

**The following is a draft of the fourth chapter of *The Trinity in History*.**

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## **4 Mimesis**

I have called attention to the four-point hypothesis that will provide the central special-categorical framework for our systematic theology. It speaks of created imitations of the divine relations, through a participation in those relations effected by grace. I have also emphasized that the key to the immanent constitution of these created imitations of the divine relations lies in the field of processions of act from act in the spiritual dimension of consciousness. There are natural processions of act from act that provide the traditional analogy for the Trinitarian processions: the procession of the word of value judgment from the gift of love, and the procession of loving acts from the gift and its judgment of value. And there are supernatural processions of act from act, for a portion of the hypothesis provides a supernatural psychological analogy for the divine processions, namely, that portion that relates sanctifying grace, which is the gift of God's love, faith as the knowledge born of that gift, and the charity grounding the kind of loving acts that would even return good for evil. These are created participations, respectively, in active and passive spiration. It is here and here alone, in these natural and supernatural processions of act from act, that we may speak of a genuine autonomy in the unfolding of conscious operations and states. In either case we find the procession of a judgment of value from a loving grasp of evidence, and this is the human analogue for the procession of the divine Word. And in either case we find the increasingly habitual procession of acts of love from loving grasp and judgment of value, and this is the human analogue for the procession of the Holy Spirit. It must be emphasized that even the supernatural analogue needs to be understood by analogy with the natural analogues that formed the psychological analogies of Aquinas and the early Lonergan.

Among contemporary authors, René Girard in particular has called our attention to the extremely precarious nature of any human claims to autonomous subjectivity. These precautions are salutary for anyone hoping to resurrect the psychological analogy in trinitarian theology. That analogy speaks of autonomous processions of act from act both in natural process and in the supernatural created participations in active and passive spiration. In each form of the psychological analogy what matters is a procession of judgment of value from grasp of evidence and a procession of love from the grasp and judgment functioning as one principle of commitment. It is in this sense and this sense alone that the hypothesis speaks of autonomy. Our authenticity lies in the self-transcendence that characterizes these processions. But not only is such authenticity, which is still our most prized possession, ever precarious, ever a withdrawal from unauthenticity, but also ‘every successful withdrawal only brings to light the need for still further withdrawals.’<sup>1</sup> Girard’s thought is, in many ways, a stark reminder of the precariousness of all human claims to the autonomous processions that alone guarantee human authenticity.

Lonergan has called attention to authenticity and unauthenticity in the realms of understanding, truth, moral development, and religion:<sup>2</sup> the areas that are positively

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1 Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 110. An earlier presentation of some of the ideas contained in this and the preceding chapter has been expected to for some time to appear in *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, under the title ‘Imitating the Divine Relations: A Theological Contribution to Mimetic Theory.’ This paper may appear on the website [www.robertmdoran.com](http://www.robertmdoran.com) before it manages to find its way into *Method*.

2 Ibid.: ‘Our advance in understanding is also the elimination of oversights and misunderstandings. Our advance in truth is also the correction of mistakes and errors. Our moral development is through repentance for our sins. Genuine religion is discovered and realized by redemption from the many traps of religious aberration.’

treated when he speaks of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. Throughout my own work I have been calling attention to a distinct dimension of the subject, of authenticity, of conversion. This distinct dimension affects primarily Lonergan's first 'way of being conscious,' and so I have spoken of a psychic conversion. Girard's work on the nature of human desire will give us a better purchase, I think, on this psychic dimension than other current or recent explorations, and being very clear with him about the character of false mimesis and deviated transcendence, which are very common precisely *in* intellectual, moral, and religious discourse, will help us isolate much more clearly just where in consciousness the genuine *imago Dei* really lies. For while the *imago Dei* is implanted in the very nature of human consciousness, it is not some automatic functioning that we need simply locate through introspective analysis or some other technique. Lonergan writes of the end of the age of innocence, in which it was presumed that human authenticity could be taken for granted.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps that illusion infected systematic theology, even very good systematic theology! At any rate, we must be very clear that the precise locating of the *imago Dei* that can function in a psychological analogy for the divine processions is crucial for systematics, and just as crucial for human self-understanding. It will clarify the two dimensions of consciousness that, quoting Lonergan, we referred to in the previous chapter, and ultimately it will give us a firmer hold on what does and does not constitute a valid analogy for the divine processions. Does the autonomous, transcendental realm of human operating that Lonergan relies on for this analogy really exist, or is the claim that we are operating from that kind of autonomy the kind of claim that Girard has exposed as illusory? The question cannot be evaded, especially by Lonergan students, who have tended to downplay the role of psychic bias, the need for psychic conversion, and the crucial role of psychic self-

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3 See Bernard Lonergan, 'The Ongoing Genesis of Methods,' *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985) passim.

appropriation in establishing theological foundations. It is best to raise the question at the outset, not only for the sake of the Trinitarian analogy in itself, but also to draw attention to the historical context in which we wish our systematics of the Trinity to unfold. For ‘The Trinity in History’ would presumably have a great deal to do and say about the problems of violence, and the collusion of religion in violence, problems that are at the heart of Girard’s work. Relating the four-point hypothesis to Girard’s mimetic theory from the outset of our endeavors is crucial for unpacking on the level of our time the meaning of the reign of God, and only such unpacking will keep our systematic theology in some sort of continuity with the mission of the incarnate Word in history.

Again, despite his acknowledgment of the two dimensions of consciousness, Lonergan’s emphasis is on the distinction within the second dimension, the spiritual or intellectual dimension, between spontaneous and autonomous processions, that is, between what Scholastic language called *processiones operationis* and *processiones operati*, or, again, between processions of act from potency and processions of act from act. This distinction is relatively easy to grasp and to affirm once one has admitted the distinct realm constituted by the second ‘way of being conscious.’ A much larger problem lies in distinguishing the two ways in the first place and in acknowledging that the two ways of being conscious also signal two modalities of human desire – a point that becomes particularly clear when we grasp the distinct character of those spiritual processions that we are calling autonomous, that is, the processions of act from act in the order of the human spirit. I proceed on the assumptions (1) that what Girard has written about mimetic desire concerns desire in the first ‘way of being conscious,’ that is, in the sensitive, psychic dimension of consciousness, but also (2) that this dimension penetrates our spiritual orientation to the intelligible, the true and the real, and the good, for better or for worse, and so that distorted mimetic desire can infect human spiritual operations.

## **1 A Dialectic of Desire**

The major component of René Girard's worldview is the notion of mimetic or triangular desire, and it is acquisitive mimesis in particular that we must be concerned about, for such mimesis easily becomes conflictual as the object drops out of sight and the subject becomes concerned with the person who had mediated his or her desire in the first place. When such conflictual mimesis spreads, so that it infects the entire group, its destructive power can be stemmed only if it is turned onto one individual or group, a scapegoat whose exclusion through murder or expulsion alone brings peace and reconciliation to the community.

Ultimately, this vision will figure centrally in our soteriology, filling out and enriching enormously Lonergan's theology of the 'law of the Cross,' which provides, as it were, a heuristic structure that to a large extent is given specific determination by the dynamics that Girard discloses. But for the moment my concern is exclusively with the assistance Girard gives us in gaining precision on the notions of desire and imitation, in order to isolate, as distinct from acquisitive mimetic desire, the authentically autonomous dimension of human consciousness from which a genuine analogy may be drawn for an obscure understanding of the divine processions.

The mediation of mimetic desire can be either external or internal, to use Girard's terminology. While Girard groups mediated desires into these two fundamental categories, he allows that within this division there 'can be an infinite number of secondary distinctions.'<sup>4</sup> There is *external mediation* of desire when the distance between the subject and the model is 'sufficient to eliminate any contact between the two spheres of possibilities of which the mediator and the subject occupy the respective centers.' And there is *internal mediation* when this distance 'is sufficiently reduced to allow these two

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4 René Girard, Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1966) 9.

spheres to penetrate each other more or less profoundly.<sup>5</sup> The 'distance' referred to in either case is, of course, not primarily physical but psychological or symbolic or spiritual. Thus, to cite perhaps Girard's favorite example, Quixote and Sancho are physically together, but still there is no rivalry between them, and their harmony is never seriously troubled, even as Sancho borrows almost all of his desires from Quixote, who himself is imitating the legendary Amadis of Gaul. 'The hero of external mediation proclaims aloud the true nature of his or her desire.'<sup>6</sup> One is proud to be the disciple of so worthy a model, as was Quixote with respect to Amadis and as is the Christian with respect to Jesus. The hero of internal mediation, on the other hand, carefully hides his or her efforts to imitate a model. While *all* mimetic desire runs the risk of impairing its victims' perceptions of reality, since the desirability of the object stems not from its own merits but from its designation by the mediator, in internal mediation the result is always conflict, even hatred. That is not the case in external mediation. In internal mediation the rivals can come to resemble each other through the identity of their desires, so that finally they are no more than each other's doubles. The actual source of any desire is so obscured that the subject may even reverse the logical and chronological order of desires in order to hide his or her imitation. That is, one may assert that one's own desire is prior to that of the rival whose desire one is imitating, and that the mediator is responsible for the rivalry. Everything that originates with the mediator is systematically belittled although still secretly desired. The mediator becomes a shrewd and diabolical enemy who tries to rob the subject of his or her most prized possessions and obstinately thwarts his or her most legitimate ambitions. Desiring individuals come to believe in the autonomy of their desires, and so deny the importance of the mediator.

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5 Ibid.

6 Ibid. 10.

Imitation thus occurs not only in the sphere of representation or knowledge, as Plato had emphasized, but also in the sphere of appropriating objects. We learn what to desire by copying the desires of others. Our desires are rooted not in their objects nor in ourselves but in a third party, the model or mediator, whose desire we imitate in the hope of resembling him or her. Thus the ground of desire resides, not in any one subject, but *between* subjects. This throws into question the intrinsic desirability of the object, recasting its value as a product of the interpersonal, or in Girard's term 'interdividual,' relation. It recasts object-relations theories, including Freudian psychoanalysis. My own appropriation of Girard's work will emphasize that what Lonergan calls the first 'way of being conscious' is precisely interdividual in many of its manifestations, that psychic development entails the negotiation of this interdividual field in the direction of what Jung calls individuation, that this negotiation calls upon the operations of the second 'way of being conscious,' that inadequate negotiations of the interdividual field can and will distort this second way, and that authentic negotiation of the same field will allow the second way to flourish in the development of the person. It remains true, however, that this authentic negotiation is a function of the second way itself, that is, of insight, judgment, and moral responsibility.

The notion of mimetic desire was worked out by Girard in the book *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, which contains studies of Cervantes, Dante, Stendhal, Proust, and Dostoyevsky. The book was first published in French in 1961, with the title *Mensonge romantique et vérité romanesque*. Those novels that portray desire as spontaneous and autonomous<sup>7</sup> embody the *mensonge romantique*, the romantic lie. Those novels that

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<sup>7</sup> Note Girard's way of conjoining the words 'spontaneous' and 'autonomous,' whereas Lonergan distinguishes them. It is only the *processions of act from act in the spiritual realm* that Lonergan calls autonomous, since these processions are governed *not* by the interdividual field that constitutes the first way of being conscious and that can

acknowledge that desire is triangular convey the *vérité romanesque*. The romantic lie valorizes all instances of originality and spontaneity as indicators of personal superiority. The romantic construal of desire is that of a straight line running between a desiring subject and an intrinsically valuable desired object. The *vérité romanesque*, on the other hand, describes the interdividual situation of desire. The conclusion to such a work may introduce a new mode of interpersonal relations, one that is not predicated on the slavish but largely unwitting imitation of others, one that rather displays an authentic negotiation of this intersubjective field through operations that in fact *are* genuinely autonomous because they entail processions of act from act in the spiritual realm. We cannot attain total independence from others, in some sort of putative heroism that is really self-possessed pride. The latter is still thoroughly entangled with the Other, in an attempt to distinguish oneself from them. What we can attain is a purified relationality that is not caught up in imitative violence. But we can do this only through a recognition of the fact that we have indeed been so caught up and through a decision to allow ourselves to be freed from such contagion. Novels that distinguish these components in human relations

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infect the second way as well, nor by the emergence of answers from questions, of act from potency, that constitutes the spontaneity even of the second way of being conscious, but by the transcendental laws of the human spirit as, in its movement from experience through understanding and judgment to right decision, it manifests along the way not only spontaneous emergences of act from potency but careful, self-possessed, assured originations of new acts from previous acts: of inner words of hypothetical conceptualization from insightful grasp of intelligibility, of judgments of fact from the reflective grasp of the sufficiency of evidence, of judgments of value from loving grasp of the evidence of goodness, and of loving acts from collaboration of loving grasp and the word of value that it has uttered.

are for Girard far more faithful to the true human condition than those that treat desire as spontaneous, autonomous, and directly object-related.

*Desire, Deceit, and the Novel* begins with the following quotation from *Don Quixote*:

I want you to know, Sancho, that the famous Amadis of Gaul was one of the most perfect knight errants. But what am I saying, one of the most perfect? I should say the only, the first, the unique, the master and lord of all those who existed in the world ... I think ... that, when a painter wants to become famous for his art he tries to imitate the originals of the best masters he knows; the same rule applies to most important jobs or exercises which contribute to the embellishment of republics; thus the man who wishes to be known as careful and patient should and does imitate Ulysses, in whose person and works Homer paints for us a vivid portrait of carefulness and patience, just as Virgil shows us in the person of Aeneas the valor of a pious son and the wisdom of a valiant captain; and it is understood that they depict them not as they are but as they should be, to provide an example of virtue for centuries to come. In the same way Amadis was the pole, the star, the sun for brave and amorous knights, and we others who fight under the banner of love and chivalry should imitate him. Thus, my friend Sancho, I reckon that whoever imitates him best will come closest to perfect chivalry.

For Girard this means that Quixote ‘has surrendered to Amadis the individual’s fundamental prerogative: he no longer chooses the objects of his own desire – Amadis must choose for him. The disciple pursues objects which are determined for him, or at least seem to be determined for him, by the model of all chivalry. We shall call this model the *mediator* of desire.’<sup>8</sup> In romantic works of fiction, the characters have desires

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<sup>8</sup> Girard, *Desire, Deceit, and the Novel* 1-2.

which are simpler than Don Quixote's. There is no mediator, there is only the subject and the object. But, says Girard, '... the great writers apprehend intuitively and concretely, through the medium of their art, if not formally, the system in which they were first imprisoned together with their contemporaries,'<sup>9</sup> the system of triangular desire, of which we are all victims. And we are victims because 'from the moment the mediator's influence is felt, the sense of reality is lost and judgment is paralyzed.'<sup>10</sup> We 'borrow [our] desires from the Other in a movement which is so fundamental and primitive that [we] completely confuse it with the will to be Oneself.'<sup>11</sup>

Note that literature portrays two varieties of such imitative desire. The person whom Stendhal refers to as *vaniteux* – the vain person – cannot draw his or her desires from his or her own resources, but must borrow them from others. 'A *vaniteux* will desire any object so long as he is convinced that it is already desired by another person whom he admires. The mediator here is a *rival*, brought into existence as a rival by vanity, and that same vanity demands his defeat.'<sup>12</sup> But this kind of rivalry between the mediator and the one who desires is quite different from the situation of Quixote: 'Amadis cannot vie with Don Quixote in the protection of orphans in distress, he cannot slaughter giants in his place.'<sup>13</sup> Quixote's situation is not one of competing desires; the mediator is not also a rival or obstacle. Obviously, the same is true of the Christian's imitation of Christ, if it is genuine. And the difference is constituted by an 'enormous spiritual gap'<sup>14</sup> between, for example, Quixote and Stendhal's *vaniteux*.

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9 Ibid. 3.

10 Ibid. 4.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid. 7.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid. 8.

Relationships of internal mediation can become so complex and impossible that the only way out of the bind is to break the circle of desire. But even this can be a ploy. Renunciation can take place for the sake of the desire itself. The goal can be to discourage further imitation, but if the object desired is another person, this renunciation can actually occur for the sake of secretly opening the road to the desired object by making the desired object desire oneself. One who feigns indifference can seem to the desired object to be so self-possessed that this seeming self-mastery and peace becomes itself an object of desire on the part of the subject's own object of desire. The object now desires the subject who desires the object. Depending on the ontological emptiness of the object and the feigned or even real self-mastery of the subject, the object may want to absorb the very being of the subject into his or her own. The subject who was imitating the model or mediator of desire now becomes imitated by the object, desire for whom was mediated by the model or mediator.

It is here, in these complications, that Girard finds the source of all mimetic desire: 'Imitative desire is always a desire to be Another' because of the radical insufficiency of one's own very being.<sup>15</sup> To covet what the other desires is to covet the other's essence. In the first case this was a matter of the subject desiring the person who is also desired by the model or mediator: the subject really wants not only what the mediator wants or perhaps has, but even what the mediator is. In the second case, when the subject feigns being above it all, the object now desires the self-sufficiency that the subject seems to be displaying. In either case, this conception of desire presupposes a radical insufficiency in the very being of the desiring individual. This individual must be painfully conscious of his or her own emptiness to crave so desperately the fullness of being that supposedly lies in others. This attraction to the 'putative autarky'<sup>16</sup> of the other

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15 See Fleming, *René Girard: Violence and Mimesis* 24.

16 Ibid.

Girard calls *metaphysical desire*, because the figures onto whom it is projected mediate being for us; it is via them that we seek to become real, and it is through wanting their very being that we come to imitate them. The wish to absorb, or to be absorbed into, the substance of the Other implies an insuperable revulsion for one's own substance.

Metaphysical desire is masochism or pseudo-masochism: a will to self-destruction as one becomes something or someone other than what one is. As the desire to be absorbed 'suffers disappointment after disappointment, the metaphysical quest is not abandoned: rather, the masochist merely seeks out more powerful mediators from which to attain real, substantial being ... The masochist ... is a casualty of metaphysical desire; he hopes that realizing the desires that he sees in the Other will bring about the hoped-for self-sufficiency and allow him to participate in his divine being. But since the self-sufficiency, divinity, or plenitude that the masochist attributes to the model is illusory, his project to attain the same is doomed from the outset. The masochist vaguely perceives the fruitlessness of his quest but fails to give it up because to do so would mean that the promise of salvation would have to be given up along with it.'<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, the subject who has been rejected can choose to be the tormentor. This is sadism or pseudo-sadism, but it backfires sooner or later. 'Pseudo-sadism emerges at the point when the masochist, who has worshipped violence, begins to emulate those who have blocked his access to objects of desire ... The sadist looks for imitators whom he can torture in the same way that he thought he was tortured prior to adopting the role. Indeed, it is the sadist's prior experience as victim that suggests the appropriate course of action. Yet, the emergence of sadism, of this "dialectical reversal," is by no means the simple "opposite" of masochism: it is, rather, the same condition at a different moment. Nor is the movement from masochism to sadism stable or irreversible; both masochism

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17 Ibid. 25-26.

and sadism are subject to the same double-imperative – of wanting to overcome the rival and simultaneously to be overcome *by* the rival ...<sup>18</sup>

There is, then, a radical ontological sickness at the core of mimetic desire, and especially internal mimetic desire. For Marcel in *Remembrance of Things Past*, so intense is the sense of his own inadequacy that he feels that everyone else, indeed everything around him, possesses more substance than he does.<sup>19</sup> Under these conditions, the search for the mediator who alone can relieve the individual's anguish becomes a constant and all-consuming obsession. As the mediator changes so does one's own being. One self replaces another as one mediator replaces another. Mimetic desire moves from one model to another, destroying the unity and continuity of the individual without the individual's even being aware that this is what is happening. The result is the decomposition of the personality. There is no single unified individual any longer, just a succession of selves brought on by successive mediations.

The 'depredation of internal mediation' is for Girard most acute in the later works of Dostoyevsky. In his heroes the wish to be absorbed into the substance of the Other implies an insuperable revulsion for one's own substance. In Dostoyevsky there can be no final victory, no fulfilment in the world of mediated desire. The only triumph possible is the complete renunciation of mimetic desire and of the ontological malady that accompanies it.

These readings of great novelists gave rise to a new psychological theory that Girard calls interindividual. It begins with a critique of Freudian psychoanalysis. Despite Girard's respect for Freud's acuteness of observation, he claims that Freud hovered around the basic insight without ever coming to acknowledge it. 'Freud's initial mistake consists in taking the sexual appetite to be "the sole motor and basis of [the] psychic

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18 Ibid. 28. One thinks also of Hegel's master-slave relationship.

19 For material in this and the next paragraph, see Golsan, *René Girard and Myth* 13-16.

process.”<sup>20</sup> The sexual drive is, says Girard, ‘subordinate to the mimetic process, which plays a much more vital and decisive role in psychic processes and human actions.’<sup>21</sup> Next, Girard rejects the Freudian premise that desire is object-oriented. The crucial role is that of the mediator, who stimulates and directs the individual’s desires toward the object in question. Third, Girard rejects what he finds to be a fundamental duality in Freudian desire (both Oedipal and narcissistic). There is only one desire, in the realm at least of acquisitive or appropriative wishes, and it is always mimetic.<sup>22</sup>

I have gone into this much detail on Girard’s position at this point in the work – and Girard will return in much greater abundance later – for several reasons. First, I wish to indicate that there is a much greater complexity to the ‘two ways of being conscious’ than might be obvious from Lonergan’s description. The mimetic model of desire indicates how much more enters into the first way than is indicated in Lonergan’s description, or for that matter in Lonergan’s portrayal of dramatic bias in chapter 6 of *Insight*. In this first way, as we have seen, we are by and large the passive recipients of ‘what we sense and imagine, our desires and fears, our delights and sorrows, our joys and sadness.’ But that passive reception is not some simple, unidimensional thing. It is extraordinarily complex, and the mimetic model of desire throws more light on that complexity than any other position of which I am aware.

Next, Girard’s position shows the interrelations of the two ‘ways of being conscious.’ For one thing, it is ultimately a spiritual emptiness that leads to the derailments of mimetic desire, an emptiness redolent of Augustine’s ‘You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.’ The ontological sickness pertains to the second way, but mimetic desire manifests how it contaminates the first.

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20 Ibid. 21.

21 Ibid.

22 See *ibid.* 21-22.

But also, the only resolution of mimetic violence is the complete renunciation of the rivalry to which triangular acquisitive desire leads us, and that renunciation is an intensely spiritual act flowing from a decision that itself proceeds from a recognition of the facts of the situation. In other words, the resolution of the problems to which acquisitive mimetic desire gives rise takes place through a series of *autonomous spiritual processions* that are precisely the sort of emanations that Lonergan regards as appropriate for the psychological trinitarian analogy.

Thirdly, if any contemporary elucidation of the dynamics of sin is possible, it must include the elements that Girard emphasizes. And if the resolution to the problem of sin occurs through those processions in us that are both analogies for and participations in the immanent life of the Trinity, then the significance of Girard's work for a contemporary systematic theology is momentous indeed.

Finally, I have written fairly abundantly on the topic of psychic conversion and on the dramatic bias from which psychic conversion can help set us free. I have come to regard the vagaries of mimetic desire to which Girard gives us entrance as among the principal instances of dramatic bias and of the psychological components of other forms of bias.

As I said earlier, these considerations lead us to ask whether there is a radical ontological desire that itself is not mimetic but that is involved in all mimetic desire, and also whether it has anything to do with the transcendental notions of the intelligible, the true and the real, and the good that lie at the heart of Lonergan's thinking. Is imitative desire brought on by a frustration of these spiritual desires, by a sense of spiritual inadequacy that is connected with the tremendous gap between aspiration and achievement? Again, we may ask whether the story of imitative desire reflects the successes and failures of mutual self-mediation in the attempt, itself completely legitimate, to find the completion of one's being that these transcendental notions intimate? In the theology that will be put forth here, these transcendental notions are

themselves obediential potency for the completion that is possible only by reason of a supernatural participation in divine life itself. But that participation overcomes conflictual mimesis to the extent that it enables an imitation of the divine relations. To answer a question that we posed in chapter 1, Girard's mimetic violence, which springs from imitative desire, *is* the story of mutual self-mediation gone wrong, and there is another kind of mutual self-mediation established in grace that overcomes conflictual mimesis. The gift of divine love enables consistent fidelity to the transcendental imperatives attached to the notions of the intelligible, the true and the real, and the good. But that gift also has a dimension of its own, a dimension that transcends through forgiveness the contamination of human relations brought on by conflictual mimesis. Our love is God's love and so truly without conditions, reservations, or qualifications, when we love our enemies and pray for them, for God's love makes the Father's sun rise on the evil and the good and rain fall for the just and the unjust alike (Matthew 5.44-45).

As Max Scheler has said in his great book *Ressentiment*, the fact of choosing a model for oneself is the result of a tendency common to all people to compare oneself with others; all jealousy, all ambition, and even an ideal like the imitation of Christ are based on such comparisons.<sup>23</sup> But this tendency is itself rooted in an ontological emptiness that only God can fill, and the ultimate meaning of the complicated vagaries of our tortured and tormented relationships lies in the way in which we negotiate this emptiness itself. There is a way of negotiating it that transcends victimization by the triangular situation that necessarily will be involved in the negotiation. Here lies, I believe, the source of our fascination with the saints, whether they be those whom the Catholic Church has canonized or those whom we acknowledge even without such official recognition as bearing in themselves a certain dignity that we can not only admire and respect but also imitate. Think of Ignatius Loyola asking, 'What if I were to do what

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23 See Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel* 14.

Saint Francis did, or to do what Saint Dominic did?’<sup>24</sup> The mimetic quality of the question itself is obvious, but we may trust that it led to something quite other than the tortured quality of internally mediated relations (however much the sons of Ignatius may have to struggle to transcend mimetic rivalry in their own midst!). It led, in fact, to autonomous spiritual processions of word and love that were in fact, if not always recognized as such, created participations in triune life. Think too of the constant appeals being made in our violent time to Gandhi and Martin Luther King and Dorothy Day, whose way of promoting justice for the victims of history is so different from the way of violence and hatred. Think of Ignatius’s own prayer in the *Spiritual Exercises*: ‘... protesting that I wish and desire, and that it is my deliberate determination ... to *imitate* Thee in bearing all insults and reproaches, and all poverty, as well actual poverty as poverty of spirit, if Thy Divine Majesty be pleased to choose and receive me to this life and state.’ The sentiment is like that of Don Quixote vis-à-vis Amadis of Gaul, but in Ignatius’s case, at least once he overcame his own tendencies to carry things to an unhealthy extreme, it did not lead to distortion of judgment or misperception of reality.

What makes the difference are the transcendental desires of the human spirit, Lonergan’s ‘second way of being conscious,’ and their ground and fulfilment in the gift of God’s love. ‘All people by nature *desire* to know,’ says Aristotle at the very beginning of the *Metaphysics*. This becomes Lonergan’s leitmotif throughout the book *Insight*, where he unpacks the dynamics of the desire to know in science, in common sense, and in philosophy, as well as some of the devices that we employ in fleeing understanding when the truth is something we do not want to face. In his later work he extends this transcendental desire, as well as the devices we use to escape its consequences, to the notion of the good.

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<sup>24</sup> *A Pilgrim’s Journey: The Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola*, trans. and ed. Joseph N. Tylenda, S.J. (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1985) 14.

How is all of this related to the mimetic quality of desire emphasized by Girard? Girard insists, correctly, that almost all learning is based on imitation,<sup>25</sup> and so satisfying the desire to know involves mimetic behavior. In this sense, too, in the realm of representation, mimesis is the essential force of cultural integration, even if in the realm of acquisitive desire it is also the force of destruction and dissolution. But the desire to know and the transcendental intention of value are not themselves a function of acquisitive mimesis. Acquisitiveness is a perversion of these desires. There is such a thing as a detached, disinterested desire to know. For Girard himself, integrating isolated discoveries into a rational framework and transforming them into real knowledge is the true vocation of thought, which in the end, after periods in which it appears to have run its course, is always reaffirmed.<sup>26</sup> This true vocation of thought reflects something other than acquisitive mimesis. It can, of course, be infected and derailed by acquisitive mimesis, as anyone who has spent any time in an academic institution knows all too well. But in itself the orientation that can become a vocation is natural, non-acquisitive, and in the last analysis not imitative. A Lonergan may have set out to do for our day what Aquinas did for his, and his journey was to that extent mimetic. But in the actual judgments and decisions that he made along the way, he was on his own, and he knew it. Girard's work assumes a greater historical and theoretical significance to the extent that it can be shown to illuminate both how our true vocations are probably always rooted in imitative behavior and how the deviations from true vocation occur. But the fulfilment of vocation will always lie in the autonomous spiritual processions that at the supernatural level are our created participation in trinitarian life and at the natural level are analogues of that participation and so of the divine processions themselves.

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25 René Girard, *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World*, trans. Stephen Bann and Michael Metteer (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987) 7.

26 Ibid. 18.

The significance, then, of imitating the divine relations is not purely inward and spiritual but historical and social. In *Violence and the Sacred*<sup>27</sup> and *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World*, Girard faces the questions of the origins of mimetic desire and of its impact on cultural and social institutions. It is here that he discovers the scapegoat mechanism, which enables him to reassess the meaning of rites, rituals, and myths. ‘... not only the prohibition but also ritual and ultimately the whole structure of religion can be traced back to the mechanism of acquisitive mimesis. A complete theory of human culture will be elaborated, beginning with this single principle.’<sup>28</sup> We will be returning to these themes throughout our attempt at systematic construction, since at least one of the keys to authentic religion lies precisely in negotiating the ‘mechanism’ that Girard has elaborated. But one notion should be introduced now: the sacrificial crisis.

A sacrificial crisis is a crisis in a community that can be resolved only by means of the sacrifice or expulsion of a surrogate victim or scapegoat. A sacrificial crisis entails the collapse of the social hierarchy and the loss of difference within the group. With the effacement of social distinctions the members of the community lose sight of who and what they are. In the chaos other distinctions are lost as well: good and evil, right and wrong, rationality and irrationality. In *Violence and the Sacred* Girard writes: ‘... coherent thinking collapses and rational activities are abandoned ... all values, spiritual and material, vanish.’<sup>29</sup> The crisis in the Catholic Church in many parts of the world as I write this book, a crisis brought about by the sexual abuse of minors on the part of clergy, is an excellent example of a sacrificial crisis, and the scapegoating of homosexuals by the Church in the wake of the crisis is clear evidence that the victimage mechanism is not yet

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27 René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1977).

28 Girard, *Things Hidden* 18.

29 Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* 91.

dead. Ironically, the very bible on which Church authorities claim their authority is founded exposed the victimage mechanism for what it is. Nothing could be more contrary to the gospel than the Church's official response, at least in some circles, to the crisis affecting its hierarchical system, a response that is resorted to in preference to reforming the system itself that is responsible for the abuses.

One of Girard's interlocutors in *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World* maintains that Girard's thesis is not primarily a theory of religion but a theory of human relations and of the role that the victimage mechanism plays in those relations, that the theory of religion is simply a particularly noteworthy aspect of a fundamental theory of mimetic relations, and that religion is one means of misinterpreting mimetic relations. Girard agrees. The sacred, he says, is to our understanding of human relations what phlogiston was to the understanding of combustion, and mimesis is to our understanding of human relations what oxygen is to the understanding of combustion. 'Our own oxygen is mimesis and all that accompanies it.' Again, Girard is working in and clarifying in an astounding fashion what Lonergan calls the first way of being conscious. But the influence that distorted mimesis has on the realm of the sacred, which in its authenticity pertains primarily to the second way of being conscious, an influence that Girard elsewhere refers to as deviated transcendence, indicates just how important this theory of human relations, indeed of primordial intersubjectivity, is for theology. Its importance is displayed already in our systematic theology, in that it helps us get straight just where the genuine *imago Dei*, and so the genuine *imitatio Dei*, lies in human consciousness and where it does not. To place it where it does not reside is precisely a matter of deviated transcendence.

## **2 *Imago Dei***

Where, then, does it lie? Where is the *imago* that is also an *imitation*?

Foundationally, it lies in the created participation in active and passive spiration that is the share in divine life given to us here and now. That participation is (1) the gift of receiving unqualified love, which (2) alters the horizon in which evidence regarding one's existential self-constitution is grasped, to ground a radical assent or fundamental option for the good, (3) from which there flows that radical yes to the value of such self-constitution that (4) grounds the habitual performance of loving acts. The movements from evidence grasped to radical assent and then from evidence and assent together to proceeding love are instances of *emanationes intelligibiles* or autonomous spiritual processions, in the supernatural order. The first three of these items constitute the created participation in active spiration, and the fourth the created participation in passive spiration.

It is, however, in the historical mission of the Word that we find concretely what it is to imitate the *Verbum spirans amorem* and the Father whose Word he is, that is, to imitate the two persons who *are* active spiration. And it is Girard who illumines the concrete dynamics of what Lonergan articulates heuristically as follows, precisely in his discussion of the 'appropriate willingness' required to transcend the mystery of iniquity:

... the will can contribute to the solution of the problem of the social surd inasmuch as it adopts a dialectical attitude that parallels the dialectical method of intellect. The dialectical method of intellect consists in grasping that the social surd neither is intelligible nor is to be treated as intelligible. The corresponding dialectical attitude of will is to return good for evil. For it is only inasmuch as men are willing to meet evil with good, to love their enemies, to pray for those that persecute and calumniate them, that the social surd is a potential good. It follows that love of God above all

and in all so embraces the order of the universe as to love all men with a self-sacrificing love.<sup>30</sup>

What Lonergan here is calling a dialectical attitude of will is expressly called by Jesus an imitation of the divine Father: ‘You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.’<sup>31</sup> At this point, it seems, our systematic considerations and the integration of these considerations with the mimetic theory of René Girard join in bearing witness to the biblical revelation’s unmasking of the principal dynamics of evil in history and to the same revelation’s pointing the way to transcending these dynamics.

If this is the foundational instance of the *imago Dei*, the derived instance is the constant fidelity to the natural unfolding of the transcendental exigencies to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible, each with their own processions of act from act. This constant fidelity, as Lonergan emphasizes in *Insight*, requires the supernatural solution to the problem of evil, a supernatural solution that, in God’s own dispensation, consists in the gift of created participations in the divine relations grounding imitations of the triune God.

Still, this supernatural *imitatio* is understood by analogy with the natural *imago*, with the imitation in the very order of nature, an imitation that lies, first, within actively

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30 Lonergan, *Insight* 721-22.

31 Matthew 5.43-48.

intelligent, actively reasonable, actively deliberative consciousness. The remainder of this chapter, then, will consider this natural analogue.

Here a distinction is drawn between the fundamental light of human consciousness and the further determinations of that same light. In the context of cognitional process, that fundamental light is what Aristotle and then Aquinas called agent intellect, which Lonergan explicitly identifies with the desire to know. It is what is referred to in Thomas's words 'ex vi intellectiva.' In that same cognitional context, the further determinations of that same light are referred to in Thomas's 'ex eius notitia procedens.'<sup>32</sup> The desire to know is a created participation, in the natural order, in the uncreated light that is divine understanding, and it is the source of all our wonder, inquiry, and reflection. In its authentic functioning it is pure, detached, disinterested. Built into its constitution, as it were, are the most general principles that are operative independently of any determination from experience: the principles of identity, of non-contradiction, and of sufficient reason. But it is also the transcendental notion of value, setting the criterion not only for cognitional process but also for decisions. And the 'precept' that is built into it at that level is, in Thomist terms, that good is to be done and evil to be avoided. The entire reality of this fundamental light in its active or intentional dimensions is expressed in the transcendental precepts or imperatives that Lonergan expresses thus: 'Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible.' Thus the 'principles' constitutively built into this fundamental light function not deductively but heuristically in actively intelligent and deliberative consciousness. They are not principles in the sense of premises from which conclusions are drawn in a logically consistent manner. While we have to articulate them in premises if we are to talk about them, the premises simply express universal features of intellectual, rational, and existential dynamism that function spontaneously in all genuine inquiry and deliberation.

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<sup>32</sup> See above, p. xx.

Our definition of autonomous spiritual procession contains the phrase *by virtue of the spiritual dimension of consciousness itself as determined by the prior act*. The fundamental light of the spiritual dimension of consciousness is the ‘by virtue of the spiritual dimension of consciousness itself’ referred to in this definition, the *vis ipsius conscientiae intellectualis* referred to in Lonergan’s definition of *emanatio intelligibilis*. But what is intellectually and consciously operative in us lies not only in this light. It is also further determined by our conscious acts themselves. We are determined as intellectually, rationally, and morally conscious and consciously active and operative: materially or potentially by the objects of sensation, with an incipient and devalued formal and actual intelligibility in the reception of meanings and values,<sup>33</sup> formally by our own acts of understanding as a release to our own inquiry, more formally still as these acts of understanding give rise to the act that is the first inner word (act from act), then actually by our own grasp of evidence and the judgments that proceed from that grasp (again, act from act), and constitutively by our deliberations and decisions flowing from our judgments of value (act from act once more). Thus, if the dynamism of the spiritual dimension of consciousness lies in the light of intelligence, reasonableness, and moral responsibility within us, the further determinations added by our own activities are in part what the definition refers to when it describes this consciousness as determined by the prior acts from which, by *emanatio intelligibilis*, by autonomous spiritual procession, there proceed other acts. Thus the notion of *emanatio intelligibilis* is what Aquinas is illustrating when he writes, ‘Whenever we understand, by the mere fact that we do understand, *something proceeds within us*, which is the conception of the thing understood, issuing from our intellectual power and proceeding from its knowledge.’<sup>34</sup>

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33 On this suggested refinement of Lonergan’s cognitional theory, see Doran, ‘Reception and Elemental Meaning.’

34 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1, q. 27, a. 1.

Lonergan expands: ‘Accordingly, when we understand and by the very fact that we understand, from our intellective power, which is the general light of intellectual consciousness, and from the knowledge contained in the act of understanding that adds a determination to the general light, *there proceeds within our intellectual consciousness a conception or definition of the reality understood*. Similarly, when we grasp that the evidence is sufficient, by the very fact that we grasp it, and from the exigency of intellectual light as determined through that grasp, *there proceeds within our intellectual consciousness either a true affirmation or a true negative assertion*. Similarly again, when we judge some good as obligatory, by the very fact that we so judge, through our intellectuality, our rationality, *we spirate an act of will*.’<sup>35</sup>

The definition of *emanatio intelligibilis*, then, speaks first of *acts*, operations, that are *real, natural, and conscious*. *Act* here is implicitly defined in relation to form and potency. ‘act : form : potency :: seeing : eyesight : eye :: hearing something : the faculty of hearing : the ear :: understanding something : the intelligible species : the possible intellect :: willing : willingness : will :: existence : substantial form : prime matter.’<sup>36</sup> *Real* acts are acts of which it can reasonably be affirmed, ‘They are, they occur, they happen.’ While the acts in question are intentional acts, they are considered here not in their intending of an object but as occurring in their own right, hence as *natural*.<sup>37</sup> To say that

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35 Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 139, emphasis added.

36 Ibid. 141. On potency, form, and act as metaphysical elements isomorphic with the experience-understanding-judgment structure of human cognitional process, see Lonergan, *Insight* 456-63.

37 ‘... there are two aspects to psychological acts; for the same psychological act is intentional insofar as it refers to some other, and natural insofar as it is considered in itself.’ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 141. See note 16 to chapter 5 in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964* (CWL 6) 105.

they are *conscious* means that the presence of the subject to himself or herself is constitutive of the acts themselves. The subject is present, not as what is intended (the object, which also is rendered psychologically present by the act), but as what intends; and the act is present to the subject as that by which the object is intended. The presence of the subject to himself or herself in these acts is distinct, too, from the presence of the subject through reflection or introspection. Reflection on oneself renders oneself present as an object, but this would not be possible unless the subject were already present to himself or herself as a subject, through consciousness – not as what is intended but as what intends.<sup>38</sup>

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38 'In every sensitive and intellectual act, whether apprehensive or appetitive, there are three things that occur *simultaneously*: (1) the object is intended; (2) the intending subject himself is rendered present to himself; (3) the act of the subject is rendered present to the subject. Distinguish sharply between the presence of the subject to himself and the presence of the object to the subject: the object is present as *that which is intended*, the act is present as *that by which the object is intended*, the subject is present as *that which intends*. In a similar way, distinguish this presence of the subject through consciousness and the presence of the same subject through reflection or introspection: reflection or introspection renders the subject present as an object, as that which is intended; but this could not be were not the subject already present to himself through consciousness, as subject, as that which intends.' Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 141. On consciousness, see Lonergan, *Insight* 344-52. See also Bernard Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, vol. 7 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 157-89.

The emanation is a procession of one such real, natural, conscious act from another such real, natural, conscious act, *within intellectual consciousness*, or, differently put for our present purposes, within the order of spirit. That is, it is a conscious psychological event *constituted by intelligent and/or existential acts and the conscious nexus between them*. It is in this conscious psychological event that the remote *imago Dei* and the natural *imitatio Dei* that we are is to be found.

As *within consciousness*, the procession is considered precisely as such a *psychological* event. Its explicitation or objectification belongs to intentionality analysis rather than to metaphysics. True, an authentic metaphysics would articulate it also, as an accident inhering in a substance or as an act received in a potency. The same reality that, metaphysically considered, is correctly thus described is also psychologically an event that occurs within the field of consciousness; and that is the way we are studying it here. Nor, Lonergan emphasizes, does ‘conscious’ add anything to ‘being,’ for being is not a genus, and what is beyond or outside of being is precisely nothing. ‘Conscious’ simply names a certain degree of perfection within being.

As *within intellectual consciousness* (Lonergan’s expression), or within the order of spirit (our preferred way of speaking), the procession is constituted by intellectual, rational, and existential acts, not by sensitive acts. The latter are not left behind, of course, but sublated into the richer context furnished by intelligent, reasonable, responsible acts. ‘Sublation’ is a term that Lonergan adopts from Karl Rahner, where its meaning is not the Hegelian sense of *Aufhebung* but something much more straightforward: ‘... what sublates goes beyond what is sublated, introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, yet so far from interfering with the sublated or destroying it, on the contrary needs it, includes it, preserves all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer

context.<sup>39</sup> Our one consciousness is not homogeneous, but is diversified in accord with the diverse nature of its acts.

The emanation is not only conscious; it is a conscious procession (*origo*), and it occurs in virtue of the dynamism of consciousness itself. The emergence of one real, natural, and conscious act from another real, natural, and conscious act is itself conscious and occurs in virtue of conscious dynamism itself. Here we need only revert to the examples that Lonergan provides: the difference between a rash judgment and a reasonable one, the difference between repeating a memorized definition and uttering it as something one has understood, and the difference between disordered and responsible choices. In this way consciousness *mediates* the procession. To say that consciousness mediates means (1) that the conscious subject as conscious is the agent principle (*principium quod*) of the procession; (2) a conscious act as conscious is the instrumental principle (*principium quo*) of the procession; (3) the procession itself has an intrinsic element that is lacking in an unconscious procession such as a chemical procession; and (4) the proceeding act is somehow consciously *because of* and consciously *in accordance with* the act from which it proceeds.<sup>40</sup>

But the mediation that renders possible an autonomous *spiritual* procession or emanation is a mediation that occurs in virtue of the dynamism of the spiritual dimension of human consciousness itself, a dynamism in the order of spirit, and not in virtue of the dynamics of sensitive consciousness. One act can proceed from another within sensitive consciousness, but the procession does not possess the characteristics constitutive of an

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39 Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 243.

40 See Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 143. Lonergan adds, 'Therefore, the phenomenalism of consciousness that would deny causality, or the mode of causality proper to consciousness, is excluded.' There is causality, of course in the *imago* or *imitatio*, not in the original, not in divine processions.

*emanatio intelligibilis*. To cite Lonergan's example, from seeing a large, fierce-looking animal on the loose there *spontaneously* arises in sensitive consciousness a sense of fear, precisely *because* one has seen the animal; and so one conscious act proceeds from another *because of and in accordance with* the first act. But in sensitive consciousness this occurs by some automatically functioning law of a particular nature. The same may be said of the triangular nature of mimetic desire, which functions precisely in this sensitive, psychic, and now intersubjective or 'interdividual' domain, however much it may be a function of a spiritual vacuum. But when one real, natural, and conscious *intelligent or reasonable or responsible* act proceeds from another real, natural, and conscious *intelligent or reasonable or responsible* act, the link is constituted not by an automatically functioning law but by the *self-governing, autonomous, and transcendental* exigencies of intelligence and reasonableness and responsibility, according to which our integrity as human subjects is a function of our ordered allegiance to complete intelligibility, truth, being, and goodness. The transcendental laws of human spirituality commit us to a set of objectives that embrace everything, the concrete universe of being. Our fidelity to these exigencies can be violated, for our performance in this realm is not a function of specific and automatically functioning laws but is such that in the relevant acts the human spirit is determinative of itself and in that sense autonomous. That performance can be cut off, strangled, rendered impotent, by one's own existential decisions, by major defaults in one's cultural and social situations, or by the interference of that other type of desire on which Girard has thrown so much light. That spiritual spontaneity is regulated, not by being bound to any automatic response, but only insofar as it is actually constituted by a transcendental desire for being and value. It rules itself, insofar as under God's agency it determines itself to its own acts according to the exigencies of its own being as spiritual. But insofar as this is the case one conscious act will arise or proceed from another conscious act through the mediation of intelligent, reasonable, responsible consciousness itself.

It is in the context of talk about the autonomy of these operations that we have found our first fruitful encounter with the mimetic theory of René Girard. Girard has introduced a necessary hermeneutics of suspicion into the project of self-appropriation initiated by Lonergan, a hermeneutics that is probably the best categorial articulation to date of what my own work has anticipated heuristically by speaking of psychic conversion. For there is an interference of acquisitively mimetic desire with the unfolding of the transcendental orientation to the intelligible, the true and the real, the good, and God, and Girard with ruthless precision has captured the dynamics, indeed the mechanism, of that interference.

Girard is working in the area of the psychic dimension of consciousness. But as we have seen, there is another kind of procession within the spiritual dimension of consciousness, one that does not satisfy the requirements of an analogy for divine procession. For from questions there can spontaneously proceed an act of understanding, but then the procession is not from act to act but from potency to act: in consciousness from questions to answers, and metaphysically from the ‘possible intellect’ to ‘intelligible species.’ This kind of procession Lonergan, following Aquinas, calls a procession of an operation (*processio operationis*). The more autonomous procession that alone qualifies as an analogue for divine procession is the procession of a subsequent act *from* a prior act and *in accordance with* that prior act. ‘... thus, we define *because* we understand and *in accordance with* what we understand; again, we judge *because* we grasp evidence as sufficient and *in accordance with* the evidence we have grasped; finally, we choose *because* we judge and *in accordance with* what we judge to be useful or proper or fitting or obligatory.’<sup>41</sup> This type of procession Lonergan, again following Aquinas, calls, not a

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41 Ibid.

procession of an operation (*processio operationis*) but a procession of something operated (*processio operati*).<sup>42</sup>

There is, then, an *imago Dei*, an *imitatio Dei* – ‘image’ and ‘imitatio’ are from the same root – that is natural, that resides in our spiritual nature, where ‘nature’ is understood in the Aristotelian sense of an immanent principle of movement and of rest. The *imago* or *imitatio Dei* is not the whole of that spiritual nature, for that nature is ‘the human spirit as raising and answering questions’ and so as potency *in genere intelligibilium*, in the realm of spiritual things.<sup>43</sup> But there are moments in which that nature precisely as nature imitates pure act, however remotely: when from understanding as act there proceeds an inner word of conceptualization as act; when from the grasp of evidence as sufficient there proceeds a judgment; and when from the judgment of value based on the grasp of evidence there proceeds a decision. That natural image can be used as an analogy from which we may understand the more radical image or imitation that lies in a created participation in the divine relations of active and passive spiration. I conclude by quoting Lonergan again on this more radical imitation and commenting on his words.

The psychological analogy ... has its starting point in that higher synthesis of intellectual, rational, and moral consciousness that is the dynamic state of being in love. Such love manifests itself in its judgments of value. And the judgments are

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42 I will leave Lonergan’s expression *processio operati* untranslated. It should become a precise technical term in systematics, and it is more likely to do so if it is left in its Latin form rather than translated into very stilted English.

For an array of details on the matter, see Lonergan, *Verbum*, chapter 3.

43 See Bernard Lonergan, ‘Natural Right and Historical Mindedness’ 172.

carried out in decisions that are acts of loving. Such is the analogy found in the creature.<sup>44</sup>

I have placed the starting point in the reception of unqualified love that gives rise to the judgment of value and with it constitutes a created participation in divine active spiration. From that reception of love there flows evidence perceived by a lover, from which one's judgments of value proceed as act from act. What proceeds from this created participation in active spiration are the decisions that are acts of loving, and as such created participations in passive spiration. The supernatural analogy found in the creature imitates by participation the entire life of the triune God, and it is only by the grace of this created imitation that the natural transcendental unfolding of our spiritual aspirations remains authentic.

We are not yet prepared, though, to follow Lonergan through the intricate details of his first systematic assertion regarding the Trinity. The existential and historical contexts have not yet been sufficiently detailed to enable us to locate this assertion and its details in the framework of a theology of history. One further set of relations must be drawn between Lonergan and Girard, and it has to do with the locus of the genuine sacred in history as well as with the sources of misplaced or deviated transcendence.

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<sup>44</sup> Lonergan, 'Christology Today: Methodological Reflections' 93.