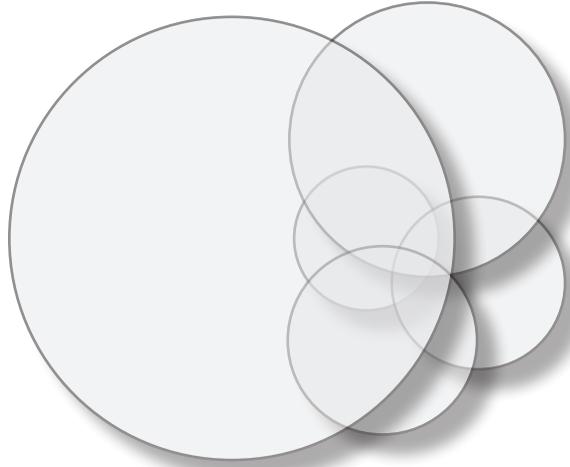


DUMBBING DOWN The Lowest Common Denominator



Venn Diagram

- ▶ Each circle represents a specific culture, each with its own intentions and horizon.
- ▶ Effective dialogue is restricted to overlapping areas between any two or more horizons.
- ▶ The public sphere is restricted to the lowest common denominator among the aggregate of all horizons. This usually means a down-grading of terminal value to either wealth or power—or both—as fundamental reality.
- ▶ Lonergan’s transcendental method provides the only means to put each horizon into a higher perspective, thus making true encounters possible.

TWO VIDEOS FOR CONTRASTING ORIENTATIONS

David P. Goldman,
The Truth About China’s Global Plan
Philosophyinsights, March 8, 2018, 12:39
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GScutLhhngo&list=PLo1Jq23H_s5XVxAseMKYJA4aH3cOI07si&index=10&t=0s

Thomas Sowell,
Dismantling the Ideology of “Social Justice”
Philosophyinsights, September 5, 2017, 15:44
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7FrBYi8pKA&list=PLo1Jq23H_s5XVxAseMKYJA4aH3cOI07si&index=39

Cosmopolis June 6, 2018 Meeting White Board Notes, RCB

OUR ROOTS

The work we are attempting to do rests on a tripod consisting of three legs:

- ▶ the interventionist transdisciplinary approach of Otto Friedman,
- ▶ the comprehensive transcendental method of Bernard Lonergan, and
- ▶ the “Christ Event” that permeates history.

Friedman’s approach was constructed to enable him to trouble shoot organizations using both a set of 16 fundamental socio-political variable and a multi-stage set of tasks that needed to be completed in the proper order. The variables are laid out in the handbook, but what we are concerned with are the operations, for it is in these operations that Lonergan’s work becomes a necessity.

- Orientation** (foundational position taken)
- Evaluation** (symptoms of a problem)
- Diagnosis** (working out the root causes)
- Prognosis** (what happens if left untreated)
- Remedial** (scope and constraints on action)

(The opening page of www.sabotshot.ca sketches out the basic position on each of these, ending with the remedial action of facilitating an emergent cosmopolis.)

Lonergan’s approach we have covered elsewhere. But his transcendental method provides the solution to the problem of true transdisciplinary work by shifting to a higher perspective in which one comes to understand in broad outline all that there is to know.

In both Insight and Method we have a set of conceptual tools to carry out the detailed orientation, evaluation, diagnosis, etc. of Friedman’s approach—with the added bonus of his identification of long term decline with common sense bias, the lack of any self-correcting mechanism to this bias, and the theoretical solution for remedial action (evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, and cosmopolis). So we now have transcendental precepts, authenticity (both individual and

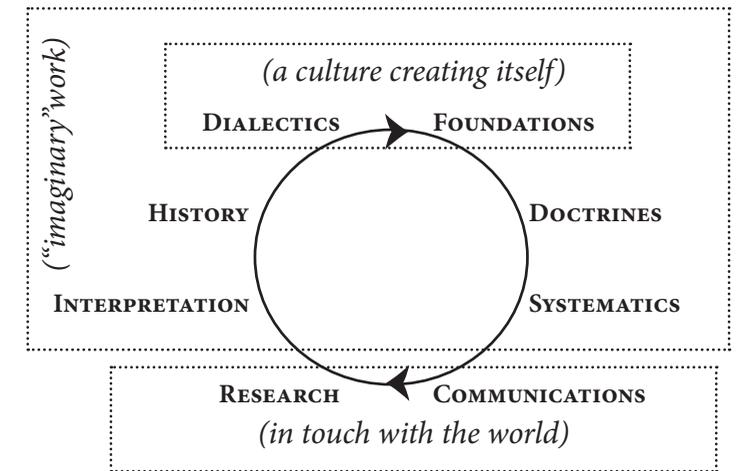
collective), conversion (intellectual, moral, and religious), horizons (intentions, boundaries, categories), good of order and terminal value, living in a world mediated by meaning, and above all the necessity to develop an historical consciousness.

The Christ Event, for the lack of a better term, refers to the possibility of joining with Christ in his hypostatic union binding human and divine together as one. This event reverberates in history, both forward and backward in time, and across space as well in such a way that other cultures are primed for participation. Its natural expression in human affairs is a divinized subjectivity that radically transforms the individual grounded in a falling in love with God that is at the center of religious conversion. In effect, such a conversion is the final outcome of any group dedicated to ongoing conversion. And cosmopolis is such a group, for without intellectual, moral, and religious conversion we would not be cleansed of our blind spots. Left intact, anything we do would only add to the confusion.

This third leg of our endeavor has always been there from the very beginning. But it is not until now that it is being made explicit as an important part of our project. For if we are to talk about an evaluative history at the level of dialectics, we must talk about the ultimate human value—that terminal value we know as the Trinity. Don’t worry about not accepting this, for we start not at the end point but from where we are. If we are open, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible we may end up there—but even that possibility is up to the Divine Mystery.

This is why our current project on socio-political markers for progress and decline are so important: they ground any evaluative history.

LIBERATION



- ▶ When we are in touch with the world, we do so through a world mediated by meaning. The functional specialty of communications deals with the practical aspects of intervening in world processes, in creating and maintaining institutions, and in learning to live with others. The world we live in is a world of objects and intentions encapsulated in the artifacts around us, hence research.
- ▶ If the creation of a culture’s world mediated by meaning is to have any rational roots, its members must engage in a linked series of specialties such that the prior one provides the data while the specialty in turn provides data to the next one.
- ▶ Most people are familiar with interpretation and history (recovering what has been accomplished) and to some extent doctrines and systematics (setting the grounds for acting in the world). But few attend to the roots or their own being, their own orientation in the world, the soundness of their own horizon and intentions operative at the cognitive level of deciding.
- ▶ A culture creates itself at this level of deciding, specifically at the pivot point between encountering the fundamental existential questions of the day (dialectics) and through discernment taking a position (foundations). This must be a collaborative effort, for the world has become too complex for any one person to comprehend.
- ▶ It is at this pivot point that our cosmopolis project has its roots. Therefore we are concerned long-term decline as a reality in our lives, the evaluative history that grounds terminal value, and the soundness of our foundations when it comes to clearing ourselves of various blind spots we have inherited from our culture.