wiewohl sie als solche im Denkeiste entstanden und diesem inhärirend ist, doch zugleich diesen transcendirt; weil, wenn sie ihn nicht überstiege, er sich selber als das Unbedingte denken mußte, dann aber auch sich nie als Bedingtes und Beschränktes erfassen könnte. So wäre nun endlich sowohl die Idee als ihre objektive Realität aus dem Selbstbewuβtsein des Geistes (aus dem Wissen um sich als ein bedingtes Sein und beschränktes Dasein) mittelst Analyse desselben begriffen.117

The stance Günther takes here is distinct from ontologism insofar as the human mind must know a conditioned thing before it can obtain an idea of the unconditioned.118 To be clear, the conditioned thing known is the self, and the faculty by which it is known is Vernunft. Following Kant and Jacobi, Günther holds that Verstand cannot attain knowledge of God’s existence.119 I take this claim and those above to corroborate the first

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116 Descartes writes, “. . . [F]rom this one fact that God created me, it is highly believable that I have somehow been made in his image and likeness, and that I perceive this likeness (in which the idea of God is contained) by means of the same faculty through which I perceive myself. That is, when I turn my powers of discernment toward myself, I not only understand that I am something incomplete and dependent upon another, something aspiring indefinitely for greater and greater or better things, but instantaneously I also understand that the thing on which I depend has in himself all of these greater things . . . .” René Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy in Which the Existence of God and the Distinction of the Soul from the Body are Demonstrated, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1979), 34.
118 Nichols, From Hermes to Benedict XVI, 130.
element of the revised Schwerpunkt thesis: that Jacobi’s epistemology of Vernunft and Verstand is the focal point in Günther’s characterization of reason.

I now turn to Günther’s treatment of faith. Günther differs from Bautain in that he seeks to make theology sufficiently scientific to impress the educated classes. To accomplish this, Günther argues that mysteries of faith, such as the Trinity and the Incarnation, lie within the grasp of reason, where reason means Vernunft. This is not to suggest that persons lacking contact with the Bible can spontaneously acquire knowledge of the mysteries. Günther contends that one must first learn of the mysteries through contact with the Bible. Subsequent to this, however, one can use Vernunft to prove—or better, intuit the necessity of—the mysteries. For Günther, then, the mysteries of faith are supernatural in mode, but not in substance. Faith is simply the act of acknowledging the fact of revelation at the outset; afterwards, one can explain and even develop the content of revelation using reason, where reason means Vernunft.

The peculiarity of Vernunft is a source of the difficulty in accurately labeling Günther’s position, just as it was with labeling Bautain’s position. On the one hand, it is tempting to label Günther a rationalist, for in a way similar to Locke, he makes reason—understood as Vernunft—a standard for affirming the mysteries of faith. On the other

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120 Reardon, 127.
121 Vincelette, 56.
122 Reardon, 127, 130.
123 Locke writes, “God when he makes the prophet does not unmake the man. He leaves all his faculties in the natural state, to enable him to judge of his inspirations, whether they be of divine original or no. If he would have us assent to the truth of any proposition, he either evidences that truth by the usual methods of natural reason, or else makes it known to be a truth which he would have us assent to by his authority, and convinces us that it is from him, by some marks which reason cannot be mistaken in. Reason must be our last judge and guide in everything. I do not mean that we must consult reason, and examine whether a proposition revealed from God can be made out by natural principles, and if it cannot, that then we may reject it: but consult it we must, and by it examine whether it be a revelation from God or no: and if reason finds it to be revealed from God, reason then declares for it as much as for any other truth, and makes it one of her dictates.” John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (New York: Dover Publications, 1959), 2:438-439. Italics in the original.
hand, Günther envisages reason—understood as *Vernunft*—in such a way that he ultimately affirms the mysteries of faith, unlike Locke. What is plain is the strength of the evidence for the second element of the revised *Schwerpunkt* thesis, that Jacobi’s epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand* is the focal point in Günther’s characterization of faith.

Before looking at some of the ecclesial declarations pertaining to Günther, it will be useful to examine his proof for the necessity of the Incarnation. Günther’s proof begins with his anthropology of the human being as a synthesis of nature and spirit. In Eden, this synthesis was perfect, but original sin caused the spirit to loose control over the body’s appetites. Adam’s progeny inherit this imperfect synthesis. The Incarnation is necessary, then, in that a divine person must restore the synthesis by joining it—and the divine person is the Son, who reorders bodily appetites to God through his perfect cooperation with the divine will. In connection with this argument, Günther maintains that God could not command Adam to increase and multiply, thereby generating a race of disordered natures, unless God had also promised Adam a redeemer to restore human nature. Christ is therefore the fulfillment of the promise God made to Adam in Eden.

As Günther puts it,


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125 Vincelette, 60.
126 Vincelette, 60.
127 McCool, 100.
Günther contends that God’s promise to Adam has been transmitted to all of his descendents. Günther identifies a further manner in which the mystery of the Incarnation lies within the horizon of self-consciousness. Günther’s argument is bound up with his claim—similar to that made by Bautain—that an event of primitive revelation occurs in Genesis. This event is the condition of all subsequent human thought.

1.8 Ecclesial Declarations Pertaining to Günther before the First Vatican Council

On 8 January 1857 the Congregation of the Index prohibited nine of Günther’s works. Günther accepted the prohibition on 10 February 1857. The grounds of the prohibition appear in Eximiam Tuam, a brief by Pope Pius IX dated 15 June 1857. The brief is directed towards the “. . . erroneous and most dangerous system of rationalism . . .” found in Günther’s works. It rejects Günther’s anthropology, identifying the soul as “. . . the true and immediate form of the body.” Moreover, it states that Günther’s works attribute “. . . the rights of a master both to human reason and philosophy, whereas they should be wholly handmaids, not masters in religious matters . . . .”

In the apostolic letter Tuas Libenter, dated 12 December 1863, Pope Pius IX makes a statement that pertains to Günther. It reads,

. . . We . . . reject and repudiate that recent and preposterous method of philosophizing which, even if it admits divine revelation as an historical fact, nevertheless, submits the ineffable truths made known by divine revelation to the investigations of human reason; just as if those truths had been subject to reason, or, as if reason, by its own powers and principles, could attain understanding and

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129 McCool, 100.
130 Vincelette, 268n56.
132 DB 1655, DS 2828.
133 DB 1655, DS 2828.
134 DB 1656, DS 2829.
knowledge of all the supernal truths and mysteries of our holy faith, which are so far above human reason that it can never be made fit to understand or demonstrate them by its own powers, and on its own natural principles.\textsuperscript{135}

The phrase “even if it admits divine revelation as an historical fact” evidently refers to Günther’s admission that revelation is supernatural in mode.

On 8 December 1864, Pope Pius IX promulgated the encyclical \textit{Quanta Cura}, which was accompanied by the document \textit{Syllabus Errorum}. The first section of the \textit{Syllabus} is entitled “Pantheism, Naturalism, and Absolute Rationalism.” This section is primarily directed at different features of Enlightenment rationality, but at least one passage pertains to Günther: it deems erroneous the idea that divine revelation is “. . . subject to continuous and indefinite progress . . . which corresponds to the progress of human reason.”\textsuperscript{136} The second section of the \textit{Syllabus}, entitled “Moderate Rationalism,” pertains to Günther in several respects: it deems erroneous the notions that “. . . theological studies must be conducted just as the philosophical,”\textsuperscript{137} that “. . . dogmas . . . are the object of natural science or philosophy,”\textsuperscript{138} and that “[t]he method and principles according to which the ancient scholastic doctors treated theology are by no means suited to the necessities of our times and to the progress of the sciences.”\textsuperscript{139}

\textsuperscript{135} \textit{DB} 1682, \textit{DS} 2878.
\textsuperscript{136} \textit{DB} 1705, \textit{DS} 2905.
\textsuperscript{137} \textit{DB} 1708, \textit{DS} 2908.
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{DB} 1709, \textit{DS} 2909.
\textsuperscript{139} \textit{DB} 1713, \textit{DS} 2913.
Chapter 2

Faith and Reason in the First Vatican Council’s *Dei Filius*

In chapter one of this study I show that Jacobi’s epistemology heavily influences the way Bautain and Günther characterize faith, reason, and the relationship between them. In the present chapter I have two goals. My first and more general goal is to survey the characterization of faith, reason and the relationship between them in *Dei Filius*. This goal serves the dual purpose of delivering what the title of this study promises and of adequately sketching a document that I will put Lonergan in contact with in chapters four and five. My second and more particular goal is to highlight passages in the constitution in which it is clear that the authors have Bautain and Günther in mind, as well as those that simply pertain to them in some respect.

The novelty of the present chapter lies in my use of the refined Schwerpunkt thesis as a hermeneutical tool to shed light on some of the internal workings of the constitution—workings that would not appear through an analysis using the closest Thomistic correlates, namely intellectus and ratio.

My approach in the present chapter will be as follows. I will analyze four key passages from each chapter of the constitution, with the exception of chapter one, where I will only analyze two passages. I will analyze canons pertaining to these passages when necessary. When it is illuminating to do so, I will trace the schematic development of a passage in an affixed footnote.

Rather than commencing section 2.1 at this juncture, I will extend the length of my introduction. This will allow me to treat chapter one of the constitution in section 2.1, chapter two in section 2.2, and so on.
On 6 December 1864, at a meeting of the Congregation of Rites, Pope Pius IX (1792-1878) privately informed the cardinals present that he intended to hold an ecumenical council.¹ In March of 1865, he appointed a Central Preparatory Commission. In April of that year, a letter was sent to a select group of bishops asking them to specify issues that should be addressed at the council. The issues related to faith and reason that appear in their responses are as follows: pantheism, naturalism, rationalism, socialism, communism, spiritism, religious indifference, and various teachings in regard to the inspiration, authority, and interpretation of Sacred Scripture.² Based on the responses, five subordinate commissions were set up: (1) Faith and Dogma, (2) Ecclesiastical Discipline and Canon Law, (3) Religious Order and Regulars, (4) Oriental Churches and Foreign Missions, and (5) Politico-Ecclesiastical Affairs and Relations of the Church and State.³ Each commission would compose a schema for its respective field. The Faith and Dogma Commission is of exclusive interest in this study, for it is the commission that composed Dei Filius. Due to the war between Austria and Prussia, the commissions did not begin to function until the summer of 1867.⁴ In the fall of that year, the Faith and Dogma Commission adopted Quanta Cura and Syllabus Errorum as its primary guides.

On 29 June 1868, Pope Pius IX selected 8 December 1869 as the date of the opening of the council. In the meantime, votum discussions would take place. A votum is a sketch of what will appear in a schema. In the summer of 1868, discussion took place of

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² Butler, 65.
³ Butler, 70.
⁴ Butler, 65.
a key votum drawn up by Johann Baptist Franzelin (1816-1886).\(^5\) Franzelin’s votum names and briefly exposit the views of—among others—Bautain and Günther. The fruit of the discussion of this votum was a schema, composed chiefly by Franzelin, entitled *Definitio doctrinae catholicae contra multiplices errores ex impio rationalismo derivatos vel contra multiplices absoluti ac temperati rationalismi errores.*\(^6\) This was the first schema of an eventual four. A second schema arose when the first was revised and given a new title: *Schema constitutionis dogmaticae de doctrina catholica contra multiplices errores ex rationalismo derivatos.*\(^7\) This schema was also composed chiefly by Franzelin.

In late November of 1869, council participants began to gather in Rome.\(^8\) There would be three kinds of sessions at the council: private sessions for discussing schemata, general congregations (primarily) for deciding whether or not a schema is adequate, and public sessions for the promulgation of an accepted schema.\(^9\) At the first general congregation, held 10 December 1869, a total of 679 participants were in attendance: 43 cardinals, 605 bishops, and 31 abbots and generals of religious orders.\(^10\)

On 28 December 1869, discussion commenced over the abovementioned second schema.\(^11\) By 10 January 1870, the general congregation had decided that the substance of the second schema would be preserved, but its length—eighteen chapters—would be...

\(^5\) This votum is reproduced in Hermann-Josef Pottmeyer, *Der Glaube vor dem Anspruch der Wissenschaft: Die Konstitution über den katholischen Glauben “Dei Filius” des Ersten Vatikanischen Konzils und die unveröffentlichten theologischen Voten der vorbereitenden Kommission* (Freiburg: Herder, 1968), 28*-89*.

\(^6\) This schema, referred to hereafter as S1, is reproduced in Pottmeyer, 90*-105*.


\(^8\) Butler, 108.

\(^9\) Butler, 131.

\(^10\) Butler, 138.

\(^11\) Butler, 157-158. Since S2 is the first document to receive discussion at the council-proper, some authors refer to it as the first schema, but for the sake of clarity, I will continue to call it the second.
reduced and its harshness replaced with a more tranquil tone. The decision to emend the schema came as a surprise to those outside of the Faith and Dogma Commission. The proposed emendations were sent to the Deputation on Faith, a twenty-four member group elected by the council, whose president was appointed by Pope Pius IX. Three members of the Deputation on Faith were chosen to carry out the emendations: Victor Auguste Dechamps (1810-1883), Louis François Désiré Pie (1815-1880), and Konrad Martin (1812-1879). Martin, the head of the group, asked for the assistance of two theologians, Kleutgen and Charles Louis Gay (1815-1892). It was Kleutgen who essentially carried out the task.

On 1 March 1870, Kleutgen submitted a schema that condensed Franzelin’s schema into nine chapters. This third schema underwent corrections, but only regarding its first four chapters. As a result, the fourth and final schema read aloud at the general congregation on 18 March 1870 contained only those four chapters. On 24 April 1870, after some final revisions to the fourth schema, the council promulgated de Fide catholica, the Dogmatic Constitution concerning the Catholic Faith (incipit: Dei Filius). All 667 members present had voted placet.

On 18 July 1870, the council promulgated a second document, de Ecclesia Christi, the First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ (incipit: Pastor

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12 Butler, 169.
13 Butler, 168.
14 Butler, 170.
15 Butler, 170.
16 Butler, 170. This schema, referred to hereafter as S3, is reproduced in Mansi 53: 164-177.
17 Butler, 235. This schema, referred to hereafter as S4, is reproduced in Mansi, 51: 31-38.
19 Butler, 247.
Aeternus).\textsuperscript{20} Discussion of remaining schemata followed, but was impeded by the withdrawal of the French troops from Rome in August and the occupation of Vatican City by Italian troops in September.\textsuperscript{21} In an apostolic letter dated 20 October 1870, Pope Pius IX suspended the council.

2.1 Key Passages in Chapter One

Chapter one of \textit{Dei Filius} is entitled “God, Creator of All Things.”\textsuperscript{22} It has less relevance to the faith-reason relation than subsequent chapters, thus I will only consider two key passages from it. I will mark each key passage with a number, to designate which chapter it is from, and a letter. The first key passage reads,

\begin{quote}
(1A) The holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church believes and confesses that there is one, true, living God, Creator and Lord of heaven and earth, omnipotent, eternal, immense, incomprehensible, infinite in intellect and will, and in every perfection; who, although He is one, singular, altogether simple and unchangeable spiritual substance, must be proclaimed distinct in reality and essence from the world; most blessed in Himself and of Himself, and ineffably most high above all things which are or can be conceived outside Himself.\textsuperscript{23}
\end{quote}

Let me make two observations about this passage. First, the phrase “believes and confesses” serves as an early indication that the declarations of the constitution are made on the basis of faith, not reason, even in passages that appear to be philosophical in character, such as that above.\textsuperscript{24} Second, passage 1A delineates a set of divine attributes so...
as to clarify the notion of God found in Catholic doctrine.\textsuperscript{25} The constitution is not yet treating natural knowledge of God, hence there is no intent to suggest that these particular attributes fall—or do not fall—within the purview of human reason.

The second key passage in chapter one reads,

\textit{(1B) This sole true God by His goodness and “omnipotent power,” not to increase His own beatitude, and not to add to, but to manifest His perfection by the blessings which He bestows on creatures, with most free volition, “immediately from the beginning of time fashioned each creature out of nothing, spiritual and corporeal, namely angelic and mundane; and then the human creation, common as it were, composed of both spirit and body (Lateran Council IV).”}\textsuperscript{26}

The first part of this passage counters Günther’s claims about the necessity of creation—claims that I do not explore in this study. My interest lies in the second part of the passage. The phrase “composed of both spirit and body,” drawn from the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, counters the anthropologies that Günther and Bautain advance. Moreover, the phrase supports the view that the senses and the intellect cooperate in acquiring knowledge. One can take this, loosely, as an acclamation of the form of reason—namely, \textit{Verstand}—that Bautain and Günther devalue.

\section*{2.2 Key Passages in Chapter Two and its Respective Canons}

Chapter two of \textit{Dei Filius} is entitled “Revelation.” The first key passage in chapter two appears in all four schemata, albeit with subtle changes in each iteration. It contains what is perhaps the most well-known statement in the entire constitution. It reads,


\textsuperscript{26} \textit{DB} 1783, \textit{DS} 3002. In Denzinger-Bannwart and Denzinger-Schönmetzer, the end of this passage includes a reference to Lateran Council IV, which I reproduce above, and some additional references, which I excise. My practice will be to reproduce references that the authors of the constitution likely made and to excise those that likely come from Denzinger’s hand.
The same Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certitude by the natural light of human reason from created things; “for the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made (Romans 1:20)” . . .

I must make three observations about this passage.

First, by stating that God “can” be known by the natural light of human reason, rather than stating that God is known in such a way, the authors of the constitution focus on the power of human reason, not its actual achievement. The authors seek an apt characterization of human reason, not a refutation of specific arguments against the existence of God. It follows that passage 2A is more of a response to thinkers like Bautain and Günther than it is to atheists. Atheists affirm the power of human reason to know whether or not God exists; Bautain and Günther do not. It is not difficult to see that the inspiration of passage 2A is Bishop Trévern’s 1834 Advertissement concerning Bautain and the subsequent documents modeled on it, all of which merely seek to establish a power of human reason. Neither the Advertissement nor the constitution make reference to any of the classical proofs for the existence of God, such as the five ways of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274).

Second, as a relatio from Bishop Vinzenz Gasser (1809-1879) explains, the phrase “with certitude” is meant to counter French Encyclopedism and early German

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27 DB 1785, DS 3004. This is an instance in which I must reproduce matching passages from the schemata. Rather than reproducing them in their original Latin, I will translate them into English so that one can glance from each schematic iteration back to Deferrari’s English translation of the constitution itself. An iteration of passage 2A is found in all four schemata. S1 reads, “We declare that this true God can be known by the natural light of human reason itself by those things which have been made.” S2 reads, “Nor can it be doubted that the true God can be known by the natural light of human reason itself by those things which have been made . . . .” S3 reads, “The same holy mother church teaches that God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certitude from created things by the natural light of human reason, so it is not wholly necessary that this doctrine regarding God be handed down . . . .” S4 reads virtually the same as the constitution itself.

28 Ryan, 367.

critical philosophy. Both movements undermine the possibility of knowing that God exists with certitude, the former through its skepticism, the latter by rendering the idea of God a practical postulate. My interest in this study lies in whether or not the phrase “with certitude” also counters Bautain and Günther. Taken loosely, it does not, for both Bautain and Günther maintain that one can be certain that God exists. Needless to say, in a study of this type, it will not suffice to take terms loosely. A first step towards pinning down the meaning of “with certitude,” then, is to ask whether it implies demonstration. Recall that Bautain and Günther undermine demonstrations because they are the fruit of Verstand—including demonstrations of the existence of God. An initial clue lies in a relatio from Gasser. It reads, “Although in some measure to know with certitude and to demonstrate are one and the same, nevertheless the Deputation of Faith resolved to select the milder phrase rather than the more demanding one.” The term demonstration does appear later in the constitution, but as I will show, its employment in that instance is not technical in nature, thus it does not serve as a corrective to the “milder phrase” in passage 2A. Of course, one could point to the 1879 encyclical Aeterni Patris, which states that “. . . certain truths which . . . were discovered by pagan sages with nothing but their natural reason to guide them, were demonstrated and proved by becoming arguments.” Moreover, one could point to the 1950 encyclical Humani Generis, which reads, “It is well known how much the Church values human reason, in what is concerned with

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31 “Demonstrated truths are all conclusions of science and philosophy derived from premises that are certain and evident, so that the new truths themselves are, by the process of demonstration and through the mediating function of some middle term between subject and predicate, rendered evident and certain. Unlike the evidence and certitude of first principles, the evidence and certitude of conclusions are themselves mediate and derived.” New Catholic Encyclopedia, 2nd ed., s.v. “Certitude.”
definitely demonstrating the existence of one personal God . . .”34 In this study, however, I will focus on the constitution itself and the intentions of its authors at the time of composition. In order to elucidate the phrase “with certitude,” then, I must turn to other elements of passage 2A.

Third, the phrase “from created things” functions first and foremost as a means of being in fidelity to Romans 1:20.35 A secondary function, however, is to emphasize that any knowledge of God acquired by human reason is mediated. The fact that the knowledge is mediated by “created things” appears to confirm that the “human reason” envisaged in passage 2A is sense-abstractive, that is, mediated by the senses, but this assumes that by “created things” the authors exclusively mean physical things outside of the subject. The matter is crucial, for if the authors do exclusively mean physical things outside of the subject, then the phrase does denounce Bautain and Günther, who take such things to be the object of Verstand—and Verstand plays no role in acquiring knowledge of God. Before it was rescinded by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1967, one could glean a degree of clarification from the 1910 motu proprio, Sacrorum Antistitum, better known as the Oath Against Modernism. It reads, “. . . I profess that God, the beginning and end of all things, can be certainly known and thus can also be demonstrated by the natural light of reason ‘by the things that are made,’ that

34 DB 2320, DS 3892.
35 Let me put the phrase in its context using Douay-Rheims, the text that the authors of the constitution use: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and injustice of those men that detain the truth of God in injustice: Because that which is known of God is manifest in them. For God hath manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity: so that they are inexcusable. Because that, when they knew God, they have not glorified him as God, or given thanks; but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened. For professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of fourfooted beasts, and of creeping things.” Romans 1:18-23 DV.
is, by the visible works of creation, as the cause by the effects.”36 Having been rescinded, the Oath has far less force as a clarifying apparatus. One is left looking to the constitution itself and the intentions of its authors. In doing so, one finds the following statement in a relatio by Gasser: “For if we say that God is known by the natural light of reason through creatures, that is, through the traces that have been impressed on all creatures, much less do we exclude the image that has been impressed on the immortal soul of the human being … .”37 The “image” being referred to here is no doubt the image of God in human beings.38 Now Aquinas associates the image of God in human beings with their capacity to understand and to love.39 Let us assume that the authors of the constitution concur with Aquinas on this matter. The capacities to understand and to love are “created things,” but not physical things outside of the subject, thus the authors would seem to be open to a variety of mediums through which God can be known with certitude. As Ambrose Ryan observes, several ratione from the council corroborate this openness: the authors consciously chose not to condemn Cartesian innatism, ontologism, and Anselm’s (1033/1034-1109) ontological argument.40 Since the stances of Bautain and Günther on

36 DB 2145, DS 3538. Compare with Aquinas, who writes, “. . . [B]ecause we do not know the essence of God, the proposition [‘God exists’] is not self-evident to us; but needs to be demonstrated by things that are more known to us, though less known in their nature—namely, by effects.” Aquinas, Summa Theologica, 1:11-12 [I, 2, 1].
38 Let me put the phrase “image of God” in its context, once again using Douay-Rheims, the text that the authors of the constitution consult: “And he said: Let us make man to our image and likeness: and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth. And God created man to his own image: to the image of God he created him: male and female he created them.” Genesis 1:26-27 DV.
39 Aquinas writes, “Since man is said to be the image of God by reason of his intellectual nature, he is the most perfectly like God according to that in which he can best imitate God in his intellectual nature. Now the intellectual nature imitates God chiefly in this, that God understands and loves Himself.” Aquinas, Summa Theologica, 1:471 [I, 93, 4].
40 Ryan, 368-369. As Ryan sums up the rationis, “St. Anselm is excepted from condemnation by name, Innatism is not explicitly included in the discussions of the Council, and Ontologism was reserved until such a time as it could be discussed at length.” Ryan, 372. For a reflection on the role of the image of God in Descartes’s epistemology, see Nicholas Jolley, The Light of the Soul: Theories of Ideas in Leibniz, Malebranche, and Descartes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 24-31.
knowledge of God parallel these non-sense-abstractive views, I must conclude that the phrase “created things” does not stand against them.

I will now discuss the canon pertaining to passage 2A. It reads, “If anyone shall have said that the one true God, our Creator and our Lord, cannot be known with certitude by those things which have been made, by the natural light of human reason: let him be anathema.” I need to make four observations about this canon. First, a ratio from the council explains that the function of the word Creator is not to declare that creatio ex nihilo is knowable by the natural light of reason, but to make clear that it is the same Creator found in Sacred Scripture that is known to exist by the natural light of reason. This would appear to denounce Bautain and Günther, who contend that the God known by the natural light of reason—namely, Verstand—is not the true God. Once again, however, it is not unambiguous that by “the natural light of human reason” the authors mean sense-abstractive reason, or that by “things which have been made” they exclusively mean physical things outside of the subject. Second, this canon, as it appears in the third schema, invokes the word “demonstration.” That the word “demonstration” disappears in the fourth schema and the constitution itself correlates with the decision to employ the “milder” phrase, “known with certitude.” Third, whereas the third schema specifies that even in their fallen state, human beings can know God with certitude, the fourth schema and the constitution itself speak only of a power of human reason in essence. Fergus Kerr contends that the council intentionally avoids specifying whether

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41 DB 1806, DS 3026. S3 reads, “If anyone happens to deny that the one and true God, our creator and Lord, can be known with certitude and demonstrated by natural reason, by a fallen human being, by those things which have been made, let him be anathema.” S4 reads, “If anyone happens to deny that the one and true God, our creator and Lord, can be known with certitude by a human being, by the natural light of reason, by those things which have been made, let him be anathema.”

42 Granderath, 79.
the light of human reason being referred to is prelapsarian light, postlapsarian light that is
graced, or postlapsarian light that is independent of the effects of grace and sin. To
specify this would reopen the sixteenth-century debate between Dominicans and Jesuits
over the help of grace that postlapsarian human beings require to achieve what, in
principle, lies within their natural power. Despite this lack of specification and the
erasure of “fallen,” Stephen Long nevertheless contends that the authors of the council
are speaking of human reason in the concrete, not in essence. He points out that in the
constitution’s other canons, the word “cannot” is used in a strict manner, thus it stands to
reason that it is also being used in a strict manner in this canon.

The second key passage in chapter two reads,

(2B) . . . [N]evertheless, it has pleased His wisdom and goodness to reveal
Himself and the eternal decrees of His will to the human race in another and
supernatural way, as the Apostle says: “God, who at sundry times and in divers
manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these
days hath spoken to us by His Son (Hebrews 1:1).”

René Latourelle contends that by “Himself” the authors of the constitution mean God’s
existence and attributes, as well as the interior life of the Trinity. The “supernatural
way” that the constitution refers to, then, is modally supernatural, but not all of the
content is substantially supernatural: the first two items—God’s existence and
attributes—are knowable through the light of reason. This explains the phraseology of the
passage, which implies that God has already revealed Himself in some other way, namely

44 Kerr, “Knowing God by Reason Alone,” 222.
45 Long asks, “Why is it that, everywhere else in near proximity to the canon in question, the sense of
‘cannot’ is real, and indeed is not merely the sense of real possibility but indeed of real proximate
potency?” Steven A. Long, Natura Pura: On the Recovery of Nature in the Doctrine of Grace (New York:
Fordham University Press, 2010), 102. Italics in the original.
46 DB 1785, DS 3004.
through created things. Latourelle goes on to contend that by “the eternal decrees of His will” the authors mean those things which pertain to Creation, the Incarnation, Redemption, and the call of the elect. Each of these is both modally and substantially supernatural.

The third key passage in chapter two reads,

\( (2C) \) Indeed, it must be attributed to this divine revelation that those things, which in divine things are not impenetrable to human reason by itself, can, even in this present condition of the human race, be known readily by all with firm certitude and with no admixture of error. Nevertheless, it is not for this reason that revelation is said to be absolutely necessary, but because God in His infinite goodness has ordained man for a supernatural end, to participation, namely, in the divine goods which altogether surpass the understanding of the human mind, since “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him (1 Corinthians 2:9).”

The transitive verb “can” and the noun “certitude” reappear here, this time in reference to truths about God that could be known by human reason, but are in fact known by faith. To use Aquinas’s terminology, the passage refers to truths about God that overlap the fields of \textit{divinitus revelabilia} (divinely revealable) and \textit{divinitus revelata} (having been divinely revealed). Regarding such truths, the first part of passage 2C declares that faith, unlike reason, can offer a certitude that is firm and free from error. A “firm certitude” is possible because of the authority of God revealing and the internal aids of

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48 Latourelle, 260.
49 \textit{DB} 1786, \textit{DS} 3005.
50 Aquinas writes, “Therefore, because Sacred Scripture considers things precisely under the formality of being divinely revealed, whatever has been divinely revealed possesses the one precise formality of the object of this science; and therefore is included under sacred doctrine as under one science.” Aquinas, \textit{Summa Theologica}, 1:2 \[I, 1, 3\].
51 Passage 2C follows Aquinas closely. Aquinas writes, “Even as regards those truths about God which human reason could have discovered, it was necessary that man should be taught by a divine revelation; because the truth about God such as reason could discover, would only be known by a few, and that after a long time, and with the admixture of many errors.” Aquinas, \textit{Summa Theologica}, 1:1 \[I, 1, 1\].
the Holy Spirit. I must note, however, that although the assent of faith is more certain than knowledge via reason, it is not as intellectually satisfying.\footnote{52}

The fourth and final key passage in chapter two reads,

(2D) Furthermore, this supernatural revelation, according to the faith of the universal Church, as declared by the holy synod of Trent, is contained “in the written books and in the unwritten traditions which have been received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself; or, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit have been handed down by the apostles themselves, and have thus come to us (Council of Trent).”\footnote{53}

Although the constitution does not explicitly use the phrase “natural revelation,” the placement of the adjective “supernatural” before “revelation” in this passage and the phraseology of passage 2B implies its aptness. This passage serves, then, to identify the body of things that are supernatural in mode and thus can be “known readily by all with firm certitude and with no admixture of error” as distinct from those things falling under natural revelation, where one is susceptible—but not destined—to error.\footnote{54}

2.3 Key Passages in Chapter Three and its Respective Canons

Chapter three of \textit{Dei Filius} is entitled “Faith.” The first key passage in chapter three is illustrious because it offers a quasi-definition of faith. It reads,

\footnote{52} As Brian Shanley explains, “While faith lacks the rational evidence of \textit{intellectus} or \textit{scientia}, it nonetheless shares with those states the quality of certitude. . . . This certitude distinguishes faith from opinion, another state lacking rational evidence; whereas opinion assents with a nagging worry that the opposite viewpoint is perhaps true (\textit{cum formidine alterius}), Aquinas holds that faith is even more certain than \textit{intellectus} or \textit{scientia} objectively speaking because it is caused by God. On the subjective side, however, it is less certain because it is a certitude without intellectual evidence. . . . The lack of rational evidence is remedied by the involvement of the will.” Brian J. Shanley, \textit{The Thomist Tradition} (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 31-32.

\footnote{53} \textit{DB} 1787, \textit{DS} 3006.

\footnote{54} George Smith elaborates, “. . . [R]evelation is supernatural—supernatural not only because it contains supernatural truths, but also because the very act whereby God reveals is beyond the ordinary course of nature. In the ordinary course of nature God teaches us through created things. . . . By supernatural revelation God teaches us himself.” George D. Smith, “Faith and Revealed Truth,” in \textit{The Teaching of the Catholic Church: A Summary of Catholic Doctrine}, 2nd ed., ed. George D. Smith (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1952), 7.
(3A) Since man is wholly dependent on God as his Creator and Lord, and since created reason is completely subject to uncreated truth, we are bound by faith to give full obedience of intellect and will to God who reveals. But the Catholic Church professes that this faith, which “is the beginning of human salvation,” is a supernatural virtue by which we, with the aid and inspiration of the grace of God, believe that the things revealed by Him are true, not because the intrinsic truth of the revealed things has been perceived by the natural light of reason, but because of the authority of God Himself who reveals them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. For, “faith is,” as the Apostle testifies, “the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not (Hebrews 11:1).”

Let me make four observations about this passage.

First, one believes in things revealed by God not only because of “the authority of God Himself who reveals,” but also because God “can neither deceive nor be deceived.” Faith, then, involves more than just the will, more than submission to authority for authority’s sake—it involves the intellect affirming the omniscience of God. Strictly speaking, however, the motive of faith is “the authority of God Himself who reveals.”

Second, although Bautain and Günther acknowledge “the authority of God Himself who reveals” in their defense of primitive revelation, what actually obliges one

55 *DB* 1789, *DS* 3008.
56 This echoes Pope Pius IX’s 1846 encyclical, *Qui Pluribus*, which reads, “Indeed, human reason, lest it be deceived and err in a matter of so great importance, ought to search diligently for the fact of divine revelation so that it can know with certainty that God has spoken, and so render to Him, as the Apostle so wisely teaches, ‘a rational service’ (Romans 12:1). For who does not know, or cannot know that all faith is to be given to God who speaks, and that nothing is more suitable to reason itself than to acquiesce and firmly adhere to those truths which it has been established were revealed by God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived?” *DB* 1637, *DS* 2778.
57 As Smith observes, “A motive, before it can give rise to an act, must first be perceived by the mind; the authority of God, then, must be known before I can make an act of faith. I must know that there is a God, and that he has the authority—i.e., the knowledge and the veracity—which is to command my assent.” Smith, 11.
58 Smith writes, “The believer accepts a revealed truth not precisely because he knows that God has revealed it and knows that God is infallible. This knowledge is the necessary condition, but it is not the motive, of his faith. He believes because God, who is infallible, has said it. The difference is perhaps subtle, but it is important. The motive of the act of divine faith is not my knowledge of that authority as accrediting revealed truth, however certain, however evident that knowledge may be, but the divine authority itself.” Smith, 21. Italics in the original.
to believe in things revealed by God is an internal reaction within Vernunft.59 Recall that for Bautain, when one encounters Sacred Scripture, one’s faculty of Vernunft (intelligence) immediately recognizes it as being true. In this sense, Bautain posits what the constitution rejects, namely the view that “the intrinsic truth of . . . revealed things has been perceived by the natural light of reason,” where reason means Vernunft (intelligence). Yet Bautain’s position is more moderate than that of Günther, who the authors likely have in mind here. Recall that for Günther, revealed things are supernatural in mode, but not in substance. Once one comes into contact with Sacred Scripture, the intrinsic truth of revealed things can be perceived and proved via one’s faculty of Vernunft.

Third, the phrase “with the aid and inspiration of the grace of God” introduces a third component of faith, the first two being the obedience of the intellect and of the will. This characterization of faith is consistent with Aquinas’s oft-cited quasi-definition of faith: “. . . [T]he act of believing is an act of the intellect assenting to the Divine truth at the command of the will moved by the grace of God . . . .”60

Fourth, in describing faith as a supernatural virtue “by which” we “believe that” something is true, the constitution echoes the distinction that Augustine of Hippo (354-430) makes between the fides quae creditur (the faith which is believed) and the fides

59 Smith writes, “There is . . . this important difference between the assent of faith and the assent of immediate knowledge. The assent in the latter case is caused by the perception of the intrinsic truth of the statement; so that when it is made I say: ‘I see; of course, that must be so’; and, when once the truth is seen, nothing further is required to gain my assent. In the case of faith, I see indeed—otherwise there could be no assent—but I do not see within the truth itself. I understand the terms of the revealed proposition, but neither the analysis of those terms nor my own experience assures me that they should be connected. The ground, or the ‘motive,’ of my assent to the proposition is extrinsic to it, and that motive is the authority of God, who tells me that it is true. In both cases there is evidence: in the former the evidence is intrinsic, in the latter it is extrinsic.” Smith, 18.

*qua creditur* (the faith by which it is believed). The latter is a point of emphasis in passage 3A, which pivots from a means of knowing “by” the natural light of reason to a means of knowing “by” the supernatural light of faith.

There are two canons pertaining to passage 3A. The first canon anathematizes those who say “... that human reason is so independent that faith cannot be enjoined upon it by God ...” It is clear that this canon counters strict rationalists, but the question arises as to whether it also counters to Bautain and Günther. If by “human reason” the authors mean sense-abstractive reason, then the canon does counter them, for they hold that *Verstand* does not have the capacity for the enjoinment of faith; faith is proportionate to *Vernunft*. As I argue above, however, the meaning of “human reason” is ambiguous in the constitution, hence I cannot conclude that the canon stands against Bautain and Günther. The second canon anathematizes those who say “... that divine faith is not distinguished from a natural knowledge of God and moral things, and that therefore it is not necessary to divine faith that revealed truth be believed because of the authority of God Who reveals it ...” This canon contains the eminent expression, “natural knowledge of God.” I must note that whereas passage 2A employs the word *cognoscí*, this canon employs the word *scientia*.

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62 *DB* 1810, *DS* 3031.

63 *DB* 1811, *DS* 3032.

64 Regarding natural knowledge of God in the constitution, Kerr remarks, “… [I]t is a knowledge that would count as *cognoscere* not *scire*, which might stretch to intuitive awareness and certainly need not be limited to apodictic demonstration.” Fergus Kerr, “A Different World: Neoscholasticism and its Discontents,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 8, no. 2 (2006): 130. Although I agree with the second part of Kerr’s claim, the appearance of the term *scientia* in this canon undermines the first part of his claim.
The second key passage in chapter three reads,

(3B) However, in order that the “obedience” of our faith should be “consonant
with reason (Romans 12:1),” God has willed that to the internal aids of the Holy
Spirit there should be joined external proofs of His revelation, namely: divine
facts, especially miracles and prophecies which, because they clearly show forth
the omnipotence and infinite knowledge of God, are most certain signs of a divine
revelation, and are suited to the intelligence of all.\textsuperscript{65}

I must make three observations about this passage.

First, each external proof is—to use an expression that appears later in the
constitution—a “ . . . motive of credibility . . . .”\textsuperscript{66} I will henceforth use this more familiar
expression. The motives of credibility evince the fact of revelation; that is, they are
certain signs of the divine origin of revelation—and what is of divine origin ought to be
believed because God cannot deceive.\textsuperscript{67} Put differently, the motives of credibility indicate
\emph{that} someone has spoken, and that that someone is God. To accept \emph{what} God has spoken
is to make the assent of faith; this is an act that the constitution will move on to discuss
shortly. One marker of the transition from the motives of credibility to the assent of faith
is the intervention of the will, which is not necessarily required in the case of the former,
but always required in the case of the latter.\textsuperscript{68}

Second, passage 3B identifies miracles and prophecies as special examples of
motives of credibility, but not the only examples. In a later passage, the constitution

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[65] \textit{DB} 1790, \textit{DS} 3009.
\item[66] \textit{DB} 1794, \textit{DS} 3013.
\item[67] Smith, 12. The \textit{Dictionary of Fundamental Theology} offers a different view. It reads, “Far from wishing
to . . . demonstrate the \emph{fact} of revelation, these signs are presented by the council as elements that can
guarantee the \emph{credibility} of that which comes to be expounded; therefore they are given as contents that,
while they come to be known by reason according to its own laws, yet are equally fitted to be believed and
accepted through an act of the will.” \textit{Dictionary of Fundamental Theology}, s.v. “Credibility.” Italics in the
original. As Dulles observes, “If the fact of revelation could be stringently demonstrated, it is difficult to
see how the assent of faith would be free and supernatural.” Avery Dulles, \textit{The Assurance of Things Hoped
\item[68] Smith clarifies, “If the preambles are accepted—as they often are—on human testimony, then the
function of the will is the same as in every act of faith, whether human or divine.” Smith, 19n2.
\end{enumerate}
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declares that “. . . the Church itself . . . is a very great and perpetual motive of credibility . . .”

Third, in describing the motives of credibility as “most certain signs . . . suited to the intelligence of all,” the constitution counters Bautain and Günther’s mutual claim that such external proofs cannot convince the unbeliever, and Günther’s specific claim that they cannot reassure the believer. Recall that Bautain and Günther propose the alternative of internal proofs via *Vernunft*. Passage 3B does indeed acknowledge the “internal aids of the Holy Spirit,” the infused light that enables one to discern what is from God, but it emphasizes God’s will that these internal aids “be joined” by external proofs.

One canon pertaining to passage 3B anathematizes those who say “. . . that divine revelation cannot be made credible by external signs, and for this reason men ought to be moved to faith by the internal experience alone of each one, or by private inspiration . . .” The first part of this canon pertains to both Bautain and Günther. The latter part of the canon pertains to Bautain, for on the grounds that the motives of credibility are ineffective against non-believers, he endorses the alternative of *évidence intuitive*. It is worth noting the similarly here between Bautain and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-

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69 DB 1794, DS 3013.
70 This echoes Aquinas, who writes, “The believer has sufficient motive for believing, for he is moved by the authority of Divine teaching confirmed by miracles, and, what is more, by the inward instinct of the Divine invitation: hence he does not believe lightly.” Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2:1187 [II-II, 2, 9]. Avery Dulles writes, “For St. Thomas . . . the praeambula fidei . . . are not necessary preconditions of the judgment of credibility.” Avery Dulles, *A History of Apologetics*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 120n82.
71 DB 1812, DS 3033. Dulles clarifies, “The Council . . . does not teach that every believer needs to rely on these external signs for his or her faith to be reasonable. A given believer, it would seem, might be satisfied with internal criteria such as the wonderful correspondence of the Christian message with one’s own aspirations and presumptions. Although Vatican I particularly emphasized the arguments from prophecy and miracle, it did not deny that valid conclusions may be drawn from the inherent features of the Christian message judged in the light of the believer’s moral and religious sense.” He continues, “In speaking of the inner assistance of grace and the external arguments of credibility, Vatican I did not settle the question whether the latter are fully convincing without the former.” Dulles, *The Assurance of Things Hoped For*, 210-211.
Another canon pertaining to passage 3B anathematizes those who say “. . . that miracles can never be known with certitude, and that the divine origin of the Christian religion cannot be correctly proved by them . . . .” The latter part of this canon pertains to both Bautain and Günther.

The third key passage in chapter three reads,

(3C) Moreover, although the assent of faith is by no means a blind movement of the intellect, nevertheless, no one can “assent to the preaching of the Gospel,” as he must to attain salvation, “without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who gives to all a sweetness in consenting to and believing in truth (Council of Orange).”

This passage twice quotes a canon from the Second Council of Orange, held in 529.75

The first part of the passage implies that the motives of credibility dissolve the view that the assent of faith is a blind movement of the intellect. The metaphor of blindness helps to reiterate the importance of the involvement of the will and the intellect in faith, for without the latter, one could rightfully claim that the more blind faith is, the greater it is.76

The second part of the passage implies that even the direct observation of a miracle

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72 As Dulles explains, “As one who subscribes to the Kantian critique of speculative reason, Schleiermacher has no intention of trying to demonstrate either the existence of God or the fact of revelation. In his great dogmatic synthesis, The Christian Faith, he attacks the arguments from miracle and prophecy. These signs, he maintains, are not sufficiently probative to bring conviction, although they may suffice to corroborate the faith of those who already accept Christ as Redeemer.” Dulles, A History of Apologetics, 212. The relationship between Schleiermacher and Jacobi is worth mentioning here. As Richard Crouter observes, “Schleiermacher appears to admire Jacobi and even sees himself as the proper heir (though also the reviser) of a ‘philosophy of faith.’” He continues, “Schleiermacher had hoped to dedicate the first edition of his dogmatics, The Christian Faith, to Jacobi, but dropped the idea when Jacobi died in 1819.” Richard Crouter, Friedrich Schleiermacher: Between Enlightenment and Romanticism (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 77.

73 DB 1813, DS 3034.

74 DB 1791, DS 3010.

75 The canon reads, “If anyone affirms that without the illumination and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who gives to all sweetness in consenting to and believing in the truth, through the strength of nature he can think anything good which pertains to the salvation of eternal life, as he should, or choose, or consent to salvation, that is to the evangelical proclamation, he is deceived by the heretical spirit, not understanding the voice of God speaking in the Gospel: ‘Without me you can do nothing;’ and that of the Apostle: ‘Not that we are fit to think everything by ourselves as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is, from God.’” DB 180, DS 377.

76 Encyclopedia of Theology: The Concise Sacramentum Mundi, s.vv. “Faith and Knowledge.”
would not suffice to elicit the assent of faith, for that assent requires the intervention of God’s grace. This is what the council means in speaking of a “motive” of credibility; it is a help to the intellect in the assent of faith, but it does not necessitate the assent of faith.

The fourth and final key passage in chapter three reads,

(3D) Further, by divine and Catholic faith, all those things must be believed which are contained in the written word of God and in tradition, and those which are proposed by the Church, either in a solemn pronouncement or in her ordinary and universal teaching power, [are] to be believed as divinely revealed.77

I need to make three observations about this passage. First, the reference to written books and unwritten traditions in passage 2D recurs here, but with the addition of things “proposed by the Church, either in a solemn pronouncement or in her ordinary and universal teaching power.” Second, a crucial difference between the form of this passage in the fourth schema and the constitution itself is that the former does not include the phrase “as divinely revealed.” Third, the constitution once again employs the phrase “by . . . faith,” which aligns with fides qua creditur, but this time adds the adjective “Catholic.”

2.4 Key Passages in Chapter Four and its Respective Canons

Chapter four of Dei Filius is entitled “Faith and Reason.” The first key passage in chapter four reads,

(4A) By enduring agreement the Catholic Church has held and holds that there is a twofold order of knowledge, distinct not only in principle but also in object: in principle, indeed, because we know in one way by natural reason, in another by divine faith; in object, however, because, in addition to things to which natural reason can attain, mysteries hidden in God are proposed to us for belief which, had they not been divinely revealed, could not become known.78

77 DB 1792, DS 3011. S4 reads, “Further, by divine and Catholic faith, all those things must be believed which are contained in the written word of God and in tradition, and those which are proposed by the Church, either in a solemn pronouncement or in her ordinary teaching power, [are] to be believed.” This passage does not appear in S3.
78 DB 1795, DS 3015.
Let me make two observations about this passage.

First, this passage describes both “natural reason” and “divine faith” as means by which we “know.” Of course, as preceding passages make clear, these two means of knowing have their differences. The type of knowing that occurs through natural reason satiates the intellect but is susceptible to error; the type of knowing that occurs through divine faith does not satiate the intellect but is free from error.

Second, in lieu of the phrase “mysteries hidden in God” in passage 4A, I will henceforth use more familiar phrase “mysteries of faith,” which I presume to be synonymous with it. Although the constitution itself does not name them, it is likely that the authors have three principal mysteries of faith in mind. Using the phraseology of ecclesial documents, they are “. . . the Most Blessed Trinity,” “. . . the Incarnation of the Lord,” and “. . . the supernatural elevation of man and his supernatural intercourse with God . . . .”

The second key passage in chapter four reads,

(4B) And, indeed, reason illustrated by faith, when it zealously, piously, and soberly seeks, attains with the help of God some understanding of the mysteries, and that a most profitable one, not only from the analogy of those things which it knows naturally, but also from the connection of the mysteries among themselves and with the last end of man; nevertheless, it is never capable of perceiving those mysteries in the way it does the truths which constitute its own proper object. For, divine mysteries by their nature exceed the created intellect so much that, even when handed down by revelation and accepted by faith, they nevertheless remain covered by the veil of faith itself, and wrapped in a certain mist, as it were, as long as in this mortal life, “we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:6).”

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79 I draw this list from New Catholic Encyclopedia, 2nd ed., s.v. “Mystery (In Theology).”
80 DB 1915, DS 3225.
81 DB 1669, DS 2851.
82 DB 1671, DS 2854.
83 DB 1796, DS 3016.
I must make two observations about this passage. First, this passage once again treats the substantially supernatural aspect of the mysteries of faith. In stating that reason is “never capable of perceiving those mysteries in the way it does the truths which constitute its own proper object,” the constitution reiterates its rejection in passage 3A of the view that the “intrinsic truth of the revealed things has been perceived by the natural light of reason . . . .” The mysteries “exceed the created intellect,” thus even after the assent of faith they remain “wrapped in a certain mist.”\(^\text{84}\) The metaphor of mist is not original to the constitution; it appears in Pope Pius IX’s 1862 brief, *Gravissimas Inter*.\(^\text{85}\) Recall that Günther denies the existence of the mist as part of his effort to make Christianity more appealing to the modern mind.

Second, passage 4B delineates three manners in which reason illustrated by faith can attain some understanding of the mysteries of faith.\(^\text{86}\) Although strongly condemning Günther’s view that the intrinsic truth of the mysteries of faith can be grasped, the constitution does not proceed to the other extreme of denying any grasp of intelligibility in them.\(^\text{87}\) The possibility of a partial understanding of the mysteries “from the analogy of those things which it knows naturally” opposes the effort of Bautain and Günther to insulate the content of *Vernunft* from *Verstand*. The contrast with Bautain and Günther is

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\(^{85}\) The relevant passage in *Gravissimas Inter* reads, “. . . [M]ysteries are revealed to us in Christ which transcend not only human philosophy but even the angelic natural intelligence, and which, although they are known through divine revelation and have been accepted by faith, nevertheless, remain still covered by the sacred veil of faith itself, and wrapped in an obscuring mist as long as we are absent from the Lord in this mortal life.” *DB* 1673, *DS* 2856.

\(^{86}\) For a brief discussion of these three manners, see Wicks, 18-19.

\(^{87}\) As Smith explains, “A mystery is incomprehensible, if you will, but it is not meaningless; it conveys a very definite meaning. The proposition that Jesus Christ is both God and man, that he is one person who has two natures, the human and the divine, is incomprehensible indeed; but it is not without meaning. It is full of meaning, so full that man with his finite mind will never exhaust it.” Smith, 7-8.
especially strong if one interprets the constitution as supporting the enterprise of conclusions theology.88

The third key passage in chapter four reads,

(4C) But, although faith is above reason, nevertheless, between faith and reason no true dissension can ever exist, since the same God, who reveals mysteries and infuses faith, has bestowed on the human soul the light of reason; moreover, God cannot deny Himself, nor ever contradict truth with truth. But, a vain appearance of such a contradiction arises chiefly from this, that either the dogmas of faith have not been understood and interpreted according to the mind of the Church, or deceitful opinions are considered as the determinations of reason. Therefore, “every assertion contrary to the truth illuminated by faith, we define to be altogether false (Lateran Council V).”89

I need to make two observations about this passage.

First, the constitution declares that a judgment made via the divinely-bestowed light of reason cannot truly contradict an assent made via the divinely-infused light of faith, for both types of light are from God. However, the appearance of contradiction can arise. In such a scenario, either what one considers to be the fruit of reason is actually the fruit of deceitful opinion, or the dogmas of faith are not being understood and interpreted according to the mind of the Church.” This seems to give equal consideration to the two possibilities, but passage 4C gives faith seniority in two places. The first

88 It is worth noting the ways in which opposition to conclusions theology adheres to something like the Vernunft-Verstand dichotomy of Bautain and Günther. “The main objection against theological conclusions is that no syllogism built on premises belonging to two different levels of knowledge (one to the level of reason, the other to the level of faith) is correct, because it violates one of the fundamental rules of logic, the rule that prescribes that the middle term must keep the same meaning in the two premises. One may take as an example the following argument: The word proceeds from the intellect. But the Son is the Word of the Father. Therefore the Word proceeds from the intellect of the Father. It is claimed, as regards this argument, that the conclusion is wrong, because the meaning of the middle term, word, is not the same in the major and in the minor premises: what one knows from reason about the word and the intellect is entirely different from what one knows from faith.” New Catholic Encyclopedia, 2nd ed., s.v. “Revelation, Theology of.”
89 DB 1797, DS 3017.
sentence, which draws from Pope Pius IX’s 1846 encyclical, *Qui Pluribus,*\(^9^0\) states that faith is “above” reason. The last sentence, which quotes the Fifth Lateran Council of 1512-1517, declares, “every assertion contrary to the truth illuminated by faith, we define to be altogether false.” The combination of these statements suggests that in a situation where a deliverance of reason contradicts a deliverance of faith, the Church automatically—so to speak—defines the deliverance of reason as deceitful opinion.

Second, Denys Turner highlights the initially perplexing fact that among those things which are contrary to the truth illuminated by faith is the claim that God cannot be known with certitude by the natural light of human reason from created things.\(^9^1\) In other words, even if Kant’s critique of natural knowledge of God came to rationally convince every Roman Catholic that one cannot acquire such knowledge, Roman Catholics would still be required to faithfully affirm that one can acquire such knowledge.\(^9^2\)

The fourth and final key passage in chapter four reads,

(4D) And, not only can faith and reason never be at variance with one another, but they also bring mutual help to each other, since right reasoning demonstrates the basis of faith and, illumined by its light, perfects the knowledge of divine things, while faith frees and protects reason from errors and provides it with manifold knowledge. Wherefore, the Church is so far from objecting to the culture of the human arts and sciences, that it aids and promotes this cultivation in many ways.\(^9^3\)

The most important declaration in this passage, at least for the purposes of this study, is that “right reasoning demonstrates the basis of faith.” Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange contends that the “basis” being referred to has three elements: the existence of God, His

\(^9^0\) The relevant passage in *Qui Pluribus* reads, “For, even if faith is above reason, nevertheless, no true dissension or disagreement can ever be found between them, since both have their origin from one and the same font of immutable, eternal truth, the excellent and great God . . . .” *DB* 1635, *DS* 2776.

\(^9^1\) Turner, 20. By way of speaking only of a possibility, the authors of the constitution carefully avoid making this truly bewildering claim: it is an article of faith that the existence of God is not an article of faith.

\(^9^2\) Turner, 22.

\(^9^3\) *DB* 1799, *DS* 3019.
veracity, and the fact of revelation.⁹⁴ These elements are better known as the preambles of faith.⁹⁵ As I mention above, the authors of the constitution employ the term demonstration here in a non-technical fashion; they are simply stating that right reasoning—that is, correcting reasoning—arrives at each element of the basis. Without a clear description of what correct reasoning is, one cannot take the phrase “right reasoning demonstrates the basis of faith” as countering Bautain and Günther. A similar situation holds with respect to the claim that right reasoning, when illumined by faith, “perfects the knowledge of divine things.” If it was clear that by “right reasoning” the authors mean sense-abstractive reasoning, then the passage could be taken as countering Bautain and Günther’s insulation of the content of Vernunft from Verstand, but it is not.

⁹⁵ Dulles, A History of Apologetics, 120n82. “Principally it [the term ‘preambles of faith’] means a number of metaphysical truths . . . which reason can establish and which revelation presupposes—not precisely in the sense that these natural truths must precede faith by a priority of time but in the sense that if they were denied the falsehood of revealed doctrines would logically follow, and that without them the mysteries of faith would lack internal credibility.” Encyclopedia of Theology: The Concise Sacramentum Mundi, s.v. “Faith.” Aquinas writes, “The existence of God and other like truths about God, which can be known by natural reason, are not articles of faith, but are preambles to the articles; for faith presupposes natural knowledge, even as grace presupposes nature, and perfection supposes something that can be perfected.” Aquinas, Summa Theologica, 1:12 [I, 2, 2].
Chapter 3

Bernard Lonergan on Human Knowing

In chapter one of this study I show that Jacobi’s epistemology heavily influences the way Bautain and Günther characterize faith, reason, and the relationship between them. In chapter two I show that several passages in *Dei Filius* constitute a response to their characterizations of faith, reason, and the relationship between them. In the present chapter I argue that the philosophical writings of Bernard Lonergan can refute Jacobi’s epistemology. By “can refute” I mean to acknowledge that Lonergan does not explicitly treat Jacobi in his writings.¹ A successful refutation of Jacobi’s epistemology severely undercuts Bautain and Günther’s characterizations of faith, reason, and the relationship between them, for Jacobi’s epistemology is at the heart of those characterizations.

I need to take a moment to connect the content of the present chapter to my concern in ensuing chapters. Philosophically refuting Jacobi, and by extension Bautain and Günther, at first appears to be something that Kleutgen would favour, for it accomplishes the *Schwerpunkt* enterprise. However, using Lonergan to refute Jacobi concomitantly introduces Lonergan’s own epistemology, and that epistemology undergirds Lonergan’s own characterization of faith, reason, and the relationship between them—a characterization that can be tested for compatibility with the constitution in the

same way that Bautain and Günther’s characterizations were in chapter two. I will carry out this test in chapters four and five.

I now return to laying out the plan of the present chapter. Recall that Jacobi, Bautain and Günther exalt *Vernunft* precisely because they *accept* Kant’s devaluation of *Verstand*. As such, it is one thing to examine (a) how Lonergan’s writings vindicate discursive reason (what they call *Verstand*) and another to examine (b) how his writings repudiate intuitive reason—both the unattainable intellectual intuition of *Verstand* in Kant and the attainable sense intuition of *Sinnlichkeit* and rational intuition of *Vernunft* in Jacobi. I structure the present chapter along these lines. In sections 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3, I show how Lonergan’s account of human knowing and his retortion argument for the irrefutability of that account vindicate discursive reason. In section 3.4, I show how Lonergan’s critique of knowing as taking a look repudiates intuitive reason. In sections 3.5 and 3.6, I show how Lonergan’s critique of knowing as taking a look refutes the intuitive-reason-based epistemologies of Kant and Jacobi.

I must make two points before proceeding. First, I presume continuity in the *epistemology* of the early and later Lonergan. Differences between the early and later Lonergan in other areas receive attention later in this study. Second, in the present chapter my concern is Lonergan’s stance on immanently generated knowledge; I detail Lonergan’s stance on testimony-mediated knowledge—that is, belief—in chapter five.

### 3.1 Human Knowing

Early in *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, Lonergan states that his aim is to “. . . assist the reader in effecting a personal appropriation of the concrete dynamic
structure immanent and recurrently operative in his own cognitional activities.” It is the
structure operative in human knowing that chiefly interests Lonergan, not the logical
principles that govern knowledge claims. A study of Lonergan’s account of human
knowing, then, must carefully identify the features of that structure.

The features of the structure immanent and recurrently operative in human
knowing become known, according to Lonergan, through a process of “… self-
objectification;” that is, through “… the subject’s advertence … both to his detached
and disinterested desire to know and to the immanent structure of its unfolding ….”
Lonergan contends that a thorough advertence of this sort will bring to light “… the
successive levels of consciousness.” He identifies three levels: empirical consciousness,
intellectual consciousness, and rational consciousness. For the sake of brevity, Lonergan
associates one emblematic cognitional operation with each level: experiencing,
understanding, and judging/deciding. In what follows, I review Lonergan’s elucidation
of these emblematic operations.

On the level of empirical consciousness the emblematic cognitional operation is
experiencing. Lonergan links two types of data with experiencing: the data of sense and
the data of consciousness. Describing the first type, he writes, “A datum of sense may be

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8 Lonergan lists the first three operations in this participle form in *Insight*, 757 and the fourth in *Insight*, 636.
defined as the content of an act of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling.”

Describing the second type, he writes, “. . . [T]he data of consciousness consist of acts of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching, perceiving, imagining, inquiring, understanding, formulating, reflecting, judging, and so forth.” Lonergan maintains that the data of sense and the data of consciousness are merely given. In other words, the intelligible is only potentially in these data.

Inquiry effects the transition from empirical consciousness to intellectual consciousness. It changes the mind from being in a state of passively experiencing data to actively wondering about them. At this point, inquiry manifests itself in “. . . questions for intelligence,” such as “. . . What? and Why? and How often?”

On the level of intellectual consciousness the emblematic cognitional operation is understanding. Lonergan subsumes a host of cognitional operations under the heading of understanding. The first operation is insight. Lonergan identifies two major types of insight; that which is of interest to this study is “. . . direct insight . . .” or “. . . direct understanding . . .” This type of insight answers a question for intelligence through a grasp of intelligibility in the data selected by inquiry. The second operation is conception.

In conception, “. . . insights . . . are expressed or formulated in concepts, suppositions,

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9 Lonergan, *Insight*, 96. He adds that “. . . an image is the content of an act of imagining . . .” and “. . . a percept is the content of an act of perceiving . . .” Lonergan, *Insight*, 667. Furthermore, he claims that it is the percept that is “. . . inquired about, understood, formulated, reflected on, grasped as unconditioned, and affirmed . . .” Lonergan, *Insight*, 349.
11 As Samuel Condic explains, “. . . [T]o say that sensation is ontologically neutral is not to say that it does not have an ontological status, but only that its ontological status is not revealed in an act of sensation considered apart from the rest of the cognitional process.” Samuel B. Condic, “How a priori Is Lonergan?” *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 79 (2005): 109. Italics in the original.
13 A further distinction regarding inquiry is as follows: “Inquiry of the classical type is an anticipation of the systematic. Inquiry of the statistical type is an anticipation of the nonsystematic.” Lonergan, *Insight*, 128.
definitions, postulates, hypotheses, theories . . . .”\textsuperscript{16} An insight can be expressed in a simple concept, such as “The king,” or in a complex concept, such as “The king is dead.” It is crucial to recognize that in the latter example, the “is” is merely the “is” of synthesis. One has a prospective judgment in mind, but as a conception it is “. . . simply an object of thought . . . ”\textsuperscript{17} The third and final operation is reflective understanding; it “. . . grasps the sufficiency of the evidence for a prospective judgment.”\textsuperscript{18} Lonergan clarifies, “To grasp evidence as sufficient for a prospective judgment is to grasp the prospective judgment as virtually unconditioned.”\textsuperscript{19} He clarifies once more, “. . . [A] prospective judgment will be virtually unconditioned if (1) it is the conditioned, (2) its conditions are known, and (3) the conditions are fulfilled.”\textsuperscript{20} Lonergan expresses this in the form of a syllogism.\textsuperscript{21} Put into traditional form, the syllogism runs as follows: \textsuperscript{22}

If A (conditions), then B (conditioned judgment, i.e. prospective judgment).

But A (fulfillment of conditions).

Therefore, B (virtually unconditioned judgment).

This comprises one of the two criteria of truth that Lonergan proposes. He writes, “The proximate criterion of truth is reflective grasp of the virtually unconditioned.”\textsuperscript{23} I will discuss the other criterion shortly. Before moving on I must note Lonergan’s distinction between the virtually unconditioned and the formally unconditioned. He writes, “The

\textsuperscript{16} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 278.
\textsuperscript{17} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 296.
\textsuperscript{18} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 304.
\textsuperscript{19} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 304.
\textsuperscript{20} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 305.
\textsuperscript{21} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 305-306.
\textsuperscript{22} This rendering of the syllogism draws from—but slightly revises—that found in Brian Cronin, \textit{Foundations of Philosophy: Lonergan’s Cognitional Theory and Epistemology} (Nairobi: Consolata Institute of Philosophy Press, 1999), 224-225.
\textsuperscript{23} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 573.
formally unconditioned, which has no conditions at all, stands outside the interlocked field of conditioning and conditioned terms; it is intrinsically absolute.24

On the level of rational consciousness the emblematic cognitional operation is judging. Here inquiry manifests itself in “. . . question[s] for reflection,” such as “. . . Is it so?”25 A judgment changes a conception from an object of thought into “. . . an object of affirmation . . . ”26 or an object of negation.27 It is important to note that it is an object of thought that one affirms or negates; a declarative sentence is an expression of such an affirmation or negation.28 Lonergan explains,

Before judgment is reached, the synthetic element is already present in knowing. All that judgment adds to the question for reflection is the yes or no, the ‘is’ or ‘is not.’ What is affirmed or denied may be a single proposition or the whole set of propositions constitutive of a hypothesis, for either may be regarded as conditioned, and either may be grasped as virtually unconditioned. Judgment, then, is not a synthesis of terms but the unconditioned positing of such a synthesis.29

Lonergan cautions that one must avoid the extremes of “. . . rash or excessively cautious judgments . . . ”30 To avoid such extremes, one should carefully consider the range of answers that can be given to a question for reflection.31 Lonergan’s fullest delineation of this range occurs in Understanding and Being. He remarks,

You do not have to say yes or no; you can say, ‘I don’t know.’ You do not have to say, ‘It certainly is so’; you can say, ‘It probably is so’ or ‘It possibly is so.’ All the alternatives relevant to human weakness, ignorance, and tardiness are

24 Lonergan, Insight, 402.
25 Lonergan, Insight, 304.
26 Lonergan, Insight, 695.
27 Lonergan, Insight, 457.
28 Lonergan explains, “Truth pertains to the judgment inasmuch as it proceeds from a grasp of the virtually unconditioned, inasmuch as it conforms to the being it affirms, and inasmuch as it demands an intrinsic intelligibility in being as a condition of the possibility of knowing. Expressions are instrumental. They are related to the truth of knowledge. Similarly, they are related to the moral truth of the will that communicates knowledge. But in themselves expressions are merely adequate or inadequate.” Lonergan, Insight, 580.
29 Lonergan, Insight, 390.
30 Lonergan, Insight, 404.
31 Lonergan, Insight, 297.
provided for, and it is your rationality that is involved in picking out the right one.\textsuperscript{32}

The answer one selects from this list depends upon one’s judgment as to whether the insight under consideration is vulnerable or invulnerable. Lonergan explains, “Insights are vulnerable when there are further questions to be asked on the same issue. . . . But when there are no further questions, the insight is invulnerable.”\textsuperscript{33} In the former scenario, “. . . judgments are obviously certain,” but in the latter scenario, “. . . judgments are at best probable.”\textsuperscript{34} Lonergan clarifies the latter type: “. . . probable judgments . . . are probably true in the sense that they approximate to a truth that as yet is not known.”\textsuperscript{35} Lonergan ties this distinction into the grasp of the virtually unconditioned. He writes, “. . . [T]he conditions for the prospective judgment are fulfilled when there are no further pertinent questions.”\textsuperscript{36} Lonergan concludes, “Within this context there follows the traditional definition of truth as the conformity or correspondence of the subject’s affirmations and negations to what is and is not.”\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{32} Bernard Lonergan, \textit{Understanding and Being: The Halifax Lectures on “Insight,”} 2nd ed., ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 113. Lonergan elaborates, “There are, then, degrees of certitude, and their ground lies behind the proximate criterion of the virtually unconditioned in the more obscure region of the remote criterion. Only if this obscure region were to become completely clarified, either in fact, or more radically as a matter of principle, would certitude reach the absolute of infallibility.” Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 575.

\textsuperscript{33} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 309.

\textsuperscript{34} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 325.

\textsuperscript{35} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 325. Lonergan adds, “This convergence, this increasing approximation, is what is meant by the familiar phrase ‘the advance of science.’” Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 328.

\textsuperscript{36} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 309. The phrase “no further pertinent questions” amounts to what contemporary epistemologists call a “. . . fourth condition . . . .” of knowledge, in response to the Gettier problem. For analysis of the fourth condition of knowledge, see Matthias Steup, \textit{An Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology} (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996), 5.

\textsuperscript{37} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 575. Hugo Meynell encapsulates Lonergan’s position this way: “. . . [T]here is, after all, a world of things and facts which exists prior to and independently of human conscious inquiry; this comes to be known . . . by the threefold process of attending to evidence, envisaging hypotheses, and accepting in each case the hypothesis which best fits the evidence. The upshot of this is that the traditional correspondence theory of truth, once suitable qualifications have been made, turns out to be correct after all . . . .” Hugo A. Meynell, \textit{Redirecting Philosophy: Reflections on the Nature of Knowledge from Plato to Lonergan} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 186.
The structure immanent and recurrently operative in human knowing is now fully in view, but I have yet to discuss the force that drives it. Lonergan writes, “. . . [A]t the root of cognitional process there is a cool, detached, disinterested desire to know, and its range is unrestricted.”38 Let me separately unpack what Lonergan means by cool, detached, and disinterested, and by unrestricted.

By cool, detached, and disinterested, Lonergan means at least three things. First, he means that the desire to know is opposed to the interference of bias.39 This comprises the other criterion of truth that Lonergan proposes. He writes, “The remote criterion is the proper unfolding of the detached and disinterested desire to know.”40 Second, he means that the desire to know is “. . . opposed to the inhibitions of cognitional process that arise from other human desires and drives.”41 I will expound on these desires and drives when I examine Lonergan’s critique of knowing as taking a look. Third, he means that the desire to know reaches beyond the subject to what is.42 As Lonergan puts it in a later writing, “. . . [W]hen we say that something is, we mean that its reality does not depend upon our cognitional activity.”43

Lonergan’s claim that the desire to know is unrestricted in its range is better understood when one considers the restricted range of sight. In Understanding and Being,

38 Lonergan, Insight, 376.
39 Lonergan identifies four types of bias: dramatic, individual, group, and general. Lonergan, Insight, 214-231 and 244-267.
40 Lonergan, Insight, 573.
41 Lonergan, Insight, 404.
42 As Joseph Fitzpatrick explains, “. . . [R]eality, in Lonergan’s critical realism, exists independently of the knower. The fact that conditions independent of the subject have to be met before judgment can be made validly indicates that there is an impersonal, detachable quality about what is affirmed in judgment—it is independent of the subject who affirms it. Since what is known is not relative to the subject, is not something that simply appears to him or seems to him or appeals to him, knowing is a self-transcending activity, and what is known is potentially public and can become a shared possession.” Joseph Fitzpatrick, Philosophical Encounters: Lonergan and the Analytic Tradition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 47.
Lonergan writes, “Sight has no cognizance of sound, but there are sounds; therefore, the
type of sight is a limited object.”44 By contrast, the desire to know “. . . unrestrictedly
intends a correspondingly unrestricted objective named being, or the all, or everything
about everything, or the concrete universe.”45 Here one can see why it is unacceptable to
adopt a theory of truth based on either pragmatism46 or “. . . the absence of internal
contradiction . . . .”47 These theories restrict the range of the desire to know. Only a
mediated correspondence theory of truth will suffice—a correspondence mediated by
direct understanding, reflective understanding, and judgment. One acquires knowledge of
being only in a judgment, and yet being is something that one unrestrictedly intends. For
this reason, Lonergan speaks of the “. . . notion of being,” that is, “. . . the all-inclusive
heuristic anticipation issuing from an unrestricted desire to know.”48 He claims that one
can use the notion of being to hypothesize about the structure of proportionate being. He
writes, “. . . [A]s the known is reached only through knowing, structural features of the
one are bound to be reflected in the other.”49 Corresponding to cognitional experiencing,
understanding, and judging he postulates metaphysical potency, form, and act.50

Lonergan is fully aware of the incessant distortion that the notion of being undergoes.51

44 Lonergan, Understanding and Being, 146-147.
45 Lonergan, Insight, 380. To those who object that they do not have a desire to know everything about
everything, Lonergan asks, “. . . [H]ow do they know that they do not already know everything about
everything?” Lonergan, Insight, 375.
46 Lonergan, Insight, 664.
47 Lonergan, Insight, 694.
48 Lonergan, Insight, 447.
49 Lonergan, Insight, 138.
50 Lonergan, Insight, 457.
51 Lonergan writes, “. . . [T]hough there is a latent metaphysics common to all minds, there also is common
a variable interference with the proper functioning of the pure desire to know, and consequently there also
is common a distortion of the latent metaphysics. So it is that the philosopha perennis is flanked by no less
perennial counterphilosophies. But as the detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know is a constant,
so too are the principles that interfere with its unfolding.” Lonergan, Insight, 760.
I have been reviewing Lonergan’s account of human knowing as found in *Insight*. Let me take a moment to list some key points of continuity between *Insight* and *Method in Theology* on the topic of human knowing. First, Lonergan has the same aim: “... making explicit the basic normative pattern of the recurrent and related operations of human cognitional process ...” In *Method in Theology*, he carries this out in the context of a transcendental method. He explains, “... [I]n the procedures of the human mind we shall discern a transcendental method, that is, a basic pattern of operations employed in every cognitional enterprise.” Second, Lonergan posits the same set of operations within intentional consciousness. Third, he continues to encourage self-objectification, observing that transcendental method is “... a matter of heightening one’s consciousness by objectifying it ...” Fourth, he maintains that what is true is independent of the mind and socially communicable. Fifth, he continues to associate

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54 The development is that what was formerly a component in the subdivision of the third level, namely rational self-consciousness, now subsists as a distinct level of its own. Lonergan explains, “There is the empirical level on which we sense, perceive, imagine, feel, speak, move. There is an intellectual level on which we inquire, come to understand, express what we have understood, work out the presuppositions and implications of our expression. There is the rational level on which we reflect, marshal the evidence, pass judgment on the truth or falsity, certainty or probability, of a statement. There is the responsible level on which we are concerned with ourselves, our own operations, our goals, and so deliberate about possible courses of action, evaluate them, decide, and carry out our decisions.” Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 9. Italics in the original.
55 Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 14. It is important to note that Lonergan’s invitation is not simply to objectify whatever operations happen to be taking place at any given moment, but to notice the “... normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results.” Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 4.
56 “... [R]eflection and judgment reach an absolute: through them we acknowledge what really is so, what is independent of us and our thinking.” Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 35. “... [W]hat is true is of itself not private but public, not something to be confined to the mind that grasps it, but something independent of that mind and so in a sense detachable and communicable.” Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 44.
objectivity with the subject’s fidelity to the desire to know, although here it receives a
new expression: “Genuine objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity.”

3.2 A Concrete Example

As a concrete example of Lonergan’s account of human knowing, I want to inspect the dynamics involved in the television game show, Liars Club. Four contestants sit at a panel on one side of the set; four celebrities sit at a panel on the other side. A peculiar item is given to the celebrities; for instance, a motorized propeller with backpack-like arm straps. Each celebrity gives a different account of what the item is. The contestants, who can only look at the item from a distance, must ultimately place a bet on the one celebrity they judge to be telling the truth.

As the first celebrity tells a story about the item and points to its various features so as to substantiate the story, the contestants are collecting data of sense. At some point during the story, the celebrity supplies an answer to the question, “What is it?” For instance, the celebrity states that the motorized propeller with backpack-like arm straps is a device that hang-gliders wear to help them steer as they fly. In the mind of the contestant, this answer is only a prospective judgment—an object of thought. The proposition, “The item is a hang-glider’s backpack propeller,” sits in the contestant’s consciousness, not yet affirmed or negated. Three more possible answers to the question, “What is it?” are still to come.

Once all four of the celebrities have supplied their stories, the contestants must review the data of sense that they have collected and determine which prospective

57 Lonergan, Method in Theology, 292.
58 The details that I provide here pertain to the 1976-1979 run of the show. For background information, see Encyclopedia of TV Game Shows, 3rd ed., s.vv. “Liars Club.”
judgment receives the most corroboration from those data. I should clarify that the
contestants do not make a judgment about the credibility of each celebrity; who is lying
and who is telling the truth is determined by the producers. In fact, the contestants must
block out the fact that they are on a set with celebrities; in keeping with the remote
criterion of truth, they must not let their emotional reactions towards the celebrities affect
their judgment.

Each contestant must now execute an act of reflective understanding; that is, he or
she must grasp the evidence as sufficient for one of the four prospective judgments. Once
this occurs, the contestant is in a position to make a judgment; he or she converts an
object of thought into an object of affirmation or negation by answering the question, “Is
it so?” For instance, “The item is a hang-glider’s backpack propeller—It is so.” Or, “The
item is a wind generator for movie sets—It is not so.” All of this takes place in the
contestant’s mind before he or she expresses it through a declarative sentence.

Before the contestants announce who they judge to be telling the truth, each must
wager a portion of the money that is given to them at the beginning of the game. On the
rare occasion that the contestant is familiar with the item from real life, his or her insight
is invulnerable; he or she can wager a large amount of money based on the assessment,
“It certainly is so.” Ordinarily, however, contestants possess a vulnerable insight, for
there are further questions that could be asked about the item. Such contestants work with
the assessment, “It probably is so,” and bet according to their degree of confidence.

In some cases, there is a commercial break before the truth is revealed. That
viewers stay tuned during the commercial break evinces their dissatisfaction with the
conditioned. Viewers have the promise not of money, like the contestants, but of the
fulfillment of the conditions for one of the prospective judgments. In the context of this game show, grasping a prospective judgment as virtually unconditioned—the proximate criterion of truth—occurs partly via one’s trust in the producers, for one assumes that they are being honest when they reveal which celebrity has not been lying.

Once the truthful celebrity is revealed, the contestants’ money totals are adjusted accordingly. The celebrities then move on to another item. At the end of the show, the contestant with the greatest amount of money wins. Generally speaking, the winner is the contestant who judges most closely in accord with the evidence and who exercises the most prudence in affixing a degree of certitude to his or her judgments.

Much weightier concrete examples of Lonergan’s account of human knowing are available,59 but Liars Club is effective precisely insofar as it illustrates the elements of his account at work in something as commonplace as a television game show.

3.3 Retortion and the Foundations of Knowledge

Lonergan maintains that his account of the structure immanent and recurrently operative in human knowing “. . . is not subject to radical revision.”60 He explains,

The only manner in which this basic theorem could be modified would be to modify its factual supposition that knowing consists in experiencing, understanding, and judging; and it has been argued that that fact is not open to revision in any concrete meaning of the term ‘revision.’ For any human reviser would appeal to experience, understanding, and judgment . . . .61

60 Lonergan, Insight, 366.
61 Lonergan, Insight, 757.
Here Lonergan employs a device sometimes referred to as retortion. Retortion has a long history of use in Western philosophy. Ancient and medieval philosophers use retortion to show that first principles cannot be negated. Lonergan uses retortion to show that the structure immanent and recurrently operative in human knowing cannot be negated. Lonergan’s specific use of retortion effects a change in the locus of cognitional truth and error. Where ancient and medieval philosophers would point out that one’s reasoning has violated the principle of noncontradiction, Lonergan would point out that one’s reasoning has violated “... the nature of intelligence as such.” He explains,

... [T]he shift from an ideal in terms of logic to an ideal in terms of method involves a shift not only in the ideal of scientific endeavor but also in the ideal of philosophic inquiry. As long as one’s ideal is in terms of logic, then one’s first philosophy will be, like Aristotle’s, a metaphysic. For logic operates on propositions, and it is metaphysical propositions that are presupposed by all other propositions. But method orders cognitional operations, and there are cognitional operations that are prepropositional, preverbal, prejudgmental, preconceptual; to these prior operations all propositions, including metaphysical propositions, reduce; and so from the viewpoint of method, as opposed to the viewpoint of logic, priority passes from metaphysics to cognitional theory.

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62 As W. Norris Clarke observes, “This method was occasionally practiced by the ancients and medievals, in particular by Aristotle and St. Thomas in defending the principle of contradiction against would-be deniers. But the generalization of this method, especially the linking it up with the notion of a form of life, has come into clearer focus in our own day, through the work of Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and other existential phenomenologists, and in particular by the school of Transcendental Thomism, initiated by Joseph Maréchal in the 1930s and followed up by Rahner, Coreth, Lonergan, Donceel, etc.” W. Norris Clarke, “What is Most and Least Relevant in the Metaphysics of St. Thomas Today?” *International Philosophical Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (1974): 415.

63 “Examples of typical, traditional formulations are: For the law of identity, A is A; everything is what it is; every subject is its own predicate. For the law of contradiction, A is not not-A; judgments contradictorily opposed to each other cannot both be true. For the law of excluded middle, everything is either A or not-A; judgments opposed as contradictories cannot both be false, nor can they admit the truth of a third or middle judgment, but one or the other must be true, and the truth of the one follows from the falsehood of the other.” *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2nd ed., s.vv. “Laws of Thought.”

64 Lonergan’s version of retortion is not without criticism. See, for example, John Finnis, “Self-referential (or Performative) Inconsistency: Its Significance for Truth,” *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 78 (2004): 19.


This is not to say that Lonergan leaves no role for logic to play in human knowing. He writes, “. . . [A] transition from logic to method . . . does not, by any means, involve an elimination of logic: for it is still logic that cares for the clarity of terms, the coherence of propositions, the rigor of inferences.” Logic, then, serves a supplementary role; the cognitional operations are primary.

Lonergan’s contention that no proposition is basic raises the question as to whether or not he is a foundationalist. Ulf Jonsson notes that Lonergan himself does not invoke the term foundationalism because it only came into regular use at the end of his writing career. Jonsson finds Lonergan to be a proponent of broad foundationalism, but not of proper foundationalism. Jonsson conceives of broad foundationalism as a view that grounds knowledge claims on some sort of firm foundation. I contend that Lonergan fits this category, for he describes the operations that he outlines as “. . . a fixed base, an invariant pattern . . .” Proper foundationalism, as Jonsson conceives of it, is a view that grounds knowledge claims on some set of basic propositional beliefs. I contend that Lonergan is not a proponent of this view, for he insists that all propositions reduce to cognitional operations. This raises the further question as to which contemporary theory

69 Jonsson, 335-337.
70 Lonergan, Insight, 22. Italics in the original.
71 Kai Nielson elaborates, “Foundationalism is a philosophical account which seeks to isolate, by some kind of philosophical method, a set of basic beliefs which are foundational to the rest of the things that we may justifiably claim to know or reasonably believe. Classical foundationalism holds that the only properly basic beliefs are those that are self-evident, incorrigible reports of experience or are evident to the senses. On such an account, other beliefs can be rationally held only if they are supported either deductively or inductively by such properly basic beliefs.” Kai Nielsen, “Philosophy as Critical Theory,” in Through Time and Culture: Introductory Readings in Philosophy, ed. A. Pablo Iannone (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994), 468. Cited in Hugo Meynell, “Faith, Foundationalism, and Nicholas Wolterstorff,” in Rational Faith: Catholic Responses to Reformed Epistemology, ed. Linda Zagzebski (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), 96.
of justification Lonergan would subscribe to. Jonsson finds Lonergan’s stance to be similar to reliabilism because it associates justification with belief-forming processes rather than beliefs themselves. I see this exemplified in Lonergan’s statement, “The ideal of knowledge is myself as intelligent, as asking questions, as requiring intelligible answers.” However, Jonsson correctly notes two ways in which reliabilism differs from Lonergan’s stance: its mechanical account of cognition and its epistemic externalism.

The present chapter, up until this point, sketches Lonergan’s account of the operations involved in knowing and his claim that his account is not subject to radical revision. There remains the culminating step of affirming that these operations—and only these operations—constitute one as a knower. Lonergan refers to this as the “. . . self-affirmation of the knower . . . .” Just as he does with the virtually unconditioned, Lonergan expresses the steps involved in the self-affirmation of the knower syllogistically. Put into traditional form, the syllogism runs as follows:

If I am a conscious unity identity whole who experiences, understands and judges (conditions), then I am a knower (conditioned, i.e. prospective judgment).

But I am a conscious unity identity whole who experiences, understands and judges (fulfillment of conditions).

Therefore, I am a knower (virtually unconditioned judgment).

72 Jonsson, 311.
73 Lonergan, Understanding and Being, 14.
74 Jonsson, 311-312. Steup explains the difference between internalism and externalism. He writes, “What makes an account of justification internalist is that it imposes a certain condition on those factors that determine whether a belief is justified. Such factors—let’s call them ‘J-factors’—can be beliefs, experiences, or epistemic standards. The condition in question requires J-factors to be internal to the subject’s mind or, to put it differently, accessible on reflection. What makes an account of justification externalist, in contrast, is that no such condition is imposed. According to externalism, J-factors need not be internal to the subject’s mind or accessible on reflection.” Steup, 84-85. Italics in the original. See also Paul A. Macdonald, Jr., Knowledge and the Transcendent: An Inquiry into the Mind’s Relationship to God (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 119-121.
75 Lonergan, Insight, 343.
76 Lonergan, Insight, 343-344.
77 This rendering of the syllogism draws from—but slightly revises—that found in Cronin, 326.
If Lonergan’s account of the structure operative in human knowing is correct—which, on the basis of a retortion argument, he contends it must be—one cannot deny the antecedent in the major premise. That this verges on the obvious can lead one to view the syllogism as redundant. Any apparent redundancy disappears, however, when one considers not only the many alternative antecedents that have been hypothetically posed and affirmed by philosophers, but the fact that some antecedents have been posed only to be denied. Examples of philosophers who affirm the antecedents that they pose are Plato (428/427-347 BC), Epicurus (341-270 BC), and Georg Hegel (1770-1831). Examples of philosophers who deny the antecedents that they pose are David Hume (1711-1776), Kant, and Karl Marx (1818-1883). Again, the peculiarity of those in the latter group is that they stipulate or intimate the operations that would make one a knower while denying that such operations ever occur. Lonergan finds it incongruous that these thinkers presume their critical analyses to be excepted from the restrictions that they place on knowledge.78 Lonergan frequently invokes Hume as an example. He writes, “Hume said that our knowledge consists in sense impressions which are put together by habit. Is that theory of knowledge a matter of sense impressions put together by habit?”79

### 3.4 The Critique of Knowing as Taking a Look

In “Insight: Revisted,” Lonergan identifies the two forces that brought about his critique of knowing as taking a look. These forces were operative during his study of

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78 In a similar vein, Romanus Cessario writes, “If it is said that the mind’s contact with reality is prohibited by a priori categories of the mind, or by its cultural prejudices, or by its historical limitations, or most radically by the damage done to the human person as a result of original sin, one must point out the following: One’s knowledge must extend beyond any given boundary as a condition for identifying it as such. How is it known that there are such categories, prejudices, and limits?” Romanus Cessario, “Duplex Ordo Cognitionis,” in *Reason and the Reasons of Faith*, edited by Paul J. Griffiths and Reinhard Hütter (New York: T & T Clark International, 2005), 330-331. Italics in the original.

79 Lonergan, *Understanding and Being*, 34.
theology in Rome between 1933 and 1938. First, from the philosophy of Joseph Maréchal (1878-1944) he “. . . learnt to speak of human knowledge as not intuitive but discursive with the decisive component in judgment.”80 Second, from a course on Christ with Bernard Leemining (1893-1971) he became “. . . convinced . . . that there could not be a hypostatic union without a real distinction between essence and existence.”81 What follows is a chronological survey of several texts in which Lonergan develops his critique of knowing as taking a look.

A first locus of interest is Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas, a book containing articles that originally appeared in Theological Studies between 1946 and 1949. At one juncture, Lonergan contrasts the accounts of knowing that Plato and Aristotle advance. He writes, “For the Platonist, knowing is primarily a confrontation; it supposes the duality of knower and known . . . .”82 He continues, “For the Aristotelian, on the other hand, confrontation is secondary. Primarily and essentially, knowing is perfection, act, identity.”83 In Lonergan’s view, the mind’s capacity to become all things defuses the promotion of a duality of knower and known.84

A second locus of interest is Lonergan’s notes for a 1951 course entitled “Intelligence and Reality.”85 The word “confrontation” reemerges here, this time as an “ism.” Lonergan describes confrontationalism this way: “Roughly: Knowing is or should

83 Lonergan, Verbum, 192.
85 The course took place at the Thomas More Institute, Montreal. The notes are available at the Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto.
be ‘taking a look.’ The look may be sensitive perception, or presentation of sense data, or some intellectual intuition."\textsuperscript{86} Here Lonergan clearly distinguishes between sensible and intellectual versions of knowing as taking a look. He goes on to list several historical illustrations of confrontationism, both movements and individuals. In terms of the latter, he lists Plato, Plotinus, Augustine, Avicenna, Scotus, Ockham, Nicolaus d’Autrecourt, Galileo, Descartes, Hobbes, Berkeley, Newton, Kant, Feuerbach, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche.\textsuperscript{87} Although it is only in passing, Lonergan makes a statement in connection with these thinkers that prefigures a major theme in his later work. He writes, “Confrontationism cannot accept radical intellectual conversion.”\textsuperscript{88}

A third locus of interest is \textit{Insight}.\textsuperscript{89} Lonergan contends that philosophers in the period between Scotus and Hegel are “. . . devoted to working out in a variety of manners the possibilities of the assumption that knowing consists in taking a look.”\textsuperscript{90} For Lonergan, this assumption is a fundamental obstacle to philosophical development. He writes, “A first step towards transcendence . . . is to reject the mistaken supposition that knowing consists in taking a look.”\textsuperscript{91}

The passage in which Lonergan supplies his most robust explication of the critique stands in chapter fourteen of \textit{Insight}. It reads,

. . . [T]he inevitable philosophic component immanent in the formulation of cognitional theory will be either a basic position or else a basic counterposition. It will be a basic position (1) if the real is the concrete universe of being and not a subdivision of the ‘already out there now’; (2) if the subject becomes known when it affirms itself intelligently and reasonably and so is not known yet in any prior ‘existential’ state; and (3) if objectivity is conceived as a consequence

\textsuperscript{86} Lonergan, Notes for the course, Intelligence and Reality, 19.
\textsuperscript{87} Lonergan, Notes for the course, Intelligence and Reality, 19-20.
\textsuperscript{88} Lonergan, Notes for the course, Intelligence and Reality, 20.
\textsuperscript{89} “Insight was written during the years 1949-1953. Parts of it were rewritten during 1954-1955, in response to the publisher’s critiques.” Editor’s note, \textit{Understanding and Being}, 4n2.
\textsuperscript{90} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 396.
\textsuperscript{91} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 658.
of intelligent inquiry and critical reflection, and not as a property of vital anticipation, extroversion, and satisfaction.

On the other hand, it will be a basic counterposition if it contradicts one or more of the basic positions.\(^92\)

Elements (1) and (3) in this passage are of exclusive interest in this paper. I want to stress that the error in element (3) leads to the error in element (1). In this sense, element (3) is fundamental. Let me take a moment to elaborate on it.

Element (3) is bound up with Lonergan’s demarcation of patterns of experience.\(^93\)

In the biological pattern of experience, which human beings and animals share, interest is limited to “... external conditions and opportunities.”\(^94\) An object is real to the extent that it satiates one’s biological needs. Such an object is a “... body,” an “... already out there now real.”\(^95\) By contrast, the intellectual pattern of experience, exclusive to human beings, opposes restrictions on its interests. In this pattern, “... the real is being; it is whatever is to be grasped intelligently and affirmed reasonably.”\(^96\) An object from the perspective of this pattern is not a body, but a “... thing ...”\(^97\)

Lonergan maintains that one cannot completely escape the biological pattern, thus the solution to the problem is not the elimination of that pattern. Rather, one must “...
acknowledge the reality of the various blends and mixtures of the patterns of human experience, and . . . grasp how these blends and mixtures generate confusion and error on the notions of reality, objectivity, and knowledge. Objectivity is conceived of as a matter of extroversion when an indiscriminate blending of the biological and intellectual patterns takes place. In relation to this, Lonergan encourages an awareness of two types of knowing: “. . . [T]he elementary type is constituted completely on the level of experience; neither questions for intelligence nor questions for reflection have any part in its genesis . . . .” By contrast, “. . . fully human knowing . . .” does pose such questions. The obligatory task is not the elimination of elementary knowing, for it has proven indispensable in the survival of human beings and animals. Elementary knowing correctly perceives the interference of other interests, including intellectual ones, as obstacles to attaining its goals. Lonergan concludes, “. . . [T]he difficulty lies, not in either type of knowing by itself, but in the confusion that arises when one shifts unconsciously from one type to the other.”

Elementary knowing perceives any mediation between subject and object as a threat to objectivity since the object or body is already considered to be real. When the mediation of intellect is introduced into this schema, certitude requires “. . . some super-

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98 Lonergan, Insight, 607. Lonergan elaborates, “The intellectual pattern of experience is supposed and expressed by our account of self-affirmation, of being, and of objectivity. But no man is born in that pattern; no one reaches it easily; no one remains in it permanently; and when some other pattern is dominant, then the self of our self-affirmation seems quite different from one’s actual self, the universe of being seems as unreal as Plato’s noetic heaven, and objectivity spontaneously becomes a matter of meeting persons and dealing with things that are ‘really out there.’” Lonergan, Insight, 410-411.

99 Lonergan, Insight, 277.

100 Lonergan, Insight, 277.

101 Lonergan, Insight, 278.

102 Lonergan, Insight, 278.

103 Snell, 194-195.
look in which one can compare the object to be looked at and the object as seen . . .”\textsuperscript{104}

Both Plato and Descartes hold that such a super-look is attainable.\textsuperscript{105} Philosophers as diverse as Kant, Willard Quine (1908-2000), and Richard Rorty (1931-2007) correctly insist on the impossibility of such a super-look, but they mistakenly embrace pragmatic or coherence theories of truth in response to the impossibility.\textsuperscript{106} Lonergan contends that a mediated correspondence theory of truth defuses the problem. The judgment as culminating act is essential in such a theory. He writes, “On the counterposition, the real has to be known before one can make a judgment; it is known by an ocular or a fictitious intellectual look . . .”\textsuperscript{107}

Thus far Lonergan has only been treating the philosophic component that is immanent in the formulation of a cognitional theory. He goes on to expand the framework to cover any philosophic pronouncement. In doing so, he introduces two new terms which must not be confused with those found above. He writes,

\textbf{. . . [A]ny philosophic pronouncement on any epistemological, metaphysical, ethical, or theological issue will be named a position if it is coherent with the basic positions on the real, on knowing, and on objectivity; and it will be named a counterposition if it is coherent with one or more of the basic counterpositions.}\textsuperscript{108}

To summarize, a pronouncement that is consonant with \textit{all} three elements of the “basic position” is a “position.” A pronouncement that is inconsonant with \textit{any} of the three

\textsuperscript{104} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 658.
\textsuperscript{105} Snell, 38.
\textsuperscript{106} For example, Quine writes, “We can improve our conceptual scheme, bit by bit while continuing to depend on it for support; but we cannot detach ourselves from it and compare it objectively with an unconceptualized reality. Hence it is meaningless, I suggest, to inquire into the absolute correctness of a conceptual schema as a mirror of reality. Our standard for appraising basic changes of conceptual scheme must be, not a realistic standard of correspondence to reality, but a pragmatic standard.” Willard Van Orman Quine, “Identity, Ostension, and Hypostasis,” in \textit{From a Logical Point of View}, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963), 79.
\textsuperscript{107} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 513.
elements of the “basic position” is a “counterposition.” The relevance of this to Bautain and Günther is that by showing intuitive Vernunft to be a basic counterposition, it follows that the theological pronouncements methodically shaped by it are counterpositions.

A fourth locus of interest is “Cognitional Structure,” an article that originally appeared in 1964 in the journal Continuum. One passage is especially pertinent to this study. It reads,

The analogy of ocular vision reveals what intellectual activity must be like if it is objective; it must be like seeing. Even if introspection discovers no intellectual activity that resembles seeing, still some such activity really must exist; for if it did not, then our intellectual activity would be merely immanent, and idealism would be correct; but the conclusion is false, and therefore the premise must be false.109

This passage helps one to understand the motivation of philosophers who are both intellectual intuitionists and realists, including Jacobi, Bautain, and Günther. Lonergan goes on to state that it is in the context of the analogy of ocular vision that the “. . . problem of the bridge from ‘in here’ to ‘out there’ . . . .” emerges.110 For Lonergan, there is a correspondence not between in here and out there, but between a judgment and what is.

A fifth and final locus of interest is Method in Theology. Here the critique of knowing as taking a look appears within Lonergan’s discussion of the sources of pluralism.111 One source is the varying degree of “. . . intellectual conversion . . .” found in human subjects.112 Lonergan explains what he means by this term:

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111 Lonergan identifies three sources of pluralism: subjects having linguistic, social, and cultural differences (which gives rise to different brands of common sense); subjects having undifferentiated or partly differentiated consciousnesses; and subjects having different degrees of intellectual, moral and religious conversion. Lonergan, Method in Theology, 326.
112 Lonergan, Method in Theology, 238.
Intellectual conversion is a radical clarification and, consequently, the elimination of an exceedingly stubborn and misleading myth concerning reality, objectivity, and human knowledge. The myth is that knowing is like looking, that objectivity is seeing what is there to be seen and not seeing what is not there, and that the real is what is out there now to be looked at.\footnote{Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, 238.}

Note that the three elements of the myth correspond to the three contradictories of the basic position in \textit{Insight}. This evinces a continuity in the structure of Lonergan’s critique of knowing as taking a look. Nonetheless, the critique does undergo developments in \textit{Method in Theology}. The cause of the myth is not the indiscriminate blending of the biological and intellectual patterns of experience, but the confusion of what constitutes objectivity in “. . . the world of immediacy . . . .” with what constitutes objectivity in “. . . the world mediated by meaning . . . .”\footnote{Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, 265.} Lonergan elaborates, “In the world of immediacy the necessary and sufficient condition of objectivity is to be a successfully functioning animal. But in the world mediated by meaning objectivity has three components. There is the experiential objectivity constituted by the givenness of the data of sense and the data of consciousness. There is the normative objectivity constituted by the exigences of intelligence and reasonableness. There is the absolute objectivity that results from combining the results of experiential and normative objectivity so that through experiential objectivity conditions are fulfilled while through normative objectivity conditions are linked to what they condition. The combination, then, yields a conditioned with its conditions fulfilled and that, in knowledge, is a fact and, in reality, it is a contingent being or event.” \footnote{Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, 263.} Lonergan adapts the language of \textit{Insight} to fit his new emphasis on conversion. He writes, “Positions are statements compatible with intellectual, moral, and religious conversion . . . . Counter-positions are statements incompatible with intellectual, or moral, or religious conversion . . . .”\footnote{Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, 249.} One can easily miss the two occurrences of “or” in this statement.
3.5 Knowing as Taking a Look in Kant

Later in this section, I will examine Lonergan’s own remarks about Kant.¹¹⁶ Before doing that, it will be helpful to frame Kant’s epistemological stance in the syllogistic expression of the self-affirmation of the knower:

If I am a conscious unity identity whole who intellectually intuits, then I am a knower.

But I am not a conscious unity identity whole who intellectually intuits.

Therefore, I am not a knower.

As an epistemological anti-realist, Kant commits the error of denying the antecedent that he hypothetically poses. Moreover, he puts forth an unmediated correspondence theory of truth as an ideal, but because it is unattainable, he affirms a coherence theory of truth. Without an intellectual intuition—what Lonergan refers to as a fictitious intellectual look—one cannot bridge the gap between “in here” and “out there.” In the language of *Insight*, Kant’s unattainable ideal of intellectual intuition is a basic counterposition because it is immanent in the formulation of his cognitional theory and it contradicts element (3) of the basic position. In the language of *Method in Theology*, it is a counter-position because it is incompatible with intellectual conversion.

Despite the unknowability of what is “out there,” namely “things in themselves,” Kant maintains that they are genuinely real and causally responsible for one’s sensible intuitions. In the language of *Insight*, Kant’s philosophic pronouncement on things in

themselves is a counterposition because it contradicts element (1) of the basic position. In
the language of *Method in Theology*, it is a counter-position because it is incompatible
with intellectual conversion.

I now turn to Lonergan’s own statements about Kant, specifically those that occur
in *Insight*. Two of them are of interest for the purposes of this study.

The first statement of interest reads, “Kant rightly saw that animal knowing is not
human knowing; but he failed to see what human knowing is.”¹¹⁷ Here Lonergan credits
Kant for moving beyond animal knowing, a term that is synonymous with elementary
knowing. Kant achieves this in part by acknowledging that the data of sense must be
conceptualized by the understanding if they are to mean anything: “. . . intuitions without
concepts are blind.”¹¹⁸ Kant also acknowledges the role of judgment in knowing.¹¹⁹ In
short, Kant is to be commended for his emphasis on the discursivity of human
knowing,¹²⁰ but faulted for positing intellectual intuition as a necessary condition for
genuine knowledge acquisition.

The second statement of interest reads, “. . . [A] more thorough and precise
account of human knowing enables us to eliminate the rigidity of the Kantian a priori, to
uncover a grasp of the unconditioned as essential to judgment . . . .”¹²¹ The first part of
this statement points out the contrast between the restricted dynamism of consciousness
found in Kant’s cognitional theory and the unrestricted dynamism found in Lonergan’s.

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¹¹⁸ Kant, 93 [B75].
¹¹⁹ For instance, Kant writes, “. . . [T]he only use which the understanding can make of . . . concepts is to
judge by means of them.” Kant, 105 [B93].
¹²⁰ As Lorne Falkenstein observes, “Kant adhered to the doctrine of the discursivity of the human intellect
more stringently than did his predecessors—for him, the human intellect is exclusively discursive; in
principle, it is incapable of an intuitive cognition. This doctrine was a constant of his Critical Philosophy . . . .”
Lorne Falkenstein, *Kant’s Intuitionism: A Commentary on the Transcendental Aesthetic* (Toronto:
University of Toronto Press, 2004), 43.
Whereas Kant envisages consciousness as limited by the forms of sensibility and the categories of the understanding, Lonergan envisages it as guided by the completely open notion of being.\(^{122}\) In the second part of the statement, Lonergan hints at a similarity between his virtually unconditioned and Kant’s unconditioned.\(^{123}\) Lonergan expounds on this in a passage that only appears in the first edition of *Insight*. He writes,

So far was Kant from positing the unconditioned as the immediate ground of every judgment, that he described it as an Ideal of Pure Reason, an ideal that becomes operative in our knowing, not prior to judgment and as a condition of judgment, but subsequently inasmuch as each judgment rests on an infinite regress of prosyllogisms. As the reader familiar with Kant will note, our assertion of a demand for the unconditioned as a prior ground for judgment not merely implies that the Kantian analytic is seriously incomplete but also involves in utter ruin the Kantian dialectic. For the dialectic has but a single premise, namely, that since the demand for the unconditioned is not a necessary ground for judgment, therefore, it is a transcendental illusion; in other words, since the unconditioned is not constitutive of knowing an object in the sense of making a judgment, therefore, it has a purely regulative function in our knowing. On our showing, the unconditioned is prior and constitutive; to affirm a fact is to affirm an unconditioned.\(^{124}\)

I must make three points about this passage. First, for Lonergan, both the ground of a true judgment of fact and the reality that is manifested by a true judgment of fact are virtually unconditioned. To claim that the virtually unconditioned can be grasped is to give it a

\(^{122}\) Lonergan elaborates, “... Kant deduced or postulated an original synthetic unity of apperception as the a priori condition of the ‘I think’ accompanying all cognitional acts. On the other hand, Kantian theory has no room for a consciousness of the generative principles of the categories; the categories may be inferred from the judgments in which they occur; but it is impossible to reach behind the categories to their source. It is precisely this aspect of Kantian thought that gives the categories their inflexibility and their irreducible mysteriousness.” Lonergan, *Insight*, 365.

\(^{123}\) Lonergan is relating the virtually unconditioned to Kant’s unconditioned *qua* totality of conditions, not *qua* absolutely unconditioned, which Kant sometimes includes in his definition of the unconditioned. See Kant 391-392 [B445].

\(^{124}\) Editorial note in *Insight*, 796. It is worth noting Kant’s own use of the term prosyllogism: “... [R]eason, in its logical employment, seeks to discover the universal condition of its judgment (the conclusion), and the syllogism is itself nothing but a judgment made by means of the subsumption of its condition under a universal rule (the major premiss). Now since this rule is itself subject to the same requirement of reason, and the condition of the condition must therefore be sought (by means of a prosyllogism) whenever practicable, obviously the principle peculiar to reason in general, in its logical employment, is: — to find for the conditioned knowledge obtained through the understanding the unconditioned whereby its unity is brought to completion.” Kant, 306 [B364]. Bracketed terms in the original.
constitutive than regulative role, even if the grasp is incremental. Second, Lonergan shows how questions for reflection, such as “Is it so?” indicate one’s dissatisfaction with the prospective (i.e. conditioned) judgment that one considers on the level of intellectual consciousness. In this sense, “. . . [A]ll judgments are responses to the demand for the unconditioned.” Third, for Lonergan, human knowing need not be identical to divine knowing in order to be genuine.

Giovanni Sala contends that the metaphysical presupposition that restricts Kant from allowing the demand for the unconditioned to be met is his conception of the universe as one system. On this matter, Lonergan writes,

. . . [A]s we have seen, the criterion of judgment is the virtually unconditioned. Each judgment is a limited commitment. So far from pronouncing on the universe, it is content to affirm some single conditioned that has a finite number of conditions which in fact are fulfilled. No doubt, were the universe simply a vast explanatory system, knowledge of the conditions of any conditioned would be identical with knowledge of the universe. But in fact the universe is not simply explanatory system . . . .

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126 Lonergan, Insight, 380. Lonergan elaborates, “To affirm actual being, more than a plausible tale is wanted; for experience, though it is not as such the source of the concept of being—else, as Kant held, the real would have to be confined to the field of possible experience—still it is the condition of the transition from the affirmation of the possibility to the affirmation of the actuality of being.” Lonergan, Verbum, 57.
127 Summarizing Aquinas’s stance on ontological arguments, Lonergan writes, “. . . [T]hough being is naturally known, though our intellects are created participations of uncreated light, still there is no valid ontological argument for the existence of God. God’s knowledge of being is a priori; he is the act of understanding that grasps everything about everything; but we advance towards knowledge by asking the explanatory question, Quid sit? and the factual question, An sit?” Lonergan, Insight, 394. Compare with Aquinas, who writes, “. . . God’s knowledge . . . is not ratiocinative but solely intellectual.” Thomas Aquinas, Summa Contra Gentiles, trans. Anton C. Pegis, et al. (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1955), I, 57, 8. Compare also with Kant, who writes, “. . . [W]e are careful to remove the conditions of time and space from his [God’s] intuition—for all his knowledge must be intuition, and not thought, which always involves limitations.” Kant, 89-90 [B70]. Italics in the original.
129 Lonergan, Insight, 369.
I truncate the passage above because I lack the space to examine the many reasons Lonergan supplies for that last claim. What is important for the purposes of this study is that for Lonergan, one need not know the whole to be considered a genuine knower.130

3.6 Knowing as Taking a Look in Jacobi

As with Kant above, I will begin by framing Jacobi’s epistemological stance in the syllogistic expression of the self-affirmation of the knower:

If I am a conscious unity identity whole who sensibly and rationally intuits, then I am a knower.

But I am a conscious unity identity whole who sensibly and rationally intuits.

Therefore, I am a knower.

As an epistemological realist, Jacobi does not commit the error of denying the antecedent he hypothetically posits. Nor does he commit the related error of adopting a coherence theory of truth; he adopts a correspondence theory of truth. The problem, from the standpoint of Lonergan’s critique, is that it is an unmediated correspondence theory of truth. Jacobi renounces Kant’s gap between “in here” and “out there,” but he does so on the basis of one’s capacity for a sensible and rational intuition. In the language of Insight, Jacobi’s attainable ideal of sensible and rational intuition is a basic counterposition because it is immanent in the formulation of his cognitional theory and it contradicts element (3) of the basic position. In the language of Method in Theology, it is a counter-position because it is incompatible with intellectual conversion. It is helpful here to recall Lonergan’s claim that elementary knowing perceives any mediation between subject and

object, any intervening cognitional process or content, as a threat to objectivity. This is clearly operative in Jacobi’s epistemology insofar as he portrays Verstand as degrading the veracity of any sensible or rational intuition that it operates on.

As with Kant, a mistake with respect to element (3) inevitably leads to some mistake with respect to element (1). In the language of Insight, Jacobi’s philosophic pronouncement on the extra-mental existence of things is a counterposition because it contradicts element (1) of the basic position. In the language of Method in Theology, it is a counter-position because it is incompatible with intellectual conversion.

Before bringing the present chapter to a close, I must reiterate that I take Lonergan’s refutation of Jacobi’s epistemology to extend to Bautain and Günther. Lonergan nullifies the epistemology at the heart of their characterizations of faith, reason, and the relationship between them, rendering the characterizations themselves untenable.
Chapter 4

Bernard Lonergan on Natural Knowledge of God

In chapter one of this study I show that Jacobi’s epistemology heavily influences the way Bautain and Günther characterize faith, reason, and the relationship between them. In chapter two I show that several of Bautain and Günther’s stances, including their stances on natural knowledge of God, are implicitly argued against in Dei Filius. In chapter three I show that Lonergan’s writings refute Jacobi’s epistemology. The refutation of Jacobi’s epistemology severely undercuts Bautain and Günther’s stances in general, including their stances on natural knowledge of God, for Jacobi’s epistemology is at the heart of those stances. However, the refutation of Jacobi’s epistemology also introduces Lonergan’s own epistemology, and that epistemology undergirds Lonergan’s own stance on natural knowledge of God. The fact that Lonergan refutes an epistemology underlying the views of two thinkers implicitly argued against in the constitution provides no guarantee that his own stance on natural knowledge of God will be compatible with the constitution. Testing the compatibility of Lonergan’s stance with the constitution is the task that occupies me in the present chapter. I argue that Lonergan’s stance is wholly compatible with the constitution.

My judgment that Lonergan’s stance on natural knowledge of God is wholly compatible with the constitution is not a personal endorsement of his stance. The purpose of my judgment is to show that Lonergan’s epistemology, despite differing from that of a chief author of the constitution (see section 4.1 below), nevertheless engenders a view of natural knowledge of God that is wholly compatible with the constitution.
4.1 Georges Van Riet and the Schwerpunkt Thesis


Van Riet divides the [Thomistic] philosophers into classes. First, there are those whose epistemology is fundamentally a matter of confrontation; and there are subdivisions under this heading. Secondly, there are those who hold an epistemology that is based upon understanding, comprehension, intelligence; and there are subdivisions here too. Finally, he has a category of epistemologies that are based upon judgment, and he divides them into two main classes: those that depend upon general judgments, and those that depend upon the act of judgment itself.

I will refrain from assessing how suitable Van Riet’s division is for differentiating Thomistic philosophers. I simply want to point out that each class in Van Riet’s typology is a *Schwerpunkt*. That is, each class contains an epistemological presupposition that shapes one’s characterization of faith, reason, and the relationship between them. Even the seemingly miniscule difference between the two sub-divisions of the third class can engender different stances on issues such as natural knowledge of God.

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3 Van Riet associates thinkers with each division. It is worth listing them here. I must note that correspondence between Lonergan’s synopsis of Van Riet’s typology and the typology itself is not unambiguous, hence what follows is my own speculation. In the first group: Father Gény, Msgr. Farges, Father de Tonquédec, Gilson, Count Domet de Vorges, Msgr. Noël, Father de Vries, Father Brunner, Father Picard, Msgr. Zamboni. In the second group: Balmès, Peillaube, Lepidi, Gardeil, Garrigou-Lagrange, Roland-Gosselin, Maritain, Jolivet, Verneaux. In the first part of the third group: Kleutgen, Rickaby, Mercier, Sentroul, Boyer, Romeyer. In the second part of the third group: Maréchal, Rousselot, Rabeau. Van Riet, 2:289-290.
To suggest, as I do above, that the philosophies of Franzelin, Kleutgen and every other nineteenth-century Thomist contain a *Schwerpunkt* has a significant implication: it removes the neutrality that they envisaged their philosophies to possess and legitimates subjecting them to the same kind of *Schwerpunkt*-analysis that Bautain and Günther received. To speak of Kleutgen’s *Schwerpunkt* is to widen the scope of the applicability of the original *Schwerpunkt* thesis in a way that its nineteenth-century Thomist promoters would not have contemplated. This loss of innocence, so to speak, is the inevitable result of decades of speculative and historical studies in Thomistic epistemology following the First Vatican Council. More specifically, it is the result of a serious engagement with Kant’s philosophy, an engagement that Kleutgen would find problematic given his confidence in what he calls *die philosophie der vorzeit* (the philosophy of former times). Insofar as Lonergan is a thinker who engages Kant, it is no great leap to suggest that his own *Schwerpunkt*, whatever it might be, differs in some measure from Kleutgen’s, whatever it might be.

It is the *bare fact* that Lonergan’s *Schwerpunkt* differs from Kleutgen’s that interests me in the present chapter. I will not speculate as to which of Van Riet’s classes Kleutgen and Lonergan belong to, if any, nor will I contemplate what their *Schwerpunkte*

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4 Alasdair MacIntyre sheds light into the reason why Kleutgen would not have contemplated this move. He writes, “It was a mark of the unusual philosophical ingenuity of Kleutgen that, having first misidentified Aquinas’s central positions with those of Suarez, thus opening up a kind of epistemological question for which there is no place within Aquinas’s own scheme of thought, he went on to supply an epistemological answer to that question by reading into texts in *De Veritate* an epistemological argument which is not in fact there. So by this creative multiplication of misinterpretations Aquinas was presented as the author of one more system confronting the questions of Cartesian and post-Cartesian epistemology, advancing, so Kleutgen contended, sounder answers than either Descartes or Kant.” Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 75.

might be. Instead, I want to examine the stance on natural knowledge of God that issues from Lonergan’s *Schwerpunkt*—a *Schwerpunkt* that differs from that of a chief author of the constitution. I argue that despite the fact of differing *Schwerpunkte*, Lonergan’s stance on natural knowledge of God is wholly compatible with the constitution.

I must note that Lonergan’s stance on natural knowledge of God—his account of how natural knowledge of God can be acquired—is continuous across his writing career, thus I need not separately consider the early and later Lonergan on the issue. In chapter five, when I investigate Lonergan’s treatment of natural knowledge of God in relation to the acts that lead to faith, I will need to separately consider the early and later Lonergan’s stances.

### 4.2 Natural Knowledge of God in *Insight*

Chapter nineteen of *Insight* is entitled “General Transcendent Knowledge.” At the outset of the chapter, Lonergan identifies strictly ocular models of knowing as an obstacle to arriving at general transcendent knowledge. He writes, “A first step towards transcendence . . . is to reject the mistaken supposition that knowing consists in taking a look.” It cannot be accidental, then, that when Lonergan mentions in passing that “. . . positivists and Kantians . . . are loud in their negations of the possibility of transcendent knowledge,” he happens to name two groups who embrace the mistaken supposition.

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6 For an analysis of Kleutgen that might help to situate him within Van Riet’s typology, see John Inglis, “Kleutgen and the Spheres of Philosophical Inquiry,” in *Spheres of Philosophical Inquiry and the Historiography of Medieval Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 62-104. That Kleutgen and Lonergan maintain different *Schwerpunkte* does not nullify the possibility of close affinities on some philosophical issues. As Inglis notes, Kleutgen is keenly aware of the fact that “. . . the epistemology of an individual has metaphysical consequences.” Inglis, 95.


Although he only intermittently refers to these groups in the course of chapter nineteen, their “negations” are most certainly in the back of Lonergan’s mind as he writes. Lonergan thus tailors his argument for the attainability of general transcendent knowledge in a way that meets the criticisms of positivists and Kantians. This becomes a more dominant concern eleven years later in “Natural Knowledge of God,” a text that I will examine shortly. The fact that Lonergan’s argument is tailored to meet the criticisms of Kantians legitimates comparing and contrasting him with Bautain and Günther, for they also argue for the attainability of general transcendent knowledge in the face of Kant.

Lonergan summarily describes the manner in which one can acquire general transcendent knowledge. He writes,

Knowledge of transcendent being involves both intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation. But before we can affirm reasonably, we must grasp intelligently; and before we can grasp transcendent being intelligently, we have to extrapolate from proportionate being.9

In stating that knowledge of transcendent being involves more than one cognitional operation, Lonergan makes an initial movement away from the approaches of Bautain and Günther. Later in the chapter, he writes, “The existence of God . . . is known as the conclusion to an argument . . . .”10 Not only, then, does it involve more than one cognitional operation—it involves more than one judgment. This further contests the approaches of Bautain and Günther. At this point, it is tempting to label Lonergan’s approach Verstand-like, but before one can do so, the entirety of his argument for the existence of God must be in view.

Lonergan begins with the question, “What . . . is being?”\textsuperscript{11} He considers several human vantage points from which one can pose the question, but finds each of them unable to arrive at an answer. He writes, “The pure notion of being raises all questions but answers none. The heuristic notion envisages all answers but determines none. Particular inquiries solve some questions but not all.”\textsuperscript{12} These dead-ends, so to speak, lead Lonergan to the following conclusion:

Only an unrestricted act of understanding can meet the issue. For being is completely universal and completely concrete; apart from it, there is nothing; and so knowledge of what being is cannot be had in anything less than an act of understanding everything about everything. Correlative to an unrestricted desire to understand, there may be posited either an indefinite process of development or an unrestricted act of understanding. But the content of developing understanding never is the idea of being, for as long as understanding is developing, there are further questions to be answered. Only the content of the unrestricted act of understanding can be the idea of being, for it is only on the supposition of an unrestricted act that everything about everything is understood.\textsuperscript{13}

Recall that the notion of being is “. . . the all-inclusive heuristic anticipation issuing from an unrestricted desire to know.”\textsuperscript{14} This all-inclusive heuristic anticipation is captured in the question, What is being? One cannot answer the question, but one knows the kind of act that is necessary to answer it and what the content of that act would be: the idea of being. On this basis, Lonergan writes, “We have extrapolated from the question, What is being? to the absolutely transcendent idea of being . . . ”\textsuperscript{15}

The idea of being—if it exists—marks the achievement of what the notion of being can at best strive for: understanding everything about everything. Yet the impossibility of an unrestricted act of understanding in the human mind does not cut one

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 665.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 666.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 666.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 447.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 666.
\end{itemize}
off from further inquiry into the matter in the way that Kant’s denial of intellectual
intuition to the human mind cuts one off from the real. Lonergan writes, “. . . [W]hile
man cannot enjoy an unrestricted act of understanding and so answer the question, What
is being? still he can determine a number of features of the answer . . . .”

Lonergan goes on to treat a number of technical issues revolving around
causality. I will prescind from these issues and simply report that Lonergan ultimately
identifies the idea of being with God. This establishes God as something conceivable
within human consciousness, but nothing more. Lonergan explains that his approach will
be to treat “. . . the notion of God . . .” before addressing “. . . whether this notion refers
to existent reality,” that is, before carrying out “. . . the affirmation of God.” This is in
keeping with his cognitional theory, for he will first consider the notion or concept of
God as an object of thought before making it an object of affirmation. Lonergan notes
that a lack of fidelity to the three elements of the basic position can corrupt both stages of
this approach. He writes, “It is by the positions that the notion of God is developed and
the affirmation of God is sustained, and it is by the counterpositions that the issues are
misconceived and confused.” This marks an early sense of the need for some type of
intellectual conversion on the part of the knower before he or she can understand and
affirm an argument for the existence of God.

Using only the notion of God, Lonergan enumerates a set of divine attributes: the
primary intelligible, the primary truth, the primary being, without any defect, the primary

17 For analysis, see Paul St. Amour, “On the Validity of Extrinsic Causality in Proofs for the Existence of
18 Lonergan, *Insight*, 680. Instead of emphasizing the absurdity of an infinite regress of causes, Lonergan
emphasizes the absurdity of an infinite regress of restricted acts of understanding.
20 Lonergan, *Insight*, 707. Furthermore, “The fourfold bias of the dramatic and practical subject of common
good, perfect loving, self-explanatory, unconditioned, necessary, one, simple, timeless, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, free, without change, creator, conserver, first agent, final cause, and personal. There are clear points of consonance between this enumeration and that given in chapter one of the constitution. The question pertinent to this study, then, is not about the attributes that Lonergan posits, but about the philosophical means by which he—and potentially any reader of Insight—affirms the existence of God. Once I complete my review of Lonergan’s argument, I will offer my assessment of whether or not the constitution permits his philosophical means.

Lonergan moves from treating God as an object of thought to treating God as an object of affirmation by way of an argument. He writes, “If the real is completely intelligible, God exists. But the real is completely intelligible. Therefore, God exists.” I will refrain from elaborating on the argument; works doing this are extant. What is notable here, given the interests of this study, is the fact that Lonergan affirms the existence of God with only “. . . the light of human intelligence and reasonableness . . .”

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21 Lonergan, Insight, 681-692. As Ulf Jonsson observes, the first six attributes are derived from the concept of an unrestricted act of understanding; the remainder are derived from the third attribute. Ulf Jonsson, Foundations for Knowing God: Bernard Lonergan’s Foundations for Knowledge of God and the Challenge from Antifoundationalism (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999), 157.

22 I will recapitulate the list that the constitution gives: omnipotent, eternal, immense, incomprehensible, infinite in intellect and will, and in every perfection; one, singular, altogether simple and unchangeable spiritual substance. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution concerning the Catholic Faith, in The Sources of Catholic Dogma, trans. Roy J. Deferrari from the 30th edition of Henry Denzinger’s Enchiridion Symbolorum (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1957), 443 [DB 1782, DS 3001]. Henceforth, I supply Denzinger-Bannwart and Denzinger-Schönmetzer numbers.


as his basis. Later in *Insight*, Lonergan paraphrases the constitution. He writes, “... [B]y the natural light of human reason man can know with certitude the existence of God ...”

Having affirmed the existence of God, Lonergan goes on to reject ontological arguments, including those that Anselm and Descartes advance. One can infer from this that Lonergan would also reject the idea of Being employed in Bautain’s defense of the existence of God and the idea of the Unconditioned employed in Günther’s defense of the existence of God. The question remains, however, as to what Lonergan’s assessment would be of arguments that proceed more—or at least more explicitly—on the side of the object. One wonders, for instance, how Lonergan would see his argument in relation to Aquinas’s five ways.

As it happens, Lonergan makes two illuminating statements about the five ways in chapter nineteen of *Insight*. First, he writes, “... [T]he five ways in which Aquinas proves the existence of God are so many particular cases of the general statement that the proportionate universe is incompletely intelligible and that complete intelligibility is demanded.” Second, he writes, “... [B]esides Aquinas’s five ways, there are as many other proofs of the existence of God as there are aspects of incomplete intelligibility in the universe of proportionate being.” These two statements illuminate what is central to Lonergan’s argument: the incapacity of proportionate being as such to satiate the mind’s demand for complete intelligibility. Alicia Jaramillo contends that Lonergan’s focus on

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25 In full, Lonergan writes, “... [O]ur first eighteen chapters were written solely in the light of human intelligence and reasonableness and without any presupposition of God’s existence, without any appeal to the authority of the church, and without any explicit deference to the genius of St. Thomas Aquinas.” Lonergan, *Insight*, 765.
this demand—something on the side of the subject—does not mark an abandonment of classical cosmological arguments.\textsuperscript{30}

I now return to the question of whether the constitution permits the philosophical means by which Lonergan—and potentially any reader of \textit{Insight}—affirms the existence of God. Even if by “created things” the authors of the constitution exclusively meant physical things outside of the subject, Lonergan’s means would still mesh with the constitution, for contact with the physical world is a necessary—albeit preliminary—component of his argument. Of course, in chapter two, I contend that the phrase “created things” includes both physical things outside of the subject and human consciousness. The constitution therefore fully permits Lonergan’s argument, including its heavy reliance on the subject’s desire to know.\textsuperscript{31}

Before turning to the next text of interest, I must examine one final passage from \textit{Insight}. This passage is especially pertinent to this study, for in it Lonergan expresses a familiarity with the issues that make up the original and revised forms of the \textit{Schwerpunkt} thesis. He writes,

\begin{quote}
For years, as he tells us, St. Augustine was unable to grasp that the real could be anything but a body. When with neo-Platonist aid he got beyond that view, his name for reality was \textit{veritas}; and for him truth was to be known, not by looking out, nor yet by looking within, but rather by looking above, where in an immutable light men consult and contemplate the eternal reasons of things. It is
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{30} Alicia Jaramillo, “The Necessity of Raising the Question of God: Aquinas and Lonergan on the Quest after Complete Intelligibility,” \textit{The Thomist} 71, no. 2 (2007): 248. As Lonergan explains elsewhere, “We have not moved from a limited case of act, from act limited by potency, to pure act. We have moved from insight as limited, to an unlimited act of understanding.” He continues, “. . . I think the two processes are equivalent; the same conclusions are reached, although they are reached in different ways.” Lonergan, \textit{Understanding and Being}, 240.

\textsuperscript{31} Fergus Kerr recollects the first time an approach such as Lonergan’s became viable for him. He writes, “It was a little shocking—a little audacious—when in 1958/9 our professor in the English Dominican study house, Cornelius Ernst, observed that we ourselves might be included among ‘the things that are made’—which would allow us to set up an argument from effects to cause by reflecting not just on change, causation, and so on, in the world, but rather on the nature and capacities of the rational animal.” Fergus Kerr, “Knowing God by Reason Alone: What Vatican I Never Said,” \textit{New Blackfriars} 91, no. 1033 (2010): 223.
disputed, of course, just how literally St. Augustine intended this inspection of the eternal to be understood. Aquinas insisted that the uncreated light grounds the truth of our judgments, not because we see that light, but because our intellects are created participations of it. But if St. Augustine’s meaning is doubtful, there is less doubt about a group of nineteenth-century Catholics known as ontologists, who believed that the only way to meet Kant’s claim that the unconditioned is, not a constitutive element in judgment, but a merely regulative ideal, was to issue under Augustinian auspices the counterclaim that the notion of being was an obscure intuition of God.32

Lonergan’s implicit rejection of ontologism in this passage helps to further pin down his stance on natural knowledge of God. Lonergan’s notion of being is not a notion of Being.33 Yet, as Desmond Connell contends, Lonergan’s notion of being secures the advantages of ontologism.34 Lonergan makes the unconditioned—or more precisely, the grasp of the unconditioned—a constitutive and not merely regulative element of human knowing, but in a non-intuitive and non-ontologistic way.

4.3 Natural Knowledge of God in “Natural Knowledge of God”

At the 1968 annual convention of the Catholic Theological Society of America, Lonergan delivered a lecture entitled “Natural Knowledge of God.” Lonergan begins, “By natural knowledge of God I shall understand the knowledge of God intended by the dogmatic constitution Dei Filius of the first Vatican Council.”35 He then reproduces the

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33 As William Hill puts it concisely in an encyclopedic entry, “. . . Lonergan allows that man can think about being before knowing it; the former bespeaking ‘notions’ of being and its transcendental properties but not the concepts realized in objective and explicit knowledge . . . The being in question throughout all of this is unlimited, unconditioned, ultimate-absolute being as the unrestricted horizon of the pure desire to know, not, however, the Absolute Being which the believer can come to recognize (in faith) as its ground. This is not ontologism because the being objectified in the affirmation is not God but finite being as it points to the divine.” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Thomism, Transcendental.”
relevant passage from the constitution and its respective canon.\textsuperscript{36} Lonergan states that he bases his interpretation of these parts of the constitution on a section of Hermann-Josef Pottmeyer’s \textit{Der Glaube vor dem Anspruch der Wissenschaft}.\textsuperscript{37} Central to Lonergan’s interpretation is an acknowledgment that the constitution deals only with the possibility of natural knowledge of God. He writes, “. . . Vatican I was not speaking of a \textit{quaestio facti} but of a \textit{quaestio iuris}, not of conditions of actuality but of conditions of possibility.”\textsuperscript{38} As evidence of this, Lonergan highlights two phrases that appear in the third schema, but not in the fourth, nor the constitution itself: “by a fallen human being” and “it is not wholly necessary that this doctrine regarding God be handed down.” For Lonergan, the removal of these passages evinces the fact that the constitution is dealing with human beings in the abstract, not in the concrete.

In the remainder of the text, Lonergan surveys and responds to seven “. . . difficulties perhaps commonly felt about the doctrine of natural knowledge of God.”\textsuperscript{39} It is important to note that the doctrine Lonergan refers to here is that which is set out in the constitution. Lonergan surveys difficulties, or better, objections, from both intra-ecclesial and extra-ecclesial perspectives. In what follows, I examine two of the objections that Lonergan surveys and responds to.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{36} For the sake of convenience, I will reproduce them here. “The same Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certitude by the natural light of human reason from created things; ‘for the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made (Romans 1:20)’. . .’ \textit{DB} 1785, \textit{DS} 3004. “If anyone shall have said that the one true God, our Creator and our Lord, cannot be known with certitude by those things which have been made, by the natural light of human reason: let him be anathema.” \textit{DB} 1806, \textit{DS} 3026.


\textsuperscript{38} Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 133.

\textsuperscript{39} Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 121.
\end{footnotesize}
A first objection is that many contemporary senses of the term “object” preclude God from being an object. God cannot be an object in the Kantian sense because for Kant “. . . our cognitional activity is restricted to a world of possible experience and that [is] a world not of metaphysical realities but of sensible phenomena.”\footnote{Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 122.} Nor can God be an object within “. . . atomism, positivism, or empiricism, for the only discourse considered meaningful is discourse that can be reduced to, or be verified in, or at least be falsifiable by sensible objects.”\footnote{Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 122.} Further still, God cannot be an object in the sense given the term by modern science. Modern science verifies hypotheses by returning to data, and as Lonergan concedes, “. . . there are no data on the divine. God is not among the data of sense and he is not among the data of human consciousness.”\footnote{Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 120.}

Lonergan responds that God can be an object if the term “object” is taken in the sense that accords with his epistemology: “. . . an object is what is intended in questioning and becomes known by answering questions.”\footnote{Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 121.} Lonergan admits that this approach does not dispense with the need for verification. He writes, “It [the need for verification] is a need disclosed to us by what Vatican I referred to as the natural light of human reason, by what I should name our power to ask and answer questions.”\footnote{Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 125.} Here Lonergan turns his attention to the source of the need for verification: the human mind itself. He writes, “. . . [T]his principle, the human mind itself, does not need verification for its validation.”\footnote{Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 125.} The human mind, then, is “. . . the unverifiable principle by which we proceed from knowledge of this world to knowledge of God.”\footnote{Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 126.} Lonergan explains, “. . .
If human knowing consists in asking and answering questions, if ever further questions arise, if the further questions are given honest answers then, as I have argued elsewhere at some length, we can and do arrive at knowledge of God. As a footnote indicates, the “elsewhere” he is referring to is chapter nineteen of *Insight*.

A second objection to the constitution’s declarations on natural knowledge of God is that such knowledge “. . . is not attained without moral judgments and existential decisions,” and that these acts “. . . do not occur without God’s grace.”

Lonergan’s response is that this objection is not applicable to the constitution, given the intent of its authors. He writes,

One misinterprets Vatican I if one fancies it is speaking, not about a *quaestio iuris*, but about a *quaestio facti*. The *quaestio iuris* is (1) whether there exists a valid argument for God’s existence and (2) whether the apprehension of that argument is an *actus supernaturalis quoad substantiam*. Natural knowledge of God is denied if one holds that there is no valid argument or if one holds that apprehending the argument is an intrinsically supernatural act. Natural knowledge of God is affirmed if one holds that there is a valid argument and if one holds that apprehending the argument is intrinsically natural.

That the early Lonergan falls into the latter category—those who affirm natural knowledge of God—is clear from chapter nineteen of *Insight*, where Lonergan supplies an argument for God’s existence solely on the basis of human intelligence and reasonableness. One wonders, however, where the later Lonergan stands on the *quaestio facti*. Lonergan notes that the *quaestio facti* concerns the “. . . conditions of someone

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48 Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 133.
49 Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 133.
50 I should note that the early Lonergan is not entirely unaware of the *quaestio facti*. Speaking of his proof for the existence of God in *Insight*, Lonergan writes, “. . . [T]hat proof is not some automatic process that results in a judgment, as taking an aspirin relieves a headache, or as turning on a switch sets the digital computer on its unerring way. All that can be set down in these pages is a set of signs. The signs can represent a relevant virtually unconditioned. But grasping it and making the consequent judgment is an immanent act of rational consciousness that each has to perform for himself and no one else can perform for him.” Lonergan, *Insight*, 695.
actually grasping a valid argument for God’s existence.”51 Given the wide range of
conditions, from one’s physical health to one’s sinful habits, a complete treatment of the
*quaestio facti* is nearly impossible. As Lonergan explains, “An adequate account would
include every entity that conditioned the actual occurrence.”52 From a purely practical
standpoint, then, it is understandable why the authors of the constitution do not attempt to
specify the conditions under which one acquires natural knowledge of God. Nevertheless,
the *quaestio facti* is of import, and Lonergan’s stance on the matter exhibits sympathy
with the objection that he is responding to. He writes, “I do not think that in this life
people arrive at natural knowledge of God without God’s grace, but what I do not doubt
is that the knowledge they so attain is natural.”53 The first part of this remark is
intriguing, for elsewhere in the text Lonergan insists that the God of the philosophers is
not necessarily distinct from the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.54 One can only
conclude that Lonergan sees Aristotle, for example, as arriving at natural knowledge of
God with the aid of God’s grace. Of course, the view that human beings can be aided by
God’s grace independent of contact with scriptural revelation is not without its critics.55

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51 Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 133.
52 Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 133.
striving to perform one’s cognitive operations (i.e. the operations of the first three levels of consciousness)
in a reasonable way is the fruit of a moral decision, and one’s moral striving is itself but an element in an
more comprehensive human self-transcendence towards the gift of God’s grace.” He concludes, “... [A]lthough
it is the case that a reasonable judgment on the validity of an argument for knowledge of God is
 apprehended by the natural light of reason, such a judgment de facto presupposes that the judging human
subject has made moral decisions sustained by the supernatural grace.” Jonsson, 190.
55 Lonergan is no doubt writing in the light of the Second Vatican Council and its declaration that God calls
everyone and helps everyone respond to that call, including those who have not had contact with scriptural
revelation. See Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium)* and
Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes) in Vatican Council II: The
Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, ed. Austin Flannery (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1988),
350-426 and 903-1001. For analysis, see Miikka Ruokanen, *The Catholic Doctrine of non-Christian
I must make one final point about the text under consideration. At the outset, Lonergan observes that in the constitution natural knowledge of God “. . . is not immediate but mediated, and it is mediated not by revelation but by creation. . . . Explicitly it is mediated by creatures . . . .”\(^{56}\) Given the predominance of the mind in the passages above, it is plain that Lonergan takes human beings who possess minds to be “creatures” by which mediated knowledge of God can be attained. As I have already asserted, the constitution permits this view.

### 4.4 Natural Knowledge of God in *Method in Theology*

I will now explore Lonergan’s treatment of natural knowledge of God in *Method in Theology*, particularly as it unfolds in the sections entitled “The Question of God” and “The Function of Systematics.”

The section, “The Question of God”\(^{57}\) rests in “Religion,” chapter four of *Method in Theology*. In this section, Lonergan seeks only to defend this claim: “The question of God . . . lies within man’s horizon.”\(^{58}\) Consequently, his approach resembles the first half of the chapter “General Transcendent Knowledge” in *Insight* and the first half of “Natural Knowledge of God”—the halves where Lonergan is defending the viability of the God question, not supplying answers. Lonergan explains the emergence of the question of God this way:

> It [the question of God] is not a matter of image or feeling, of concept or judgment. They pertain to answers. It is a question. It rises out of our conscious intentionality, out of the \textit{a priori} structured drive that promotes us from experiencing to the effort to understand, from understanding to the effort to judge

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\(^{56}\) Lonergan, “Natural Knowledge of God,” 118.


truly, from judging to the effort to choose rightly. In the measure that we advert to our own questioning and proceed to question it, there arises the question of God.\textsuperscript{59}

Lonergan acknowledges that the question of God manifests itself differently in different historical and cultural settings. Nevertheless, he finds the question itself to lie beneath the differences. He explains,

\ldots [H]owever much religious or irreligious answers differ, however much there differ the questions they explicitly raise, still at their root there is the same transcendental tendency of the human spirit that questions, that questions without restriction, that questions the significance of its own questioning, and so comes to the question of God.\textsuperscript{60}

It is important to note the discursivity involved in the emergence of the question of God.

It is not only a matter of noticing one’s unrestricted questioning, but also of posing questions about one’s unrestricted questioning.

I turn now to the section, “The Function of Systematics,”\textsuperscript{61} which appears in “Systematics,” chapter thirteen of \textit{Method in Theology}. Given the concerns of this study, it is intriguing that Lonergan’s very first remark in his effort to outline the function of systematic theology is a reference to \textit{Verstand}. Lonergan writes, “For Kant understanding (\textit{Verstand}) was the faculty of judgment.”\textsuperscript{62} Lonergan invokes the term \textit{Verstand} in order to make the point that without distinguishing between understanding and judgment, one is likely to misinterpret the meaning of the expression \textit{crede ut intelligas}. For Lonergan, \textit{intelligas} means understanding and nothing more; judgment is not involved in \textit{intelligas},

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\textsuperscript{59} Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, 103.
\textsuperscript{61} Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, 335-340.
\textsuperscript{62} Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, 335. Kant writes, “\ldots [W]e can reduce all acts of the understanding to judgments, and the \textit{understanding} may therefore be represented as a \textit{faculty of judgment}.” Kant, 106 [B94]. Italics in the original.
for judgment has already taken place in *crede*. I will not explore this claim further. I mention it only because it is the occasion for a remark that illumines Lonergan’s attitude towards the constitution. He writes, “Out of the Augustinian, Anselmian, Thomist tradition, despite an intervening heavy overlay of conceptualism, the first Vatican council retrieved the notion of understanding.” Lonergan affixes a footnote to the word conceptualism. It reads, “The key issue is whether concepts result from understanding or understanding results from concepts.” Lonergan’s reference to conceptualism is intriguing for two reasons. First, Kleutgen himself—a chief author of the constitution—is the recipient of the charge of conceptualism in the writings of some philosophers, such as Étienne Gilson (1884-1978). It is noteworthy, then, that Lonergan does not find conceptualism to be operative in at least one of the constitution’s key declarations: the possibility of some understanding of the mysteries of faith. Second, although Lonergan’s

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63 It is worth reproducing a passage from *Verbum* that sheds light on Lonergan’s rationale here. He writes, “St Augustine’s *Crede ut intelligas* no more means ‘Believe to be certain’ than it means ‘Believe to have an intellection’; it means ‘Believe that you may understand.’ When the Vatican Council affirms that reason illumined by faith and inquiring *pie, sedulo, sobrie* can attain some limited but most fruitful *intelligentia* of the mysteries of faith, *intelligentia* means not certitude, for by faith one already is certain, nor demonstration, for the mysteries cannot be demonstrated, nor intellection, for a mystery is not a universal, but rather obviously understanding.” Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 219. For analysis of Augustine’s position, see Robert E. Cushman, “Faith and Reason,” in *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, ed. Roy W. Battenhouse (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), 287-314.


emphasis here is on the overlay of conceptualism preceding the council, I must note that in other texts he speaks of its prevalence following the council.  

Lonergan’s explicit discussion of the constitution’s declarations on natural knowledge of God arises within his argument for “...an integration of natural with systematic theology.” A necessary condition of this integration is the abandonment of the view that objectivity results from escaping subjectivity. In congruence with his emphasis on the quaeestio facti in “Natural Knowledge of God,” Lonergan calls for a consideration of the subject not in the abstract, but in the concrete, where objectivity is bound up with intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. He is aware, however, of how easily one can see this move as contradicting the constitution. He writes,

It may be objected ... that this transition from the abstract to the concrete, from proof to conversion, does not square with the claim of the first Vatican council that through creatures God can be known with certainty by the natural light of human reason.

Lonergan’s response to this objection involves a reiteration of his contention in “Natural Knowledge of God” that the constitution treats only the quaeestio iuris. He writes,

In the first place, I would draw attention to the fact that the foregoing definition tacitly prescinds from the actual order in which we live. The third schema of Dei

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67 During a 1958 question and answer session, Lonergan remarks, “...[I]f you look up the type of Latin scholastic manual that was still current between 1926 and 1929, when I was studying philosophy, you’ll find an account of intellect that doesn’t at any stage have anything to say about understanding anything. You form concepts, and they’re little nuggets. And they’re functions of the thing; they’re not dependent upon any intelligently conscious process; they’re first; the first element of intellectual knowledge is the concept. Then you compare concepts, and they’re either contradictory, or necessarily related, or neither the one nor the other. Then you make judgments, and you make judgments in virtue of the sufficiency of the evidence. And what’s the evidence? Well, it’s your concept ...” Lonergan, *Understanding and Being*, 350.


69 Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 338. I supply Lonergan’s description of intellectual conversion in chapter three. His descriptions of the two other types of conversion are as follows: “Moral conversion changes the criterion of one’s decisions and choices from satisfactions to values. ... Religious conversion is being grasped by ultimate concern. It is other-worldly falling in love. It is total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, reservations. But it is such a surrender, not as an act, but as a dynamic state that is prior to and principle of subsequent acts.” Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 240.

Lonergan affixes a footnote to the phrase “pure nature”\textsuperscript{72} in which he refers to, among other texts, an article by David Coffey entitled “Natural Knowledge of God: Reflections on Romans 1:18-32.”\textsuperscript{73} The footnote is only a reference, thus one must personally inspect Coffey’s article to determine the way in which it supports Lonergan’s position.

According to Coffey, just as the constitution does not state that human beings do in fact know God from reason {	extit{alone}}, so too Paul does not state that Gentiles did in fact know God from reason {	extit{alone}}.\textsuperscript{74}

Lonergan goes on to spell out his ultimate position on the matter. He writes the following,

\textit{. . . [W]ith regard to the actual order in which we live, I should say that normally religious conversion precedes the effort to work out rigorous proofs for the existence of God. But I do not think it impossible that such proofs might be a factor facilitating religious conversion so that, by way of exception, certain knowledge of God’s existence should precede [religious conversion] . . .}.\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{71} Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, 338.


\textsuperscript{73} David M. Coffey, “Natural Knowledge of God: Reflections on Romans 1:18-32,” \textit{Theological Studies} 31, no. 4 (1970): 674-691. The other texts are Lonergan’s own piece, “Natural Knowledge of God,” and the same section of Pottmeyer’s \textit{Der Glaube vor dem Anspruch der Wissenschaft} that he refers to in that piece.

\textsuperscript{74} Coffey writes, “There [in Romans 1], where he [Paul] said that the Gentiles knew God, he was speaking of the distant past, when they knew Him as Adam did, before they committed the sin that led them into their present condition of ignorance. He does not say there that they ever knew Him from reason alone, but rather that when they knew Him by faith they knew Him by reason too, from His creation, and when by idolatry they lost their faith this creation remained as a permanent witness to the God against whom they sinned and were sinning.” Coffey, 682.

\textsuperscript{75} Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, 338.
In this passage, the later Lonergan defends the possibility of acquiring certain knowledge of God’s existence prior to religious conversion. Even though he now identifies it as the exception, it is still possible, thus he does not diverge from the constitution’s defence of knowledge of God through the natural light of reason. One might say that Lonergan’s argument for the existence of God in *Insight* remains a valid answer to the *quaestio iuris*.\(^{76}\)

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\(^{76}\) As Charles Hefling observes, “The problem with *Insight* is not chapter nineteen as it stands. It is that chapter nineteen stands where it stands, namely as a bridge between the earlier chapters, in which Lonergan consistently appeals to experience, and the theological method he sketches in chapter twenty and the epilogue, where religious experience is deliberately bracketed. In the fifteen years between this sketch and *Method in Theology*, Lonergan did change his mind. But it was not so drastic a change as it is sometimes made out to have been. Everything in chapter nineteen, read in the light of Lonergan’s later work, still holds good; only what it is good for is different. . . . In any case, it simply will not do to try to suppose that *Method* abandons the God of the philosophers for the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They are still, as in fact they were in *Insight*, one and the same God, a God who is to be loved with all one’s mind as well as all one’s heart.” Charles C. Hefling, Jr., “Philosophy, Theology, and God,” in *The Desires of the Human Heart: An Introduction to the Theology of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Vernon Gregson (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 121. Italics in the original.
Chapter 5

Bernard Lonergan on the Acts that Lead to Faith and Faith Itself

In the present chapter I argue that the early Lonergan’s stance on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself is wholly compatible with the declarations of Dei Filius, whereas the later Lonergan’s stance is narrowly compatible with them. There are two new points of emphasis in the later Lonergan’s work—points of emphasis that do not mark a revision of his epistemology, but are substantial enough to generate distinct stances on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself. I contend that the narrow compatibility of his later stance is due in part to the new points of emphasis. I detail the new points of emphasis in section 5.4.

In the present chapter, as in chapter four, my pronouncements on the compatibility of the early and later Lonergan’s stance with the constitution are not personal endorsements or repudiations. Once again, my interest lies in investigating the kind of stance on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself that Lonergan arrives at, given his epistemology—an epistemology which differs from that of a chief author of the constitution, namely Kleutgen.

Before turning to the acts that lead to faith and faith itself, I must review Lonergan’s account of belief in general—that is, his account of belief considered independent of religion. Lonergan’s account of belief in general factors into his stance on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself in the same measure as his account of knowledge. Separate sections for the early and later Lonergan’s account of belief in general are not necessary since his account remains essentially the same across his writing career.
5.1 Belief in General

In this section I examine those places in *Insight* and *Method in Theology* in which Lonergan communicates his notion of belief in general.

Before I focus on a specific section in chapter twenty of *Insight*, I want to reproduce two statements from elsewhere in the text—statements that help set the stage for my analysis of his stance on belief. In the first statement, Lonergan highlights a key difference between knowledge and belief. He writes, “Knowing is affirming what one correctly understands in one’s own experience. Belief is accepting what we are told by others on whom we reasonably rely.”¹ In the second statement, Lonergan notes a key similarity between knowledge and belief. He writes, “... [T]he object of belief is the same as the object of immanently generated knowledge ...”² What the object is is a matter that I will return to shortly; at present, I want to note a significant implication of the mere fact that they share an object. Recall that Lonergan envisages knowledge “... as not intuitive but discursive with the decisive component in judgment.”³ Recall further that by “discursive” he principally means the process of reflective understanding. Since for Lonergan knowledge and belief do not differ in object, it comes as no surprise that he envisages both knowing *and* believing as discursive—as involving reflective understanding.

I now turn my attention to “The Notion of Belief,”⁴ a section in “Special Transcendent Knowledge,” chapter twenty of *Insight*. Lonergan’s background concern in

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this section is made manifest in a statement at the outset. He writes, “. . . [A]mong the evils that afflict man, none is graver than the erroneous beliefs which at once distort his mind and make systematic the aberrations of his conduct.” For Lonergan, the solution to the problem of mistaken beliefs is not avoiding believing altogether. Some reliance on the reports of others is necessary, for if one were to start from scratch in every investigative enterprise, one would never advance very far. No scientist has the resources to repeat every experiment that his or her thinking presupposes. Since one cannot avoid believing, one must explore what beliefs are and how they arise. Lonergan carries out this task before offering a solution to the problem of mistaken beliefs. Outlining the “. . . typical process of true belief,” he writes,

Five stages are to be distinguished, namely, (1) preliminary judgments on the value of belief in general, on the reliability of the source for this belief, and on the accuracy of the communication from the source, (2) a reflective act of understanding that, in virtue of the preliminary judgments, grasps as virtually unconditioned the value of deciding to believe some particular proposition, (3) the consequent judgment of value, (4) the consequent decision of the will, and (5) the assent that is the act of believing.

In chapter three of this study I bracket the fourth level of intentional consciousness, promising to return to it later. This is the juncture at which it becomes relevant, for as stages (4) and (5) in the passage above make clear, an exposition of Lonergan’s stance on belief necessitates reference to the fourth level.

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7 Lonergan, *Insight*, 729. Lonergan elaborates on the second stage: “. . . [I]f the reflective act is to occur, there must be (1) a conditioned, (2) a link between the conditioned and its conditions, and (3) the fulfilment of the conditions. The conditioned in question is the value of deciding to believe a determinate proposition. The link between the conditions and the conditioned is that, if the proposition has been grasped as unconditioned in a manner that satisfies the criterion of truth, then there exists a value in deciding to believe the proposition. Finally, the conditions are fulfilled in the measure that one knows (1) that the proposition has been communicated accurately from its source, and (2) that the source uttered the proposition, uttered it as true, uttered it truthfully, and was not mistaken.” Lonergan, *Insight*, 731-732. Indentations omitted.
In due course, Lonergan returns to his focus: mistaken belief. Lonergan argues that mistaken beliefs arise from the same sources that mistaken knowledge arises from: biases and the three contradictories of the basic counterposition. In addition, he states that evil distorts both knowledge and beliefs. These various distorting influences do not lead Lonergan to “. . . attribute belief to the psychological depths or to desire or fear or to sentiment or to mere will.”

Lonergan goes on to indicate some of the similarities and differences between the act of believing—stage (5) in the typical process of true belief—and the act of judgment. He writes,

It [the act of believing] resembles the act of judgment in object and in mode, but it differs from it in motive and in origin. It resembles judgment in its object, for it affirms or denies a proposition to be true. It resembles judgment in its mode, for it is a rational utterance of a yes or no that may be pronounced with certitude or with probability. But while judgment is motivated by one’s own grasp of the unconditioned, the assent or dissent of belief is motivated by a decision to profit by a human collaboration in the pursuit of truth. And while judgment results with rational necessity from reflective grasp of the unconditioned, the assent or dissent of belief results with natural necessity from a free and responsible decision to believe.

Here Lonergan explains more fully the sense in which the object of belief is the same as the object of immanently generated knowledge. His contention that belief is motivated by a decision to profit from collaboration will reemerge in his account of faith itself in Insight.

Towards the end of the section under consideration, Lonergan supplies another reason as to why the solution to mistaken beliefs is not jettisoning all of one’s beliefs in favour of knowledge alone. He writes, “. . . [T]here are extraordinarily few items of

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8 Lonergan, Insight, 737.
9 Lonergan, Insight, 731.
immanently generated knowledge that are totally independent of beliefs.”¹⁰ Of course, as Lonergan acknowledges, “. . . ‘known to be true’ and ‘believed to be true’ are quite distinct,” thus “. . . one will be inviting fallacy if one ignores the distinction and speaks without qualification of what is ‘true.’”¹¹ Instead, Lonergan urges that one begin the project of eliminating mistaken beliefs by identifying at least one. In doing so, one sets in reverse the process that gave rise to one’s mistaken beliefs in the first place. He writes, “For the basic problem lies not in mistaken beliefs but in the mistaken believer.”¹²

I now turn to Method in Theology, specifically to “Beliefs,”¹³ a section in chapter two, “The Human Good.” It is crucial to observe the first footnote in this section. It reads, “I have treated the topic of belief more fully in Insight . . . .”¹⁴ This signals continuity in his stance on belief in general across his writing career.

Lonergan begins the section with a now-familiar emphasis: “. . . [I]mmanently generated knowledge is but a small fraction of what any civilized man considers himself to know.”¹⁵ He contends that human knowledge is not an individual possession, but a “. . . common fund . . . .” that one can draw from or contribute to.¹⁶ The quality of the common fund is only as good as the authenticity of those who contribute to it.

Lonergan goes on to outline five steps in the “. . . process of coming to believe.”¹⁷ Steps two through five closely correspond to the five stages in the “. . . typical process of true belief . . . .” in Insight. To paraphrase: the first step is the witness’s decision to report

¹¹ Lonergan, Insight, 739.
¹² Lonergan, Insight, 738.
¹³ Bernard Lonergan, Method in Theology, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 41-47.
¹⁴ Lonergan, Method, 41n15.
¹⁵ Lonergan, Method, 41.
¹⁶ Lonergan, Method, 43.
¹⁷ Lonergan, Method, 44-46.
something; the second step is a judgment about the value of believing in general; the third step is a judgment of value about the trustworthiness of a particular witness; the fourth step is the decision to believe; the fifth step is the act of believing.

5.2 Early Views on the Acts that Lead to Faith

To reconstruct the early Lonergan’s stance on the acts that lead to faith I will utilize “Analysis of Faith,”18 a set of notes for students in a 1951-1952 seminary course. Two difficulties present themselves when using a text such as this. First, as a set of notes, there are headings and points, not a coherent flow of exposition. Second, as notes for a course, one wonders whether they represent Lonergan’s own views or those that he was obliged to present by the seminary. I take them to represent his own views; clearly on display in the notes is Lonergan’s effort to expand the treatment of belief in general in *Insight* into the area of religious belief.19

Lonergan distinguishes two processes in his analysis of the acts that lead to faith: the logical process and the psychological process. The logical process comprises two syllogisms. They are as follows,

(a) Whatever God knows and truthfully reveals to humankind is to be believed by us. But this is something that God knows and truthfully reveals. Therefore this is to be believed by us. (b) If that which is to be believed by us exceeds the natural proportion of the human intellect, then we are in fact ordered and destined to a supernatural end. But that which is to be believed by us exceeds the natural proportion of the human intellect. Therefore we are in fact ordered and destined to a supernatural end.20

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Lonergan elaborates on these two syllogisms later in the text. His elaborations involve quotations from the 1846 encyclical *Qui Pluribus, Dei Filius*, and the 1950 encyclical *Humani Generis*. Not undermining the veracity and importance of the logical process, Lonergan states that he aims to show “. . . how gravely mistaken one would be who . . . would evaluate and judge the faith process solely on the basis of a logical analysis.”

Here Lonergan intimates that the psychological process is at least of equal importance to the logical process. Moreover, as Lonergan explains, “The logical process is an abstract representation of the psychological process.” Given Lonergan’s proclivity for the concrete, it is no surprise that he will invest more time unpacking the psychological process than the logical one.

The psychological process has two parts. On the one hand, there are four acts that “. . . remotely precede faith;” they are the four judgments by which one affirms the truth of the four premises in the two syllogisms above. These acts “. . . do not exceed the natural proportion of the human intellect,” but “. . . according to the different needs of individuals, [healing] grace is required to elicit . . . .” On the other hand, there are six acts that “. . . more immediately lead to faith.” For these acts, “. . . the absolutely supernatural graces of enlightenment and inspiration are required.” It is worth reproducing Lonergan’s description of these acts in full. He writes,

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First, the supernatural beginning of faith. It consists of a reflective act of understanding in which one grasps that there is sufficient evidence for reasonably eliciting [the] next five acts.

Second, a practical judgment on the credibility of the mysteries. This consists in affirming that one is in fact ordered and destined to a supernatural end and that therefore belief in the mysteries of faith is a good for that person.

Third, a practical judgment on the credendity of the mysteries. By this judgment one affirms that the whole of revelation, the mysteries included, ought to be believed.

Fourth, willing the end. In this act one wills the supernatural end to which one is destined, and intends to pursue it.

Fifth, willing the means. This is the devout inclination to believe. One acknowledges one’s obligation to believe, and commands an assent of faith.

Sixth, the assent of faith itself elicited in the intellect and freely commanded by the will.29

Something must be said regarding the first, second, third, and sixth acts. Regarding the first act, Lonergan, referring to the constitution, states that faith is not “. . . blind . . . ”30 precisely because of this initial act of reflective understanding.31 Regarding the second act, the absence of a reference to the preambles of faith here does not imply that Lonergan rules them out. Instead, he is focusing on the very structure of religious believing, captured in the declaration in the constitution that God “. . . has ordained man for a supernatural end, to participation, namely, in the divine goods which altogether surpass the understanding of the human mind.”32 There are sporadic references to the motives of credibility elsewhere in “Analysis of Faith;” I will review them shortly.

Regarding the third act, the technical term credendity refers to something so persuasive

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32 DB 1786, DS 3005. Lonergan elaborates, “. . . [T]he judgment about one’s supernatural end . . . is a supernatural act that goes beyond the purview of philosophy (DB 1669, DS 2851) . . . .” Lonergan, “Analysis of Faith,” 140. DB and DS numbers in the original.
that—under the influence of God’s grace—it morally obliges a person to believe.  

Regarding the sixth act, Lonergan’s invocation of intellect and will reflects the constitution: “. . . [W]e are bound by faith to give full obedience of intellect and will to God who reveals.”

There are three points of interest in the remainder of “Analysis of Faith.” I take them up individually in what follows.

The first point of interest is that, as I mention above, Lonergan does intermittently refer to the motives of credibility in “Analysis of Faith”: he reproduces the passage from the constitution that speaks of “. . . external proofs,” he states that unbelievers on their way to faith can “. . . investigate miracles and prophecies,” he quotes the passage in the constitution that refers to the church as a motive of credibility, he remarks that according to the constitution “. . . the very fact of revelation is known through external signs,” and that “. . . knowing this fact [the divine origin of the Christian religion] does not exceed the natural proportion of human reason.” Lastly, he contends that in each

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33 Modern Catholic Dictionary, s.v. “Credentity.” Credentity is an alternative spelling that is often used. A key thinker who develops the notion of credentity is Ambroise Gardeil (1859-1931). As Hans Boersma observes, “. . . Ambroise Gardeil . . . had argued in his 1908 book, La credibilité et l’apologetique, that divine prophecy and miracles did not require supernatural grace in order to be convincing to people. On the basis of the evidence, anyone could come to the rational conclusion that one must accept the teachings of the Church. That conclusion, Gardeil explained, in line with standard neo-scholastic teaching, was a judgement of credibility.” He continues, “Well aware that . . . a separation between natural judgements of credibility (leading to scientific faith) and supernatural belief in the truth of the gospel made it difficult to connect the two, Gardeil made the additional move of inserting a step in between the judgement of credibility and supernatural faith. He referred to this in-between step as the ‘judgment of credentity’. This judgement of credentity was a supernatural element that provided the link between human freedom, on the one hand, and supernatural necessity, on the other hand. Once someone had made a positive judgement of credibility, divine faith imposed itself on the conscience as something ‘absolutely obligatory.’” Hans Boersma, “A Sacramental Journey to the Beatific Vision: The Intellectualism of Pierre Rousselot,” Heythrop Journal 49, no. 6 (2008): 1026.

34 DB 1789, DS 3008.


external proof “... God’s grace is ... present.”40 This echoes the declaration in the
constitution that external proofs operate in conjunction with “... the internal aids of the
Holy Spirit ...”41

The second point of interest regards Lonergan’s treatment of the motive of faith.
The motive of faith pertains to faith itself, thus I will be temporarily wading into the
subject matter of the ensuing section of the present chapter. Lonergan writes,

Why do you believe what has been revealed? Because it is the word of God. Why
believe the word of God? Because God speaks truthfully; indeed, God cannot lie
or deceive. Why do you believe God who speaks truthfully? Because one who
speaks truthfully expresses what one has in one’s mind, and there can be no
question about what God has in his mind. He is omniscient; he cannot be
deceived. God’s knowledge, therefore, first truth itself, is the ultimate motive,
ground, cause, and reason for faith. This point is clearly stated by the First
Vatican Council: “... because of the authority of God who reveals, who can
neither be deceived nor deceive” (DB 1789, DS 3008 ...).42

Recall from chapter two of this study that, strictly speaking, the motive of faith is God in
His authority, not God in His omniscience.43 Nevertheless, knowledge of God’s
existence, authority, and omniscience must precede faith itself. That Lonergan
foregrounds this fact is in keeping with the treatment of belief in Insight. Recall that in
Insight Lonergan describes belief as “accepting what we are told by others on whom we
reasonably rely.” The reasonableness of relying on God in faith itself, then, is a key
issue.44 Following Qui Pluribus, Lonergan explains, “... [F]aith is that kind of knowing

41 DB 1790, DS 3009.
43 Lonergan expresses his awareness of this: “... [T]he assent of faith as already possessed is not based on
one’s own knowledge whether this was acquired through reason or through faith itself. Vatican I does not
state that we believe truths because we either know or believe that God has knowledge and truthfully
reveals them; it states that we believe ‘because of the authority of God who reveals them, who can neither
be deceived nor deceive.’” Lonergan, “Analysis of Faith,” 133.
44 “Here one can clearly see the problem of the reasonableness of faith, namely, how it can be that a person
can know something not because of knowledge that that person possesses, but because of knowledge
whose ultimate ‘why’ is someone else’s knowledge. But in divine faith this knowledge is
God’s knowledge; nothing therefore, could possibly be more reasonable than divine
faith.”45

The third point of interest concerns the preambles of faith. Lonergan writes, “By
the ‘preambles’ we mean those foundations of faith that are known with certitude but not
by divine faith.”46 The preambles he has in mind appear to be same that the authors of the
constitution have in mind: the existence of God, His veracity, and the fact of revelation
(which is evinced by the motives of credibility). With respect to the declaration in the
constitution that “. . . right reasoning demonstrates the basis of faith,”47 Lonergan
interprets the “basis” to be the preambles of faith. Lonergan goes on to tackle an
objection pertaining to the preambles. The objection is that few persons are conversant
in—nor familiar with the evidence that supports—arguments for the existence of God,
deductions of the divine attributes, the possibility of miracles, and so forth. Lonergan
pinpoints the presupposition underlying the objection: “The sufficiency of evidence
cannot be grasped unless the evidence itself is known. But very few people seem to know
this evidence.”48 He then responds,

. . . [K]nowledge of the evidence and the grasp of its sufficiency enter into
the production of a judgment or assent in different ways. Knowledge of the
evidence is as the material or as an instrument and the grasp of the sufficiency of
the evidence is as the form or as the principal cause. For evidence, however
abundant and accurate and detailed it may be, is of no avail unless it is grasped as
being sufficient. On the other hand, even scanty and scattered evidence, as long as
it is sufficient and its sufficiency is grasped, validly grounds and by a certain
rational necessity engenders a judgment.

It is for this reason that everyone, adults and children, and learned and
unlearned alike, have the same proximate foundation for their faith, namely, a

47 DB 1799, DS 3019.
grasp of the sufficiency of the evidence which is had through God’s grace of enlightenment. What is different in different persons is not this grasp of sufficiency but knowledge of the evidence."  

The passage above illustrates the fact that Lonergan’s distinct epistemology makes possible a distinct response to problems pertaining to the acts that lead to faith. The distinctiveness is not of a sort that brings him into opposition with the constitution, thus the early Lonergan can be seen as supplementing the efforts of its authors. In this passage, and in all of the others that I have examined in this section, Lonergan proffers a stance on the acts that lead to faith that is both unique and wholly compatible with the constitution.

5.3 Early Views on Faith Itself

In this section I shift my focus from Lonergan’s stance on the acts leading to faith to his stance on faith itself—both its structure and its object. I will once again utilize “Analysis of Faith,” followed by a section from Insight. I must note that Lonergan’s interest in this subject is longstanding. In his 1935 letter to Henry Keane, Lonergan reports that in the summer of 1933 he “. . . put together a 25,000 word essay upon the act of faith . . .”

49 Lonergan, “Analysis of Faith,” 151. Further light is shed on Lonergan’s position by considering the disagreement he has with Heinrich Lennerz (1880-1961). As Michael Stebbins observes, “. . . [T]he issue on which Lonergan and Lennerz part company is whether it lies within the proportion of the human intellect to grasp the sufficiency of the evidence contained in the preambles [of faith] in such a way that there follows an act of divine faith.” He continues, “. . . Lennerz places the motive of faith in the evidence of the preambles; Lonergan places it in the act of understanding which grasps the sufficiency of that same evidence by a supernatural light and as a result attains a complex object, “the first truth on account of the first truth.”” J. Michael Stebbins, The Divine Initiative: Grace, World-order, and Human Freedom in the Early Writings of Bernard Lonergan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 115 and 117.

In “Analysis of Faith,” Lonergan’s fundamental description of faith itself follows the constitution verbatim: “Faith is . . . a supernatural virtue.”51 This is just one of many points of consonance with the constitution with respect to faith itself. Less innovation on Lonergan’s part is understandable here, both because of the topic and because he is writing notes for a seminary course. In what follows, I review three points of consonance. I take each of them as evincing the fact that the early Lonergan’s stance on faith itself is wholly compatible with the constitution.

A first point of consonance with the constitution regards the distinction between divinitus revelabilia and divinitus revelata. Lonergan writes, “. . . [T]ruth is natural or supernatural, not according to what is known, but according to the light by which it is known.”52 This supports the possibility of truths which are natural for some and supernatural for others. Lonergan elaborates, “. . . [F]aith is that sort of knowing whose ultimate ground is someone else’s light and knowledge. . . . [T]he light of faith is that light given to us to enable us to adhere to God’s light and knowledge.”53

A second point of consonance with the constitution concerns the objects of faith. It is worth reproducing Lonergan’s statement on this matter in full. He writes,

. . . [T]he formal object of faith is that truth which is the whole of revelation. “We believe that what God has revealed is true” (DB 1789, DS 3008); and “all things contained in the word of God and taught by the church as revealed are to be believed” (DB 1791, DS 3011).

The material objects of faith, therefore, are all those particular truths that are contained in the formal object. Thus to ask whether this or that is a matter of faith is to ask about the material object. By the same token, a heretic who believes some articles of faith while rejecting others attains material objects of faith but

rejects the formal object. Similarly, a schismatic who rejects the revealed living magisterium of the church is equivalently heretical.\textsuperscript{54}

In anticipation of the later Lonergan’s account of faith itself, it is worth noting that he associates the phrase “a matter of faith” with the material objects.

A third point of consonance with the constitution concerns the role of analogy in understanding the mysteries of faith. Lonergan writes, “. . . [S]upernatural realities are to some extent understood by analogy from natural realities (\textit{DB} 1796, \textit{DS} 3016).”\textsuperscript{55} Based on Lonergan’s citation of the constitution at the end of this sentence, it is clear that the “supernatural realities” he has in mind include the mysteries of faith.\textsuperscript{56} He elaborates,

\textit{. . . [T]he mysteries of faith are truths that cannot be known apart from divine revelation (\textit{DB} 1795, \textit{DS} 3015), that are beyond the created intellect (\textit{DB} 1796, \textit{DS} 3016), and that cannot be understood or demonstrated even by a well-trained mind (\textit{DB} 1816, \textit{DS} 3041). Such truths are attained through a proportionate light, attained by God himself to whom divine light is natural, by the blessed in heaven who have an immediate vision of God and enjoy the light of glory and by those who believe in the proper way and so do not cling to or rely upon their own light and their own knowledge but upon God’s light and God’s knowledge.}\textsuperscript{57}

Of note here is Lonergan’s emphasis on the fact that the mysteries of faith are supernatural in mode and in substance. Contrary to Günther’s view, Lonergan maintains that “. . . only the beatific vision can penetrate . . . ” the mysteries of faith.\textsuperscript{58}

I now turn my attention to “Resumption of the Heuristic Structure of the Solution,”\textsuperscript{59} a section in “Special Transcendent Knowledge,” chapter twenty of \textit{Insight}. In this section, Lonergan contends that a solution to the problem of evil could arise through

\textsuperscript{54} Lonergan, “Analysis of Faith,” 131-132. \textit{DB} and \textit{DS} numbers in the original.

\textsuperscript{55} Lonergan, “Analysis of Faith,” 134. \textit{DB} and \textit{DS} numbers in the original.


\textsuperscript{57} Lonergan, “Analysis of Faith,” 136-137. \textit{DB} and \textit{DS} numbers in the original.

\textsuperscript{58} Lonergan, “Analysis of Faith,” 146. It is worth nothing that in \textit{Insight}, Lonergan writes, “. . . Anselm had been mistaken in offering necessary reasons for the mysteries of faith . . . ” Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 551.

\textsuperscript{59} Lonergan, \textit{Insight}, 740-750.
“... some type of charity, of hope, and of belief.”60 Of specific interest here is the fact that “... the solution in its cognitional aspect will consist in a new and higher collaboration of men in the pursuit of truth.”61 Lonergan describes the solution as “... not simply a collaboration of men with one another, but basically man’s cooperation with God in solving man’s problem of evil.”62 Moreover, “... the solution meets a problem of error and sin through a higher integration that, though in some sense transcendent, nonetheless is a harmonious continuation of the actual order of the universe.”63 Here Lonergan links the epistemological category of “error” and the theological category of “sin.” This parallels the declaration in the constitution that “... faith frees and protects reason from errors ... .”64

Lonergan goes on to state that “... man’s entry into the new and higher collaboration and his participation of its fruits will be some species of faith.”65 In clarifying what he means here, Lonergan refers to conjugate form, one of the six metaphysical elements that he outlines in Insight. He writes, “By faith is meant the requisite conjugate form that the solution brings to man’s intellect. By some species of faith is meant any of the conjugate forms that perfect intellect in any of the series of possible solutions within the reach of divine omnipotence.”66

Lonergan further specifies the way faith operates within the collaboration. He writes,

... [B]ecause faith is a transcendent belief operative within a new and higher collaboration of man with God, the act of faith will be an assent of intellect to

60 Lonergan, Insight, 740.
61 Lonergan, Insight, 740.
62 Lonergan, Insight, 741.
63 Lonergan, Insight, 740.
64 DB 1799, DS 3019.
65 Lonergan, Insight, 741.
66 Lonergan, Insight, 741.
truths transmitted through the collaboration, and it will be motivated by man’s reliance on the truthfulness of God. For, as a belief, the act of faith will be an assent of intellect to an object and because of a motive. As a belief within a new and higher collaboration, the object of faith will be the truths transmitted by the collaboration. Because it is a belief within a collaboration of man with God as initiator and principal agent, the motive of faith will be the omniscience, goodness, and omnipotence of God originating and preserving the collaboration.67

This passage contains numerous echoes of “Analysis of Faith” and marks a point in Insight where implicit and explicit references to the constitution emerge. An implicit reference occurs when Lonergan states that “. . . there will be revealed to faith truths that man never could discover for himself nor, even when he assented to them, could he understand them in an adequate fashion.”68 This matches up with the declaration in the constitution that one believes the things God reveals as true “. . . not because the intrinsic truth of the revealed things has been perceived by the natural light of reason . . . .”69

Lonergan goes on to make explicit reference to the declarations of the First Vatican Council. He writes,

. . . [T]he clarification we have effected of the role of understanding in knowledge recalls to mind the impressive statements of the Vatican Council on the role of understanding in faith; and a firm grasp of what it is to understand can hardly fail to promote the limited but most fruitful understanding of the Christian mysteries that results both from the analogy of nature and from the inner coherence of the mysteries themselves.70

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67 Lonergan, Insight, 742.
68 Lonergan, Insight, 746.
69 DB 1789, DS 3008.
70 Lonergan, Insight, 756. Another reference to the First Vatican Council is as follows: “For in successive statements the Vatican Council insisted (1) that divine revelation was to be regarded, not as a human invention to be perfected by human ingenuity, but as a permanent deposit confided to the church and by the church to be preserved and defended, and (2) that every group and every period should advance in the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom by which the same doctrine with the same meaning was to be apprehended ever more fully.” Lonergan, Insight, 761.
This passage is reminiscent of the original Schwerpunkt thesis. Lonergan is stating that one’s envisagement of understanding influences one’s envisagement of theological method with respect to the mysteries of faith.71

Before I turn to my next section, it is worth reproducing a passage from the Epilogue of Insight. Lonergan identifies his approach as a third way between the extremes of rationalism and fideism. He writes,

The Catholic admits neither the exclusive rationalism of the Enlightenment nor, on the other hand, the various irrationalist tendencies that can be traced from the medieval period through the Reformation to their sharp manifestation in Kierkegaard’s reaction to Hegelianism and in contemporary dialectical and existentialist trends. But this twofold negation involves a positive commitment. If one is not to affirm reason at the expense of faith or faith at the expense of reason, one is called upon both to produce a synthesis that unites two orders of truth and to give evidence of a successful symbiosis of two principles of knowledge. Clearly, this positive commitment goes beyond the assertion that irreligious rationalism and irrationalist religiosity are not the contradictories that exclude a third possibility.72

This passage is an ideal one on which to pivot into a discussion of the later Lonergan. The later Lonergan critically appropriates aspects of “the Enlightenment” and aspects of “contemporary dialectical and existentialist trends.” The result is two new points of emphasis in his later writings.

### 5.4 Two New Points of Emphasis in the Later Lonergan

By merely distinguishing between the early and later Lonergan on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself, I intimate that modifications are extant in both areas. Before I

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71 In defending the use of sense-abstractive reason in understanding the content of faith, Lonergan distances himself from Bautain and Günther, who decry the operation of Verstand on the deliveries of Vernunft. For a concrete, contemporary example of what Lonergan’s envisagement of method allows, and what Bautain and Günther’s envisagement of method prohibits, one can consider Robert John Russell’s effort to enable interaction between theological doctrine creatio ex nihilo and the scientific theory t = 0. See Robert John Russell, “t = 0: Is it Theologically Significant?” in Religion & Science: History, Method, Dialogue, ed. W. Mark Richardson and Wesley J. Wildman (New York: Routledge, 1996), 201-224.

72 Lonergan, Insight, 754-755.
examine the modifications, however, I must identify the causes of the modifications. There are two types of causes that one can consider. On the one hand, there are external causes—developments in the world that oblige Lonergan to modify his stance on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself. The Second Vatican Council is no doubt the chief development of this kind. On the other hand, there are internal causes—developments in Lonergan’s own framework that oblige him to modify his stance on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself. I will treat both of these causes in what follows, but the latter will be my focus.

Given the great continuity that exists in Lonergan’s core philosophical views and his stance on the structure of belief, it is natural to wonder where developments could occur and how they could be substantial enough to cause him to modify his stance on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself. A resolution to the perplexity comes into view when one realizes that what causes the modifications are not, strictly speaking, new elements, but rather new points of emphasis.

I want to focus on two new points of emphasis in the later Lonergan: (a) an emphasis on interiority, or more specifically, on the differentiations of consciousness that interiority permits, and (b) an emphasis on the fourth level of consciousness. Before I

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73 Consider the observations of George Tavard: “In the realm of theological research and elaboration, the climate of the nineteenth century, which gave apologetics a central place, is all but forgotten today. Theology is now investigating Christian experience rather than the rational aspects of Revelation. It restores to Revelation its mystery and to assent its mystical dimension. The steps toward faith, which used to be carefully analysed through the evidences of credibility, the rational assent, the moral certitude, the ecclesiastical faith and the divine faith, now appear to be quite secondary. What primarily matters is the Revelation itself, that is, not so much the result of Revelation for intellectual knowledge and its importance as a provider of ideas, but God speaking, revealing himself to the heart of men, whether these be the Prophets, the Apostles, those who, in many places and in different ways, have been selected by God to deliver his message, or even the unknown man who seeks God without knowing if he ever can find him. God revealing himself and man’s irreplaceable response to God are at the center of modern theological reflection on Revelation.” George H. Tavard, “Commentary on ‘De Revelatione’,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 3, no. 1 (1966): 12-13.
elaborate on these new points of emphasis, it is worth reproducing a passage from *Method in Theology* in which Lonergan links them. He writes,

> The . . . shift to interiority was essayed in various manners from Descartes through Kant to the nineteenth-century German idealists. But there followed a still more emphatic shift from knowledge to faith, will, conscience, decision, action in Kierkegaard, Schopenhauer, Newman, Nietzsche, Blondel, the personalists, and the existentialists. The direction of this shift is correct in the sense that the fourth level of intentional consciousness—the level of deliberation, evaluation, decision, action—sublates the prior levels of experiencing, understanding, judging. It goes beyond them, sets up a new principle and type of operations, directs them to a new goal but, so far from dwarfing them, preserves them and brings them to a far fuller fruition.74

In this passage Lonergan discloses who he takes to be originators, or at least forerunners, of the new points of emphasis in his later writings. With these names in mind, I can commence my analysis.

The “shift to interiority” and its accompanying differentiations of consciousness are my first concern. In order to adequately expound on the differentiations, I need to first review some related notions, namely exigences, realms of meaning, and stages of meaning.

The later Lonergan identifies four exigences: the systematic, the critical, the methodical, and the transcendent.75 These exigences “. . . give rise to different modes of conscious and intentional operation, and different modes of such operation give rise to different realms of meaning.”76 The systematic exigence “. . . separates the realm of common sense from the realm of theory.”77 The former is the realm of “. . . things in their relations to us.”78 In the latter realm, “. . . objects are apprehended, not in their

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commonsense relations to us, but in their verifiable relations to one another.”79 The tension that exists between the realm of common sense and the realm of theory effects a “. . . withdrawal into interiority . . . .”80 There one differentiates the different modes of conscious and intentional operation which gave rise to the two realms of meaning in the first place. The critical exigence compels one to answer the three basic questions: “What am I doing when I am knowing? Why is doing that knowing? What do I know when I do it?”81 One must then mediate between the two apparently—but not genuinely—competing languages. What the critical exigence mobilizes is the ability to appropriate both modes of apprehension. Such an appropriation meets the demands of another exigence: the methodical exigence. This exigence yields a division of the sciences. I will prescind from discussing the transcendent exigence.82

The question inevitably arises as to who, historically, first operated in the different realms of meaning. Lonergan’s answer to this question occurs within his treatment of stages of meaning. He delineates three stages whose names are identical to the three realms: common sense, theory, and interiority.83 Lonergan contends that the

79 Lonergan, Method in Theology, 274.
80 Lonergan, Method in Theology, 83.
81 Lonergan, Method in Theology, 25. Joseph Fitzpatrick writes, “To use the preferred vocabulary of analytic philosophy, a cognitional theory is descriptive: it describes the processes of cognition. An epistemology is prescriptive: it prescribes the conditions necessary for valid knowledge; it discriminates between valid and invalid knowledge. Ontology is implied in epistemology since valid knowledge is knowledge of the real.” Joseph Fitzpatrick, Philosophical Encounters: Lonergan and the Analytic Tradition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 48.
82 I will simply note that for Lonergan, “. . . [M]an can reach basic fulfilment, peace, joy, only by moving beyond the realms of common sense, theory, and interiority and into the realm in which God is known and loved.” Lonergan, Method in Theology, 84.
83 Lonergan elaborates, “In the first stage conscious and intentional operations follow the mode of common sense. In a second stage besides the mode of common sense there is also the mode of theory, where the theory is controlled by a logic. In a third stage the modes of common sense and theory remain, science asserts its autonomy from philosophy, and there occur philosophies that leave theory to science and take their stand on interiority.” Lonergan, Method in Theology, 85. Thomas McPartland alerts readers to some key differences between Lonergan’s stages and those that positivists propose, namely myth, metaphysics, and science. See Thomas J. McPartland, Lonergan and the Philosophy of Historical Existence (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2001), 74.
stages are “. . . ideal constructs . . . .” and “. . . not chronological.” A culture can reach a stage even though the majority of its members have not. It is therefore difficult to discern the occurrence of a stage, but what is not difficult is discerning when the stages first appeared in history. Lonergan writes, “The [Greek] discovery of mind marks the transition from the first stage of meaning to the second.” Moreover, to repeat Lonergan’s statement above, the “shift to interiority was essayed in various manners from Descartes through Kant to the nineteenth-century German idealists.”

With this background in place, I can address what is most important for the purposes of the present chapter: the differentiations of consciousness. The later Lonergan delineates seven differentiations: “. . . the linguistic, the religious, the literary, the systematic, the scientific, the scholarly, and . . . . the modern philosophic.” Henceforth I refer to the last three collectively as the modern differentiations. Lonergan contends that the modern differentiations “. . . are quite beyond the horizon of ancient Greece and medieval Europe.” This statement is crucial, for it aligns the first appearance of the modern differentiations with the first appearance of the stage of interiority. One can conclude from this alignment that the later Lonergan’s emphasis on interiority is simultaneously an emphasis on the modern differentiations. Now recall Lonergan’s caveat that a culture can reach a stage even though the majority of its members have not. This sets up the possibility of, for instance, a nineteenth-century group who, despite the employment of the modern differentiations around them, do not themselves employ the

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differentiations. For Lonergan, this is an actuality with respect to Roman Catholicism. He writes,

. . . [T]he Thomist and especially the neo-Thomist conceptions of philosophy and theology rest on the religious, the linguistic, the literary, and the systematic differentiations of consciousness. Commonly they are unfamiliar with the differentiations resulting from modern science, modern scholarship, and contemporary intentionality analysis [that is, modern philosophy].

On its own, this passage merely implies that one conducts philosophical and theological inquiry differently when that inquiry is shaped by the modern differentiations. There remains an important complement to the passage that introduces an evaluative element. Lonergan writes, “. . . [W]ith every differentiation of consciousness the same object becomes apprehended in a different and more adequate fashion.” This statement, when read in conjunction with the passage above, implies that the authors of the constitution were limited in their apprehension of faith, reason, and the relationship between them—and that contemporary thinkers who do engage the modern differentiations more adequately apprehend faith, reason, and the relationship between them. Furthermore, as Lonergan himself contends, contemporary thinkers who engage the modern differentiations more adequately apprehend doctrine, including the doctrine that the constitution expounds. In sum, Lonergan authorizes the contemporary theologian not only to read the constitution as limited in certain respects, but also to develop the doctrine that it expounds in light of those limitations.

The question arises here as to whether a “. . . transposition . . .” of the constitution is desirable or undesirable—a transposition being “. . . a restatement of an

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earlier position in a new and broader context." This parallels the question of whether
the Second Vatican Council develops or departs from the First Vatican Council on certain
issues. Lonergan sees the transposition as desirable. He writes, “... [U]p to Vatican II
they [Roman Catholics] were sheltered against the modern world and since Vatican II
they have been exposed more and more to the chill winds of modernity." Taking
seriously the “winds of modernity,” despite the “chill” of its challenges, is a task that the
later Lonergan more intensely invests himself in. I should make it clear, however, that
Lonergan’s appropriation of these winds is a critical one. As he explains, “... I do not
think that things are right because they are modern, but I did find a number of things I
thought right and they are modern at least in the sense that they were overlooked in the
nineteenth-century Catholic theological tradition.” What nineteenth-century Roman
Catholic theologians overlook is, in Lonergan’s view, the set of modern differentiations.
This is evidently the case with Kleutgen. As he intimates through the title of his work Die
Philosophie der Vorzeit (The Philosophy of Old Times), there exists a perennial
philosophy that need not undergo any serious revision in the light of modernity.

For Lonergan, it was the cessation of overlooking the modern differentiations that
foreshadowed the “... change of attitude ...” towards Scholasticism at the Second

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91 Bernard J. F. Lonergan, “Horizons and Transpositions,” in Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-
least one instance, Lonergan carries out a reverse-transposition. He writes, “If one wishes to transpose this
analysis into metaphysical terms, then the active potencies are the transcendental notions revealed in
questions for intelligence, questions for reflection, questions for deliberation.” Lonergan, Method in
Theology, 120.
J. Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 93.
93 Lonergan, “Belief: Today’s Issue,” 98. Elsewhere, Lonergan writes, “... [T]here exists the ... possibility that the new can be analogous to the old, that it can preserve all that is valid in the old, that it can
achieve the higher synthesis mentioned by Leo XIII in his bull Aetri Patris: vetera novis augere
erperficer, augmenting and perfecting the old by what is new.” Bernard J. F. Lonergan, “The Scope of
Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 298.
Vatican Council.95 Lonergan’s own estimation of the degree of the change in attitude is clear. He writes, “The era dominated by Scholasticism has ended.”96 What is necessary is a development of Thomism,97 which is distinct from Scholasticism.

There remains the second new point of emphasis in the later Lonergan: an emphasis on the fourth level of consciousness, the responsible level. This is the level “. . . on which we are concerned with ourselves, our own operations, our goals, and so deliberate about possible courses of action, evaluate them, decide, and carry out our decisions.”98 Recall that although Lonergan rejects a “dwarfing” of the prior levels, he generally lauds the accentuation of the fourth that arose in the eighteenth century. Rather than elaborating on this new point of emphasis here, I will note its manifestations as I survey the later Lonergan’s writings. I will periodically draw attention to the ways in which both new points of emphasis influence the later Lonergan’s stance on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself—a stance that is narrowly compatible with the constitution.

5.5 Later Views on the Acts that Lead to Faith

Let me begin this section with a passage from “Varieties of Fundamental Theology,” a 1973 lecture at the University of Toronto. After briefly reviewing the function of miracles and prophecies in the constitution, Lonergan writes,

97 Lonergan explains, “A Thomism for tomorrow has to move from logic to method; from science as conceived in the Posterior Analytics to science as it is conceived today; from the metaphysics of the soul to the self-appropriation of the subject; from an apprehension of man through human history; and from first principles to transcendent method. . . . [T]hese transitions . . . are not exclusive; a transition from logic to method does not drop logic, and similarly in most of the other cases.” Bernard J. F. Lonergan, “The Future of Thomism,” in A Second Collection: Papers, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 49-50.
98 Lonergan, Method in Theology, 9.
Today, the signs of divine revelation, the prophecies of the Old Testament and the miracles of the New, have been engulfed in the mountainous extent and intricate subtlety of biblical studies and critical history. God’s gift of his grace is as frequent, as powerful, but also as silent and secret as ever, while we are perturbed by the probing of depth psychology and bewildered by the claims of linguistic analysts, by the obscurities of phenomenology, by the oddities of existentialism, by the programs of economic, social, and ecological reformers, by the beckoning of ecumenists and universalists.\\footnote{Bernard Lonergan, “Variations in Fundamental Theology,” in Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980, edited by Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 249. For analysis of the ecclesial backdrop of these developments, see René Latourelle, “Absence and Presence of Fundamental Theology at Vatican II,” in Vatican II: Assessments and Perspectives, ed. René Latourelle (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1989), 3:378-415.}

Here is an instance where the modern differentiations—specifically modern scholarship and modern philosophy—effect a change in attitude towards the motives of credibility.

Lonergan goes on to survey alternatives that contemporary Roman Catholic thinkers propose. One such thinker, Raymond Panikkar (1918-2010), advocates a view that Lonergan intimates agreement with. Lonergan writes,

> The preverbal and, indeed, preconceptual foundation of theology proposed by Panikkar intends to be a common starting point for all religions. Insofar as one starts from it and moves towards Christ, the Word of God, it corresponds to the foundational reality set forth in chapter 11 of Method, a reality conceived by Christians in terms of St. Paul’s statement: “God’s love has flooded our inmost hearts through the Holy Spirit he has given us” (Romans 5:5).\\footnote{Lonergan, “Variations in Fundamental Theology,” 258.}

This passage introduces much that must be unpacked; I reproduce it here to give a foretaste of what follows.

Recall that the early Lonergan foregrounds a set of acts—a judgment of credibility, a judgment of credendity, and so forth—as that which precedes faith. In contrast, the later Lonergan foregrounds religious experience as that which precedes faith. Religious experience is “. . . a conscious dynamic state of love, joy, peace, that manifests itself in acts of kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control
Lonergan associates religious experience with the fourth level of consciousness, which is

. . . the type of consciousness that deliberates, makes judgments of value, decides, acts responsibly and freely. But it is this consciousness as brought to a fulfilment, as having undergone a conversion, as possessing a basis that may be broadened and deepened and heightened and enriched but not superseded, as ready to deliberate and judge and decide and act with the easy freedom of those that do all good because they are in love. So the gift of God’s love occupies the ground and root of the fourth and highest level of man’s intentional consciousness.

This passage makes clear that the later Lonergan’s greater attention to the fourth level of consciousness will include a greater attention to religious experience, including the role of religious experience as a precursor to faith.

Lonergan goes on to clarify that the dynamic state is conscious, but not known. This is in keeping with his epistemology: mere experience awaits interpretation.

Lonergan is targeting the “preverbal and . . . preconceptual foundation” of religion, just as he targets the preverbal and preconceptual foundation of philosophy. It is crucial to notice the sense in which the two endeavours are connected. The early Lonergan writes, “The immanent source of transcendence in man is his detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know.” The later Lonergan writes, “Just as unrestricted questioning is our capacity for self-transcendence, so being in love in an unrestricted fashion is the proper fulfilment of that capacity.” It is on these bases that the later

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Lonergan contends, “. . . [P]hilosophy of God and the functional specialty ‘systematics’ have a common origin in religious experience . . . .” Here Lonergan moves beneath a position that I take the authors of the constitution to maintain, namely the need for a separation between philosophy, which is envisaged as reason-based, and theology, which is envisaged as faith-based. Lonergan acknowledges that some will have difficulty with this move because it appears to “. . . rob pure reason of its purity.” Nevertheless, he sees the move as unavoidable once “. . . objectivity is conceived as the fruit of authentic subjectivity,” for “. . . to be genuinely in love with God is the very height of authentic subjectivity.”

For Lonergan, the dynamic state as unconceptualized is what the apologist can and must appeal to. He explains,

The apologist’s task is neither to produce in others nor to justify for them God’s gift of his love. Only God can give that gift, and the gift itself is self-justifying. People in love have not reasoned themselves into being in love. The apologist’s task is to aid others in integrating God’s gift with the rest of their living.

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106 Lonergan, “Philosophy of God, and Theology,” 211. McPartland points out what he takes to be a further implication of Lonergan’s stance. He writes, “If we are to develop adequately the train of Lonergan’s thought on the existential nature of philosophy, we must eventually arrive at a startling conclusion, which goes to the very heart of philosophy, its origin, destiny, and historicity: philosophy is a variety of religious experience.” McPartland, 147.

107 It is worth noting a remark by Gabriel Daly here. He writes, “The necessity, which neo-scholastic theologians experienced, of holding a balance between the ‘natural’ claims of reason on the one hand and the ‘supernatural’ character of the act of faith on the other, ensured that increasing attention would be given to the distinction between the preliminaries to faith (preambula fidei) and the act of faith itself.” Gabriel Daly, Transcendence and Immanence: A Study in Catholic Modernism and Integralism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 8.


110 Lonergan, Method in Theology, 123.
People cannot reason themselves into being in love with God because the gift of God’s love is always-already offered.111 The apologist exploits this. The apologist draws one’s attention to the already-extant inner call to transcend oneself. The more one attends to this inner call, the more likely one is to seek a conceptual account of it—to identify the caller, as it were.

Already one can see the shift to interiority at work in Lonergan’s account of the task of the apologist. Specifically, what is at work here is “. . . the shift from a faculty psychology to intentionality analysis [that is, to the modern philosophic differentiation].”112 As Lonergan explains, “. . . [W]e have moved out of a faculty psychology with its options between intellectualism and voluntarism, and into an intentionality analysis . . . .”113 Here Lonergan moves beneath two classical positions, namely Aquinas’s prioritization of intellect and Augustine’s prioritization of will.114 As a result, the apologist will not appeal to the intellect or the will as components of the subject that can be spoken to alone.115 Instead, the apologist must appeal to the subject as a whole. The question remains as to what role the preambles of faith play in this

111 Lonergan explains his rationale. He writes, “. . . [A]ccording to the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, charity is necessary for salvation. Again, by common consent, charity is sufficient for salvation. But, as theologians argue from the First Epistle to Timothy (2:4), God wills all men to be saved. Accordingly, he wills to give them all the necessary and sufficient condition for salvation. It follows that he gives all men the gift of his love, and so it further follows that there can be an element in all the religions of mankind that is at once profound and holy.” Lonergan, “Philosophy of God, and Theology,” 170.


114 Patrick Aspell explains, “Thomas leaned more towards Aristotelian intellectualism than towards Augustinian voluntarism on the basis of his notion of being. As the object of the intellect, truth or being as intelligible, is ontologically prior to the object of the will, good or being as appetible, the intellect has precedence over the will. For that reason, Thomas located the supreme happiness of man in his intellectual vision of God which is accompanied by joy of the will.” Patrick J. Aspell, *Medieval Western Philosophy: The European Emergence* (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1999), 209.

115 Recall that the authors of the constitution make a distinction between intellect and will: “. . . [W]e are bound by faith to give full obedience of intellect and will to God who reveals.” *DB* 1789, *DS* 3008.
apologetic approach. Answering this question is central to determining the compatibility of Lonergan’s stance with the constitution.

Recall that the constitution anathematizes those who say “. . . that divine revelation cannot be made credible by external signs, and for this reason men ought to be moved to faith by the internal experience alone of each one, or by private inspiration . . .”\textsuperscript{116} Nowhere does Lonergan state that divine revelation cannot be made credible by external signs, or that human beings ought to be moved to faith by internal experience alone as an alternative. Yet he does state that persons can be moved to faith by internal experience alone—in his terms, by religious experience alone.\textsuperscript{117} Properly speaking, the constitution does not condemn those who merely state that persons can be moved to faith this way,\textsuperscript{118} thus I cannot label Lonergan’s stance incompatible with the constitution. The evidence required to label his stance narrowly compatible will be that he depicts faith based on internal experience alone as in fact the norm. Such evidence is already on display in Lonergan’s above statements regarding the task of the apologist. In what follows, I consider further evidence.

It is clear that the later Lonergan does not esteem an apologetic approach that moves logically from proofs of the existence of God to proofs of His veracity and finally to proofs of the fact of revelation. Regarding this approach, he writes,

\begin{quote}
The hollowness of such a scheme became painfully obvious in an age when logic was no more than a subordinate tool within the larger framework of method, and
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{116} \textit{DB} 1812, \textit{DS} 3033. \textsuperscript{117} Lonergan writes, “The vast majority of mankind have been religious. One cannot claim that their religion has been based on some philosophy of God. One can easily argue that their religious concern arose out of their religious experience.” Lonergan, “Philosophy of God, and Theology,” 208. \textsuperscript{118} It is worth repeating an observation by Avery Dulles that I supplied in chapter two. Dulles writes, “Although Vatican I particularly emphasized the arguments from prophecy and miracle, it did not deny that valid conclusions may be drawn from the inherent features of the Christian message judged in the light of the believer’s moral and religious sense.” Avery Dulles, \textit{The Assurance of Things Hoped For: A Theology of Christian Faith} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 210.
when the biblical movement, personalism, phenomenology, and existential concern moved attention on the European continent from words to their real antecedents in operations and attitudes.\textsuperscript{119}

Note that the recognition of the hollowness of the scheme comes to light via the modern differentiations. Lonergan’s words in this passage should not be taken as pejorative. As I indicate in section 5.4, he sees the authors of the constitution as limited in their range of differentiations, more by historical circumstance than by intent. When one embraces the modern differentiations, the proof-model of apologetics is revealed not to be utterly false, but inadequate. Lonergan explains,

> Basically the issue is a transition from the abstract logic of classicism to the concreteness of method. On the former view what is basic is proof. On the latter view what is basic is conversion. Proof appeals to an abstraction named right reason. Conversion transforms the concrete individual to make him capable of grasping not merely conclusions but principles as well.\textsuperscript{120}

This passage resides within Lonergan’s discussion of the constitution in \textit{Method in Theology}. As such, he likely has in mind the declaration that “. . . right reasoning demonstrates the basis of faith . . . .”\textsuperscript{121} Recall that the “basis” being referred to is the set of preambles of faith. Since right reason is an abstraction, that is, since no single form of rationality actually obtains among all persons in all cultures, it follows that an expectation of the preambles of faith being effective for all persons is unrealistic. This conflicts with the declaration in the constitution that the motives of credibility—one element of the preambles of faith—are “. . . suited to the intelligence of all.”\textsuperscript{122} Such is an additional ground for labeling the later Lonergan’s stance on the acts that lead to faith narrowly compatible with the constitution.

\textsuperscript{119} Lonergan, “Variations in Fundamental Theology,” 257-258.
\textsuperscript{120} Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, 338.
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{DB} 1799, \textit{DS} 3019.
\textsuperscript{122} \textit{DB} 1790, \textit{DS} 3009.
5.6 Later Views on the Faith Itself

To investigate the later Lonergan’s stance on faith itself, I turn to two consecutive sections in chapter four of *Method in Theology*: “Faith” and “Religious Belief.”

Lonergan begins the section “Faith” with these words: “Faith is the knowledge born of religious love.” He clarifies that this faith-knowledge is distinct from “. . . the factual knowledge reached by experiencing, understanding, and verifying;” rather, it is “. . . reached through the discernment of value and the judgments of value of a person in love.” By “faith,” Louis Roy interprets the later Lonergan to mean an affective knowledge that is more explicit than religious experience, but less explicit than a conceptualization of it—less explicit than religious belief. This contrasts with the early Lonergan, who, as I pointed out earlier, associates the phrase “a matter of faith” with the material objects of faith. I examine Lonergan’s view of such objects next.

Lonergan begins the section entitled “Religious Belief” with the following statement:

Among the values that faith discerns is the value of believing the word of religion, of accepting the judgments of fact and the judgments of value that the religion

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124 Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 115. Later in *Method in Theology*, Lonergan paraphrases and affirms the definition of faith found in the constitution. He writes, “Faith is a supernatural virtue by which we believe to be true what God has revealed, not because we apprehend the intrinsic truth of what has been revealed, but because of the authority of God who reveals and can neither deceive nor be deceived (DS 3008).”
proposes. Such belief and acceptance have the same structure as other belief already described in Chapter Two. But now the structure rests on a different basis, and that basis is faith.128

It is crucial to note Lonergan’s claim that religious belief has “the same structure” as belief in general, which I reviewed in section 5.1 of the present chapter. The claim implies that “believing the word of religion,” that is, “accepting the judgments of fact and the judgments of value that the religion proposes,” is a discursive process—a process involving reflective understanding.129 This distinguishes Lonergan’s position from Bautain’s, where accepting the judgments that a religion proposes involves an intuitive sense of their truth, and from Günther’s, where it involves an intuition of their necessity. This is an instance where the later Lonergan can be seen as supplementing the efforts of the authors of the constitution. It is a key reason why Lonergan’s stance on faith itself cannot be labeled incompatible with the constitution. Yet there is another aspect of his stance that prevents me from labeling it as wholly compatible with the constitution.

Lonergan writes,

. . . [B]y distinguishing faith and belief we have secured a basis both for ecumenical encounter and for an encounter between all religions with a basis in religious experience. For in the measure that experience is genuine, it is orientated to the mystery of love and awe; it has the power of unrestricted love to reveal and uphold all that is truly good; it remains the bond that unites the religious community, that directs their common judgments, that purifies their beliefs. Beliefs do differ, but behind this difference there is a deeper unity. For 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.130

For the authors of the constitution, the preambles of faith are the potential common ground among Christians and persons from other religions; for the later Lonergan, faith is

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129 To be accurate, Lonergan does not wholly dismiss an intuitive dimension to religious life. He writes, “. . . [T]here is a withdrawal from objectification and a mediated return to immediacy . . . in the prayerful mystic’s cloud of unknowing.” Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 77.
the common ground among Christians and persons from other religions. I take this
difference to warrant my judgment that the later Lonergan’s stance on faith is only
narrowly compatible with the constitution. The reason I judge it to be narrowly
compatible rather than incompatible is that Lonergan’s depiction of faith elsewhere in
*Method in Theology* is consistent with the constitution. For example, he writes,

“Doctrines are concerned to state clearly and distinctly the religious community’s
confession of the mysteries . . . hidden in God . . . . Assent to such doctrines is the assent
of faith . . . .”131 What the later Lonergan seeks to avoid is portraying the *fides quae
creditur* (the faith which is believed) and the *fides qua creditur* (the faith by which it is
believed) as necessarily concurrent.132 Avoiding such a portrayal is bound up with his
emphasis on the modern differentiations. He states that the third stage of meaning, the
stage in which the modern differentiations first appear, “. . . the gift of God’s love first is
described as an experience and only consequently is objectified in theoretical
categories.”133 In between these poles lies terrain in which faith can subsist.134

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‘outer word’ of the religious tradition . . . is essentially the story of past encounters with divine love . . . .”
Michael P. Morrissey, “Lonergan’s Foundational Theology,” in *Consciousness and Transcendence: The
134 Lonergan is also attempting to appropriate Smith. Smith writes, “Faith is . . . an orientation of the
personality, to oneself, to one’s neighbour, to the universe; a total response; a way of seeing whatever one
sees and of handling whatever one handles; a capacity to live at a more than mundane level; to see, to feel,
to act in terms of, a transcendent dimension.” He continues, “Belief, on the other hand, is the holding of
certain ideas. Some might see it as the intellect’s translation (even reduction?) of transcendence into
ostensible terms; the conceptualizing in a certain way of the vision that, metaphorically, one has seen . . . .”
Conclusion

In this study I have attempted to tell a story. In what follows, I review the story, identify its main implication, and outline some investigations that it encourages.

Review of the Story

Among the cognitive faculties that Kant delineates are Sinnlichkeit, Verstand, and Vernunft. Kant claims that Verstand must draw on Sinnlichkeit in order for its concepts not to be empty. As a result, every concept has a spatiotemporal framing. This is epistemologically dire for human beings, for there is another, superior kind of knowledge in which there is no sensibility, and only God can acquire such knowledge. Lacking the capacity for intellectual intuition, human beings grasp mere appearances, not things in themselves. Despite the limitation that Kant places on human knowing, it still has transcendent aspirations. Vernunft has a demand for the unconditioned, and this demand, when filtered through the three forms of syllogisms, results in three ideas: the soul, the world, and God. These ideas cannot be verified in experience, thus they can only serve a regulative function. One cannot claim, for example, that one knows that God exists.

Jacobi takes notice of Kant’s claims about human knowing and about God. He interprets the notion of things in themselves as Kant’s means of avoiding the logically consistent implication of his philosophy, namely that the contents of human consciousness do not correspond to anything external to human consciousness. In response to Kant, Jacobi contends that human beings can acquire genuine knowledge, both of sensible things, through sense intuitions, and of supersensible things, such as God, through rational intuitions. In allowing Sinnlichkeit and Vernunft contact with the
real, Jacobi parts with Kant, but it is crucial to note that Jacobi follows Kant in denying *Verstand* contact with the real. As a consequence, Jacobi is apprehensive about interaction between *Vernunft* and *Verstand*, and between *Sinnlichkeit* and *Verstand*.

Another important point to note is that the later Jacobi associates faith with *Vernunft*, and in some instances uses faith and *Vernunft* interchangeably.

After Jacobi’s death, Roman Catholic thinkers such as Bautain and Günther begin to appropriate his epistemology, for they find in it a means of defending their religion in the midst of major philosophical and scientific developments.

Bautain’s account of human reason reflects that of Jacobi. Among the cognitive faculties that Bautain posits are *intelligence*, which is his equivalent of *Vernunft*, and *raison*, which is his equivalent of *Verstand*. Like Jacobi, Bautain acclaims *intelligence* because it perceives truth instantly and derides *raison* because of its abstractive and discursive qualities. Because they employ *raison*, Bautain views arguments for the existence of God as resulting in antinomies. Instead, human knowledge of God arises when the idea of Being is brought to consciousness through contact with Sacred Scripture. With respect to faith, Bautain follows Jacobi in associating it with *intelligence*, the equivalent of *Vernunft*. When one encounters Sacred Scripture, one immediately detects its truth through *intelligence*. On this basis, Bautain finds arguments for the credibility of revelation unnecessary. It is important to note that Bautain shares Jacobi’s reluctance to move beyond bare affirmations of what *Vernunft* intuitively grasps. He seeks to purify Christianity of all the various elements that have been added to it by *raison*. 
Bautain’s views, especially those regarding natural knowledge of God, elicited a warning from his bishop. Over a ten-year period, Bautain would receive and sign several documents, each one containing a slightly refined expression of the initial warning. These documents anticipate the constitution’s declaration on natural knowledge of God.

Günther is another thinker who appeals to Vernunft and Verstand in articulating his view of both reason and faith. He envisages Verstand as a faculty mediated by concepts and Vernunft as an intuitive faculty that works with ideas. Following Kant and Jacobi, Günther holds that Verstand cannot attain knowledge of God’s existence. Instead, he proposes that through self-consciousness one becomes aware of the conditioned status of the self, and that this awareness in turn produces the idea of the unconditioned. With respect to faith, Günther portrays it merely as an initial acceptance of revelation. Once the content of revelation is in one’s possession, one can use philosophy, or more specifically, Vernunft, to intuit the necessity of its core elements, namely the mysteries of faith. For Günther, the mysteries of faith are supernatural in mode, but not in substance.

Like Bautain, Günther’s views elicited an ecclesial response, in his case the placement of his works on the Index of Forbidden Books. The papal brief containing the grounds of the prohibition rejects, among other things, Günther’s depiction of reason as a master, rather than handmaid, in religious matters. As with Bautain, the ecclesial responses to Günther anticipate the content of the constitution.

Prior to the First Vatican Council, Kleutgen produces a personal work that argues for the enduring value of traditional—that is, what he conceives of as traditional—Thomistic philosophy. On display in this work is a familiarity with Jacobi’s epistemology and perhaps an awareness of its influence on Günther. According to McCool, however,
Kleutgen goes much further than this. McCool contends that Kleutgen isolates Jacobi’s epistemology as the *focal point* of the philosophical and theological methods of, among others, Bautain and Günther. McCool also claims that Kleutgen finds Jacobi’s epistemology to be the cause of the flawed approaches of Bautain and Günther. If true, one can expect the declarations of the constitution to in some measure respond to the *Vernunft-Verstand* dynamic, for Kleutgen is a chief author of it and Bautain and Günther are named in a votum preceding the council.

The fact that numerous schemata preceded the final version of the constitution evinces the difficulty its authors encountered in attempting to offer a nuanced characterization of faith, reason, and the relationship between them—one that takes into account the novel stances of thinkers such as Bautain and Günther. At various points in the constitution, its authors implicitly argue against certain thinkers, including Bautain and Günther. This is especially the case in its declarations on natural knowledge of God, the acts that lead to faith, and faith itself. To state that Bautain and Günther are implicitly argued against does not imply that the actual text of the constitution resolutely condemns their views. Their accounts of the manner in which one acquires knowledge of God via *intelligence* or *Vernunft*, for example, are not firmly denounced by the text of the constitution. On other topics, firm denunciations are clear. The constitution affirms the importance and effectiveness of the motives of credibility; this counters Bautain and Günther, who posit alternative grounds for faith via *intelligence* and *Vernunft*. Regarding faith itself, the constitution reinforces both the substantially supernatural status of the mysteries of faith and the possibility of some understanding of them from analogy of things known naturally. The former counters Günther, who claims that mysteries can be
intuited via *Vernunft*; the latter counters Bautain, who claims that one should not expand upon what is detected as true by *intelligence*.

Lonergan, writing several decades after the First Vatican Council, initially seems disconnected from the story above. On closer inspection, two connections come to light. First, in his philosophical writings, Lonergan refutes Kant’s epistemology, and this can be shown to carry over into a refutation of Jacobi’s epistemology. Specifically, Lonergan’s retortion-based critique of knowing as taking a look repudiates both Kant’s unattainable ideal of intellectual intuition and Jacobi’s attainable ideal of rational intuition. Second, Lonergan is a thinker with his own stance on natural knowledge of God, the acts that lead to faith, and faith itself. The fact that Lonergan refutes an epistemology underlying the views of two thinkers implicitly argued against in the constitution provides no guarantee that his own stance on these issues will be compatible with the constitution. Put differently, the fact that Lonergan brings to completion Kleutgen’s purported enterprise of rebutting the focal point of thinkers such as Bautain and Günther does not certify his own focal point as innocuous (from Kleutgen’s point of view). It is necessary, therefore, to test the compatibility of Lonergan’s stances on the abovementioned issues with the constitution. The odds initially seem to be against compatibility, for Lonergan engages several modern thinkers in the development of his epistemology—a move that is contrary to the sensibilities of Kleutgen, a chief author of the constitution.

Lonergan’s approaches the topic of natural knowledge of God differently in his early and later work. In his early work, Lonergan focuses on laying out an argument for the existence of God—an argument that potentially any reader can understand and affirm.
One of his background concerns in this effort is taking seriously the challenges of Kantians. This immediately puts Lonergan in conversation with Bautain and Günther, for they also fashion stances on natural knowledge of God in the face of Kant. In contrast to Bautain and Günther, Lonergan contends that natural knowledge of God involves different types of cognitional operations and an argument—discursive phenomena endemic to raison and Verstand. This, coupled with his explicit statement that by the natural light of reason human beings can know with certitude the existence of God, evinces the whole compatibility of Lonergan’s stance with the constitution, at least in his early work.

In his later work, Lonergan’s stance on natural knowledge of God appears within his treatment of the question of God—the concrete conditions under which knowledge of God is possible for the subject, and viewed as worthwhile. He continues to respond to Kantians, noting that unless one defines an object as what is intended in questioning and known by answering questions, God cannot be an object. For Lonergan, the natural light of human reason, the discursive power to ask and answer questions, is the unverifiable principle by which human beings proceed from knowledge of this world to knowledge of God. Ever further questions eventually lead to the question of God. As to the means by which one can affirm the existence of God, Lonergan refers his readers to his argument for the existence of God. This is significant, for it shows that Lonergan does not abandon the argument found in his early work. What is new in the later Lonergan’s treatment of natural knowledge of God is his contention that the authors of the constitution address a quaestio iuris, not a quaestio facti. In other words, the authors deal with human beings in the abstract and prescind from the various concrete conditions under which knowledge of
God is possible for the subject. In his later work, Lonergan tends to highlight such conditions, focusing on intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. He concludes that acquiring certain knowledge of God’s existence prior to religious conversion is possible, albeit rare. To identify it as the exception does not conflict with the constitution, hence the whole compatibility of Lonergan’s stance on natural knowledge of God.

Another similarity between the authors of the constitution and Lonergan is that both address the acts that lead to faith and faith itself. The story becomes more complicated, however, since there is a stronger contrast between the early and later Lonergan’s stance on these issues.

In his account of the acts that lead to faith, the early Lonergan integrates classical categories, such as judgments of credibility and credendity, with the categories of his epistemology. This is one of numerous instances in which the early Lonergan both *upholds* and—by way of his epistemology—*augments* the views of the authors of the constitution. With respect to faith itself, the early Lonergan follows the constitution closely. He defines faith as a supernatural virtue and makes recourse to the intellect and the will in his description of the assent of faith. Moreover, he defends the possibility of some understanding of the mysteries of faith through the analogy of nature. In addressing the problem of evil, Lonergan states that the solution, in its cognitional aspect, will consist of a collaboration of human beings with each other and with God in the pursuit of truth. This collaboration will involve some variety of faith. The act of faith is an assent to truths transmitted through the collaboration; the motive of faith is the omniscience, goodness, and omnipotence of God. Here again, Lonergan integrates classical categories
with his epistemology in a way that leaves his stance wholly compatible with the constitution.

Two new points of emphasis emerge in the later Lonergan’s work: an emphasis on interiority, or more specifically, on the modern differentiations of consciousness that interiority permits, and an emphasis on the fourth level of consciousness. The later Lonergan’s emphasis on the modern differentiations—the scientific, the scholarly, and the modern philosophic—is significant since he finds neo-Thomists, such as Kleutgen, to be unfamiliar with them. Moreover, when Lonergan states that thinkers who engage the modern differentiations more adequately apprehend objects of investigation, he implies that neo-Thomists, such as Kleutgen, less adequately apprehend objects of investigation, including faith, reason, and the relationship between them. The other new point of emphasis in the later Lonergan’s work is the fourth level of consciousness, the level of decision. Although Lonergan rejects a dwarfing of the first three levels of consciousness, he commends the greater emphasis on the fourth level that emerges in the eighteenth century. These new points of emphasis heavily influence the later Lonergan’s stance on the acts that lead to faith and faith itself.

In his account of the acts that lead to faith, the later Lonergan finds the modern differentiations of consciousness to reveal the hollowness of the classical use of the preambles of faith. Among the alternatives that contemporary thinkers advance, Lonergan supports that which focuses on the preverbal and preconceptual foundations of religion. As a consequence, he foregrounds religious experience as that which precedes faith, not a judgment of credibility, a judgment of credendity, and so forth. He defines religious experience as a conscious dynamic state of love, joy, and peace that occupies the fourth
level of consciousness. This preverbal and preconceptual foundation is what the apologist should appeal to. The later Lonergan’s envisagement of apologetics is not incompatible with the constitution, for he does not state that divine revelation cannot be made credible by external signs, or that human beings ought to be moved to faith by internal experience alone as an alternative. Nevertheless, in terms of what precedes faith, he does portray internal (religious) experience as in fact the norm. Moreover, his view that right reason is an abstraction, and that one cannot expect the motives of credibility to be effective for all persons, contradicts the declaration that they are suited to the intelligence of all. Such is the basis for labeling his later stance on the acts that lead to faith narrowly compatible with the constitution.

The later Lonergan characterizes faith as a kind of affective knowledge that is more explicit than religious experience, but less explicit than a conceptualization of it. Faith is a kind of knowledge reached through the discernment of value and the judgments of value of a person in love unrestrictedly. The later Lonergan distinguishes faith from religious believing, namely accepting the judgments of fact and value that a religion proposes. Lonergan insists that religious believing has the same structure as believing in general, thus it is a discursive process. This distinguishes Lonergan’s position from Bautain’s, where accepting the judgments that a religion proposes involves an intuitive sense of their truth, and from Günther’s, where it involves an intuition of their necessity.

On the topic of religious belief, then, Lonergan both upholds and—by way of his epistemology—augments the views of the authors of the constitution. Such is not the case with some aspects of his treatment of faith. Whereas the authors of the constitution identify the preambles of faith as the potential common ground among Christians and
persons from other religions, the later Lonergan identifies *faith* as the common ground among Christians and persons from other religions. This would seem to merit labeling his later stance incompatible, but elsewhere Lonergan speaks of the assent of faith in a way that is consistent with the constitution, hence the aptness of the label, *narrowly compatible*.

**Implication of the Story**

The story that I have told calls theologians to be attentive to the fact that a seemingly inconspicuous philosophical proposal—namely, Kant’s account of three cognitive faculties—can have substantial intra-ecclesial consequences decades later. The intra-ecclesial consequences that I am referring to are Bautain and Günther’s appropriation of Jacobi’s epistemic response to Kant. Bautain and Günther would not have fashioned their atypical characterizations of faith, reason, and the relationship between them if Jacobi’s atypical epistemology was unavailable to them. Furthermore, without Bautain and Günther’s proposals to react to, the authors of the constitution would not have framed the faith-reason relation in the way that they did. In fact, if McCool is correct that some variety of the epistemology of *Vernunft* and *Verstand* underlies the proposals of Bautain, Hermes, the Tübingen theologians, Günther, and the ontologists, then it is possible that in their absence the constitution would not have been written.

**Investigations that the Story Encourages**

Let me end by specifying three further lines of investigation that the story encourages. First, the story encourages further investigation of the original *Schwerpunkt* thesis. A comprehensive examination of Kleutgen’s and other neo-Thomists’ writings
may discover some passage in which the thesis is advanced in the robust way that McCool contends it is. Second, the story encourages further investigation of other thinkers implicitly argued against in the constitution, and of the extent to which they, too, are influenced by the Vernunft-Verstand dynamic. Third, the story encourages further investigation into Lonergan’s familiarity with Kant’s epistemology and the role it plays in the development of his stances on both philosophical and theological issues.
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