

These Gramscian memes were designed to destroy classical structures of meaning. This might not have worked if it were not for the increasing secularization of the public space in Western societies undercut Judeo-Christian patterns of living, a consequence of both the Romantic period as well as the Enlightenment.

Lonergan deals with ***the loss of classical cultural norms*** by appealing to the contemporary emphasis on method, on procedures, rather than absolute truths as the primary means of controlling meaning. To do this, he draws upon the empirical sciences' reliance on the principles of the scientific method not as a strict model to pursue but as an example of one way in which such control can be obtained. The remainder of *Method* lays out the appropriate procedures for the humanities in general and theology in particular, basing his transcendental method on the fundamental operations of the conscious mind and the unrestricted desire to know.

As part of this, a Cosmopolis organization is heavily involved in the ***formation of those who seek freedom***, who seek to be liberated from the chains we ourselves have forged. After all, while we may know the "proper" way for human to live, this means nothing if we cannot follow the path that has been laid out for us by the Divine Mystery. Indeed, even being able to discern the "right" path is a function of the chains that bind us. It is like a patient whose doctor knows exactly what needs to be done to restore him or her to health and yet is blocked by the patient who refuses to accept the doctor's recommendations. The recent measles outbreak is due to a great extent to the rejection of inoculations because of a fear among the population that the injections themselves are harmful.



There are local problems and there are large scale institutional problems. While local issues may grab one's attention and efforts, it is large scale fundamental institutional changes that really make the difference. For example, a pan-fire in a kitchen means nothing if the entire neighborhood is burning down. The moral? Pay attention to fundamental institutional changes, for they will be the primary variable affecting your well-being. [What then is the highest level "institutional" change? I would maintain that it lies in the dialectic between a life-affirming Divine Mystery and a life-denying "Satanic" generative principle that creates a hell on earth.]



Why should we do this Cosmopolis work? Is not the situation hopeless, well beyond our own efforts? Perhaps it is, but even so this does not mean the effort must not be made [if we are to respect ourselves as reasonable and responsible human beings]. There are a number of other considerations. For example, not only do we as human beings tend to focus on the negative but our knowledge of what is going on is limited by our own limited existence in time and space; there may be others out there now who are waiting for what we have to offer. Then again, to

acknowledge the Divine Mystery is to accept that only this mystery's universal perspective truly applies to human affairs; our own knowledge is always proportional to who we are as a species. And if one accepts the existence of a "mystical body of Christ", then it is quite possible that our own faith and hope builds the faith and hope of others in similar situations spread across all of time and space.

The one that intrigues me is that each advance allows others coming after us to go that much further, so by refusing to do this work we are in effect forcing later generations to it rather than expend their efforts on building upon what has already been done.



We live in a period where knowledge of history is no longer desirable, where the focus is on creating a better world, a "utopian" world through social justice where the lessons of the past are irrelevant. Such an ideal world requires a disdain of all that has come before, since why undertake a radical change in human affairs unless the situation were desperate? Living in an a-historical world removes us from that great Jewish innovation: a linear perspective on time rather than the "eternal hills" of a pagan cyclic time. Within this linear perspective, humankind is on a long journey of gradual improvements punctuated by moments of radical alterations that jump-start the human trek toward the Divine Mystery.

So what are a few of these developments that are part and parcel of an historical consciousness?

- The notion of a single unknowable God that reveals an ethical standard for all human beings, quite a change from a universe of pagan gods whose often arbitrary involvement in human affairs require appeasement. The Greek and Roman pantheons of all-to-human gods are a case in point.
- The shift from cyclic time to that of a linear perspective with a beginning and end point, a radical innovation that exposed the possibility of progress as well as decline over long periods of time. The future could be radically different from the present.
- A reframing of the way we interpret contemporary events, where for example the national socialist's concentration camps can be understood as the concrete expression of the natural end point of following a "satanic" generative principle in human affairs or the radical shift in understanding that now holds governments accountable to their citizens [the latter is truly a radical shift in expectations; up until recently in human history, the norm has been that the powerful can do whatever they want to do without any constraint on the part of those they rule].
- Western society is a reflective one, where being critical of one's own behavior is normative. This in itself is a radical change in human existence, one that made slavery outlawed in the Western world. That slavery is still common in non-Western societies only demonstrates what an improvement such a reflective conscious is in human affairs.
- Pure science is also a major development in human consciousness. Most civilizations have an applied form of empirical knowledge, be it medical or technological. But the unrestricted pursuit of scientific knowledge for its own sake is a radical shift that we

take for granted. Yet even its possibility came about only because of a belief in the possibility of regular laws of nature. For pagan societies, such laws cannot be affirmed for the simple reason that the human world is experienced as conditional—if only because of the internal fights and individual pursuits of the gods. In the ancient world, the only regularity was to be found in the stars—so it was a major threat when the retrograde motion of Mars was observed. And comets were harbingers of evil, for they disturbed the eternal movement of the stars.

- The wealth-creating system created by the Victorians and the Industrial Revolution. Up to this point, all wealth was based on a solar energy economy that supported a small elite. This made politics a battlefield, for the possession of political power gave access to the means of distributing what wealth there was. Wealth creation defanged politics for the simple reason that there could be thousands of millionaires while there could be only one prime minister, king, or tyrant. The downside to wealth creation is its destructive effect on societies who depended on traditions to exist. However, it is no longer possible to return to traditional ways of living, for to do so would remove much of the industrial capabilities that support current population levels. The result would be mass famine on a scale not previously encountered.



We live in a psychological present that incorporates past, present, and future into a single moment of experience. As such, created self-affirming images of the past as well as the future, combined with images of what it means to be human and of human society, are the predominant elements. From multiple individual experiences comes the creation of a second level horizon that provides a common perspective of both time and space that is part and parcel of common sense understanding. But there is a third level horizon that constructs an invariant structure of time and space that provides a high level perspective on all of human history. We don't have a truly accurate theory of history, although Lonergan maintained that Arnold Toynbee's theory of history came close. Lonergan's own work sheds light on the fundamental dynamics of progress, decline, reversal, or collapse.

The various charts that we have produced over the years are an expression of this higher level of human historical consciousness. "What is going on?" from a higher perspective. Note that higher perspective consist of different things and different operations upon things in a higher viewpoint that puts all lower ones in context. So in mathematics, the things and operations in algebra are different from those at the level of arithmetic (variables, negative numbers, imaginary numbers, and the full extension of operations for example).



Divine love & human love, and the problem of understanding the Divine based on human proportionality. There are a variety of human expressions of love, from mother-child and family-community, to an "eros" of the spirit. The problem is that trying to understand the divine's approach based solely on human experiences is bound to distort and mislead what it

means to be human. The problem is that human experiences are essentially bound to pagan love of family and clan and not to an invisible omnipotent divinity whose presence is announced by the very lack of presence [not really a paradox, as the actual presence of such a being would negate any possibility of human freedom; the presence of the divine is expressed through individuals].

You cannot talk about something as personal as love and freedom when you haven't experienced the reality of such states of being. To talk about liberty and freedom to one who hasn't had the experience is to talk about possibilities without knowledge. How can one talk about self-constructed chains when no chains are recognized?

Humility is important. How often has it been said that doctors make the worse patients? Or teachers the hardest to teach (driving training)? There's a degree of personal protection of status for the simple reason that to lose status is to lose access to resources. Willingness is perhaps the essential feature. "Man hear what he wants to hear, and disregards the rest" [Simon & Garfunkel, *The Boxer*].



Possible to do: reframing Gramscian memes and Alinsky ethics in an historical context.

The OODA Cycle. Observe, orientate, decide, act: whoever has the tightest cycle has the edge over those whose response time is far slower. A high level perspective provides a far faster way of observing and orienting oneself to fundamental institutional changes. Lonergan's transcendental method combined with the collective methodology for being and doing forms a powerful tool for reducing the time to not only complete one such cycle but lay the foundations for a series of such cycles. [The problem with incomplete or inaccurate methods is that the world becomes filled with "unexpected events" whose occurrence could have been anticipated with a better scheme of understanding, and this includes the possibility of "black swans" and shifts to higher perspectives.]

Dream Time. Australian Aborigines live in two realities: a "dream time" of the spirit and the immediate time of the body. Of the two, the real reality is that of the spirit, the "dream time" that reveals and expresses the deeper currents of human living that lie beyond human comprehension. For us, a combination of a belief in the reality of the Divine Mystery in human affairs combined with a depth of historical understanding capable of expression such a mystery provides the reality of an emergent Cosmopolis. [The details may differ, but the underlying motif remains the same.]

Learning how to Learn. Mathematics swims in a sea of functions that express the relationships between different variables. It is possible, when one first starts to swim in this sea, to memorize the functions that one needs to know. But with a shift to higher mathematics, there are simply too many functions to possibly commit to memory. What one needs to master is the ability to derive the necessary function within the conditions of the situation, a matter of learning how to

learn. This higher level of learning how to learn supersedes any reliance on accepted beliefs or in other words on a classical system of belief.

The importance of this can be observed in one cause of fundamental institutional changes of our times: ***the proliferation of atomic weapons***. Up to recent times, such weapons have been in the hands of two major powers—a situation that eventually led to the doctrine of mutual assured destruction (MAD). But this historical situation is rapidly changing with the spread of such weapons to other states such as Britain, France, China, South Africa, India, Pakistan, and North Korea. And that is only the start. Also in the race is Iran, and if Iran becomes a fully nuclear power the Saudis will not be far behind (apparently they have jump-start arrangements with Pakistan). Already Japan and South Korea are considering going fully nuclear in response to an escalating North Korean threat.

The problem is given such a proliferation no one knows what are the appropriate strategies. Talk about a steep learning curve, a desperate need for answers that will dominate international affairs for many years to come.



There are only a few million human beings that really know how things work. If 80-90% of the population ceased to exist, yet these few remained, civilization could potentially rebuild itself. After all, it was the presence of skilled personnel that enabled Germany to rebuild so quickly after the Second World War. Yet, if these few were to disappear, we would quickly fall into a dark age where even the knowledge of how to grow food would be reduced to little more than back-yard gardening.

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