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Curiosity at the Center of One's Life
Reflections on Eric O'Connor and the Thomas More Institute.

I

In June of 1980 Eric O'Connor was awarded honorary doctorates in Law by the Universities of McGill and Concordia. In the course of his convocation address entitled "The Learning Community/Community of Inquiry," he referred to Wilder Penfield's posthumous autobiography, *No Man Alone*:

Some of you may have read that beautiful posthumous autobiography of Wilder Penfield *No Man Alone*.... About the autobiography, for anyone interested in the devious way that our inquiry leads to results - devious, not in the sense of the planned deviousness of a person, but in the deviousness of Providence, I think I can say - it is quite fascinating: the way the things get learned and the skills acquired that were needed for the great work of the Neurological Institute; and not only that, but how he was provided with what was needed so that the autobiography itself could be written. It is a wonderful book and, although Penfield had a fine early education, a book about adult learning.[1]

On December 1st 1980, less than three weeks before he died, tragically with a suddenness that few were prepared for, Eric O'Connor was interviewed at the Discovery Theatre in Toronto by Therese Mason and Michael Czerney. In their explorations of the theme of "Towards Liberated Curiosity" he gave one of the best accounts of the early days of the Thomas More Institute. In the course of the interview Therese Mason asked him to elaborate on Penfield.[2] He replied:

> He was so beautifully curious. He was not trapped in any one way of working. Neurology seemed to be all in books and not very helpful with concrete problems in a clinical setting. He saw the possibility of joining theory and practice. He heard of a man in Spain who had a technique, so he went and spent some time there; he heard of someone in Germany and went there....

His book, I find, shows him as aware on many levels. He writes about things he got interested in and worked on because his sister had a certain kind of sickness. He didn't intend to go and cure her sickness, but it caused a question in him. Out of letters he wrote to his mother, he had the possibility of writing his autobiography. He seemed led by a fate he didn't know about. That comes through in glimmers when you read the book a second time. Things he hadn't seemed to notice, he caught later from the letters; they had certainly influenced him as he lived his life.

Penfield, in his personality and life orientation, comes across to me here as a kindred spirit of Eric O'Connor. They both had commitments to institutes of learning and they both had a fundamental openness.

In an interview entitled "Directions of Openness: The Adult Choice," O'Connor explored the distinction between becoming open to one's questioning on the one hand, and finding its particular direction within one's openness on the other.[3] It suggests to us that his story and that of the Thomas More Institute are not directionless, an issue explored by Michael Czerney:

> How has the Thomas More Institute grown in its own sense of direction or sense of curiosity as a learning community? Do you know that story now, after thirty five years of learning together? ... One of the concrete fruits of this interview might be to encourage persons like yourself to find a way of looking back and making a story out of some of the things that have been learned. We are pushing you on this because we have a sense that there is a wisdom and there are insights possible for everyone in the story of how you have muddled through. I come back to the lesson to be drawn from the Penfield letters. I feel there is a story like his in the brochures and in remembrances of the courses.[4]

The questions addressed to the devious providence at work in the Thomas More Institute can also be addressed to the life of Eric O'Connor for the two are inevitably intertwined.

The publication of *Curiosity at the Center of One's Life* makes public very many of the sources in which the story resides. It is a beautifully produced book, a monument to the achievements of O'Connor and his collaborators and their devotion to him and his work. But in order to capture the imaginativeness and creativity of Eric O'Connor it has to be read in conjunction with *Conversations with Eric Voegelin, The Question as Commitment, Dialogues in Celebration*, and *Inquiry as Attunement*.[5] Taken together they constitute his currently published "Collected Works". Still missing are details of over two hundred courses that O'Connor lectured in or led discussions in, eighty of them being two term university courses as well as information on his work in mathematics. In them we will find clues as to what he and the Thomas More Institute were curious about. All I can offer here is of the form of a preface to that work.

II

In 1944, by popular request of a group of teachers in Montreal, a series of six lectures were offered on philosophical questions arising out of the process of education. One of the lecturers was Bernard Lonergan. The response to the series was substantial. In 1945 Loyola College discontinued its Adult Education or Extension courses. Given the interest in further education among the teachers the closure created a vacuum. Out of this felt need the Thomas More Institute was born. As Archbishop Emmett Carter, who was the first president of the institute put it:

During evenings when we gathered at certain homes we were really putting ourselves to this question: how can we set up some intellectual ambience in which ordinary people can pursue questions in a community?[6]

With almost no time for planning, it began suddenly in mid-November. For Carter it was to become a searchers institute.

Bernard Lonergan lectured in the first year on "Thought and Reality". It was a significant course, both for him and for the institute. The response to it convinced him that a book such as *Insight* was a real possibility. But what seems to have impressed O'Connor was not so much the problem Lonergan was grappling with itself - what do you mean by reality and how do you know it?, as the manner he went about it.[7]

> What came through from him was that all questions could be asked and should be asked, that in fact one didn't begin to learn until one began asking questions. This was a shock to anyone educated before 1945. ..... Having those lectures didn't become important as a theory. That is definite. It became important as an experience: the way you learned anything was by slow questioning. ..... In those early lectures, he somehow gave us the sense that the world is open to explore - because he is curious himself about anything, and explores it. Slowly, in the lectures, he gave us a little glimmer about the obvious next level of questioning. You ask whether you have understood a thing correctly or not.[8]

By way of contrast O'Connor refers to his own training in mathematics. He had first learned the definitions in topology without getting the questions behind them. He didn't know that the way to learn topology was to play with the shapes and then try to define them. He found that he was not asking the questions that were answered by what he was learning. (561) This same point is brought out in his account of one of his earliest meetings with Lonergan in the early forties:

> He came to my room to ask me a simple question in mathematics that he was working on in his book in philosophy. Well, it was a subject that I knew well, the area that I knew very well. I learned more from a few questions of his, just because he was asking the right questions, not being an expert, but asking the question in the right way. I learned more about how one proved things in that area of mathematics than I had in getting my PhD.[9]

Lonergan's lectures brought about that change in him.

As he with his mathematical education, so he found that people brought up in Catholic, Protestant or Jewish traditions took as unquestionable the notions they had received.

> I understand why you are talking mostly about religious doctrine; that is what many people take over without having lived through the experience of the question. They don't know what the dogma is answering, but because it's religious it has a lot of importance to them. But on every level of understanding there are doctrines that are

just accepted statements.[10]

To put it in present terms, they were receiving in their education somewhat fixed and rigid answers to questions they had not yet raised rather than signposts to a profound life giving wisdom in the past. The point was made beautifully by a student in answering an exam question:

> Incredible as it seems, up till this year knowledge was always something that I was expected to receive from the outside. I looked upon (unconsciously) myself as the passive partner. For would I have come to learn if I had knowledge already? I always thought my ignorance something insurmountable in the face of all the books that I would have to read to gain the knowledge that men have already studied through the ages. ..... Suddenly I realized that if other people's experience and insights are worth studying, the values and insights and the study of my experiences must be of equal value to me and others.[11]

As we listen to the testimony of persons such as this about their own experience it becomes evocative, it interacts with us, opens us up to ourselves.

Finding the questions to which one's early education was providing answers can be a crucial step in adult development. The Thomas More did not mean to question the correctness of the traditions, be they literary, religious, political or cultural. The point was, had they been understood, what did they mean?[12] For Voegelin, a bad introduction to one's traditions results in a fantastic ignorance of the past.[13] For him Flaubert in his *Tentation de Saint Antoine* and *Bouvart at Peuchet* was articulating a profound wisdom, but one by and large rejected by the twentieth century. "After all, who knows Flaubert? Who uses him as a source for understanding these matters?"[14] The passages echo Buber's "Prejudices of Youth", the dogma that the world begins with "our generation" and the past, tradition, has nothing to teach us. The fact of the matter is that there is a wisdom in one's past traditions, which properly assimilated equips a modern generation to understand, diagnose, interpret and respond to the pathologies and the creativities of the human spirit in its own era. Without the proper awakening of our questioning to the meaning and truth of our traditions and their wisdom figures we will be in bondage to them and become bigots. Or we will discard them and become rootless, be at the mercy of the whims of our present with no past wisdom to guide us. Bibby's *Fragmented Gods* seems to bear witness to such a collapse, especially in Quebec.[15]

Four of the best psychiatrists in Montreal lectured in the first year. They were invited to present some of the best ideas in their fields in one or two lectures. Karl Stern was one. Another was Noel Maiou, a Dominican who over time changed the whole attitude to mental illness at St-Jean-de Dieu from a pre-Freudian to a more human approach.[16] For many years O'Connor was a member his group concerned with humanizing the institutional care of the mentally ill at the time.

By the end of the first year there had emerged a sense of the importance of questioning, a grasp of the distinction between ideas and judgments, and some interests

such as psychiatry. The institute also had a decidedly Catholic ring about it. But this was not to last. In 1947 a great number of Protestants and Jewish persons began to get interested in the courses on offer. That is why, when it was incorporated in 1948, it was under the name Thomas More Institute - not Saint or Sir Thomas More. That is why, a little later, a grant of one hundred thousand dollars had to be passed over.[17]

After four years, without really understanding where it might lead, The Great Books people were invited to come and train the teachers for a week. So there emerged the idea of reading and discussing a text together. Gerald McGuigan would push one side of an issue, then the other, and make the people think. The philosophic-type questioning was extended into other areas. Instead of bringing in personal examples, every person in a group would have the common experience of a story they had all read. But recognition of this only began about 1954.[18] Needless to say teachers who had been working with the lecture method, the system in which the teacher was an expert imparting knowledge to the ignorant, resisted this new approach in which teacher and student both became learners.[19]

So there was a transition from a lecture format, through The Great Books discussions, to “reading-discussion” courses, that was to become the key methodology of the Institute.[20] This was in place by 1957-8.[21] Over time the word "reading" came to be interpreted widely, including concert hearing, play going, movie-viewing, lecture hearing, sensitivity session experience - provided they were informed by some kind of inquiry and linked by an obvious theme or set of themes.[22] The goal of the themes chosen is to help the students to find directions in their lives. The adult learners attending the evening courses, aged twenty five and over and usually in groups of between twelve and thirty, were invited to read a short text each week, specific to the particular course. The task of the discussion leaders was not to suggest answers, but to facilitate the expression of the questions of the members of the group that arise from their reading. Given that the lecture format was the paradigm at the time this transition could not have been easy.

> In our ideal picture of the discussion group, the two leaders try to find the questions that are near the surface of the persons in the group. .. Not questions out of the blue but ones which touch on something in the reading. It is an experimental method: when we get blank looks, we know we are missing *their* questions...At first, we used to prepare a list of questions to ask. We found that approach didn't allow for following the cues as to questions people were ready to consider.[23]

How does easy-flowing, satisfying, and really fruitful discussion occur? As some words awaken associations while others do not what is the way of proposing suggestive questions that will find reverberations in a person's memory and carry that person to those aspects of a subject that could take his interest? How does a discussion leader over time, become more aware of the memory resources of the members of a group so as to be able, for example, to produce a synthesizing question that would enable them to call together their experience (personal, and in the group so far, and in the shared readings) and find a new sense in it. [24]

These last remarks have moved us into consideration of directions of the movements of questioning. Before entering further, there are remarks to be made on the timing of questions. There is a kind of breathing in a good discussion very like the breathing within an orchestra under an effective conductor, or like an audience in the presence of two or more masterful actors; there is relaxation enough to breath and keep thinking alertly, space enough in which to contribute a relevant response, listening enough going on to make thinking in a group possible.[25]

To the disciplined systematic scientific mind, or to the literary mind that is familiar with narrative and style, there is an enormous jump to be made in acquiring and appreciating the method of being a discussion leader, of mid-wifing the questions of a group of adults. And yet there is an enormous creativity in doing just that, a creativity that cannot be acquired in any other way.

> I found the discipline of being a discussion leader was a great thing in my life - not being called upon to furnish answers to people, not being allowed by the discipline of the round-table to suggest an answer; that I think is a terrific experience. It teaches you to be patient, and respectful of other opinions, as many teachers are not.[26]

The same seems to be true about reading the scripts of the dialogues. It requires patience. There are dull and tedious passages in the conversation. As in mining there is the going down into the soil of the lives and experiences of the group. Out of it at certain points enormously creative passages can emerge quite spontaneously.

If the inspiration of Lonergan is there and clear, what is striking is the quite different direction which Eric O'Connor travelled in his own journey. Whereas a great deal of Lonergan's quest was in solitude, Toynbee's withdrawal and return, with punctuated returns such as giving courses at the Thomas More Institute and other places, the emphasis in the Thomas More was on the community of inquiry. The task seems to be twofold, firstly, to awaken, open up the questioning of the adult in a general way, and secondly, to help them to find their own specific direction within their new openness, to bring about an attunement which can be followed in an interplay of solitude and community. Until a person has had this experience I believe that Lonergan's work in *Insight* and *Method in Theology* is inaccessible. In some ways, until the kind of community the Thomas More Institute is interested in creating exists, Lonergan's work does not have an adequate basis from which to grow.

For O'Connor all the great educators he knew had been touched by, had a sense of the wholeness of what a person can be. In their education they communicated this vision of wholeness. A second feature of adult education is the critical involvement of the human being. There is also the suggestion that;

> "An adult has access to himself as an historical being, which made it possible to realize unique aspects of adult learning.[27]

As Buber takes dialogue relations as the anthropological basis for his adult education,

so Eric O'Connor takes Lonergan's transcendental method, within the context of a community of inquirers, as his.[28] What Eric O'Connor and the Thomas More Institute recognize well is that adults have their own unique questioning agenda, and that there is an absolute and irreducible value in that.

Further questions abound. The goal of the interaction is to find the way forward, the arteries of personal growth in the life of the individual. But in many cases that might require the painful deconstruction of the past before the reconstruction of the present and future could take place. What are the really significant questions at different stages in a particular person's life?[29] Or alternatively, how do ultimate questions arise existentially at different stages in life? My own orientation would be to assert that every human being, in the wholeness of their life, has a unique "question-history". The transcendental notions that Lonergan talks about are basically narratives in time.[30] So as well as becoming attuned to one's agenda at a particular point in adulthood, there is a further task of becoming attuned to the narrative structure of one's wonder, the intellectual plot in one's life. Obviously it is only in retrospect, as one's sense of one's personal history develops that one can, like Wilder Penfield pick up the clues to this. This was a step that I feel both O'Connor and Lonergan resisted, at least until towards the end of their lives.[31] To this end, as well as the creative "reading-discussion" courses I would also advocate the use of a Journal in adult education in order concretely to contextualize the educational issues within one's life as a whole. For it is only by telling oneself and others the story of the unfolding of one's questioning that one can understand and communicate with oneself on a deep level.

III

Eric O'Connor's interests are extremely wide ranging. *Curiosity at the Center of One's Life* includes his convocation statements over the years 1948-78, reflections on the Great Books and on Adult Liberal Education. There are interviews and dialogues with Eric O'Connor himself, demonstrations of the Thomas More Institute method at work, conversations with Bernard Lonergan, dialogues on India, Mexico, economics and genetics. At a first reading one is likely to be disorientated by the apparent multiplicity of genres and topics. It takes discernment to grasp that what unifies them all is the personality and philosophy of Eric O'Connor. A helpful starting point are the sections which describe in a focused manner what it is that the Thomas More Institute is up to and how they go about it - "Transcendental Method" at Florida, and "Toronto, Discovery Theatre". I found extremely interested the pieces: "Knowing and Loving" (pps 32-9) and "On Story in Relation to Questioning" (p 209f). Granted the diversity of the material I will focus on O'Connor's interaction with Voegelin, Frye, Lonergan, and Penfield.

Eric Voegelin's first recorded lecture at Thomas More was in 1965, entitled "In Search of the Ground". He was dealing with a question which Lonergan would also address in his *Method in Theology*, how do you develop theological categories to deal with all cultures, what is their ground? There was to follow for over fifteen years a most fruitful collaboration, during which time Voegelin published "The Ecumenical

Age." In his lecture in October 1967 he introduced the notion of the "in-between":

> Man is neither quite man nor quite god but in-between, placed in the consciousness of tension that is Plato's metaxy (which means "in-between"). So existential tension is in-between: it is not quite human, it is not quite divine, but the tension between the two. And a man who is in such tension is not quite, in the old Homeric vocabulary, the "mortal man," nor is he quite a god who is immortal, but he is, again, a man of a type in-between. We need a new vocabulary for that kind of man. (As I said, the classics did not yet have the term "tension.") Plato calls him the daimonios aner. The daimonias is an entity between god and man, a demi-god, you see - a "spiritual man," one could translate it.[32]

A fundamental characteristic of consciousness for Voegelin is then tension, "in-between":

> If you think of the consciousness with the tension between God and man and if, as is usually done (even by Plato and Aristotle), you call one pole the "timeless pole" and call the other a "pole of time," then you get a peculiar problem. Existence in tension which is consciousness moves in two dimensions at the same time; it is eternal and mundanely time bound. So you can express this existence only by the term (I usually use it) the flow of presence, meaning thereby the intersection of the time and the timeless. That is called the presence.[33]

Eric O'Connor was involved in many recorded interviews with him over those years, some of which appear in *Conversations with Eric Voegelin*, and in *The Question as Commitment*. Although he was familiar with the notion of the "in-between" from 1967, it was only towards the very end of his life that its significance and true deep meaning began to fall into place for him.

It is very clear that another major moment in Eric O'Connor's intellectual history was the discovery of Northrop Frye's *The Secular Scripture* in 1976. In that year, with Voegelin and Lonergan, Frye participated in a seminar at the Thomas More Institute on "Myth as Environment". Four of the essays in *Curiosity at the Center of One's Life* - "Continuing Education, Continuing Inquiry", "On Story in Relation to Questioning", "What does the Reader Do?", and "Northrop Frye and Romance" (pps 197-250), chart his discovery of Frye and growing enthusiasm.

> On the other hand, to relate story to people in terms of what their questions are, or to start their questions, or to guide their questions so that they can go into something like inquiry still remains to be done. ....Northrop Frye has suggested that, just as mathematics is the basis of the physical sciences, so stories can be the foundation for the social sciences.[34]

It seems that he was moving from reading and enjoying and working with stories to grasping their foundational nature, that story or narrative is of the essence of the human. For Ricoeur "time becomes human to the extent that it is organized after the manner of a narrative: narrative in turn, is meaningful to the extent that it portrays the

features of temporal experience.[35] The question arises, how does one link Frye and Ricoeur on time and myth with Lonergan on transcendental method?

To the extent that everything in our lives grows out of and adds to our own personal narrative, our own personal history, narrative is foundational. It is like the Cartesian "cogito". Any effort to think oneself out of one's personal history proves its impossibility. "Myth" in this sense is our environment. At the same time although Lonergan does not address the question of structure in time of the transcendental notions they are I believe narratives.[36] Questioning unfolds in our lives as the story of a quest, as a narrative. This can be verified in autobiographical texts of Socrates, Augustine, Descartes, Darwin, Einstein, Buber, Collingwood and others.[37] It follows that as transcendental method comes to be understood as a narrative in time the link between the philosophy of Lonergan, on the one hand, and Frye and Ricoeur on the other can be established and explored. Not only are the transcendental notions narratives in time, but so also is our appropriating or owning of them. Following Trainor, the writing down and the telling of the story of the owning of one's wonder, of one's questioning, is a basic form of philosophical "argument":

> The locus of the persuasive power of an autobiography used as a philosophical argument is the connection made between the narrator's personal growth and the way in which he thinks.[38]

Brian McGuiness, Wittgenstein's biographer, remarked that the Tractatus was a tour de force in that it combined all the philosophical problems of his life up to that point.[39] But equally, unless you understand the life you don't understand the manner in which the Tractatus brings into a unity problems that arose at different times in the life. The life in a sense explains the book.

IV

The book also contains four interviews with Lonergan. It was one of the great skills of Eric O'Connor that he was able to get Lonergan and others to loosen up and talk in an informal manner. The first interview, in February 1969, deals with the transition from *Insight* to *Method in Theology*, and the latter's emphasis on the fourth level of intentional consciousness which was one of the key shifts. In discussing the relation between the two books he remarks that:

> You will not get much out of *Insight* unless you have had experience of insight on your own.[40]

It is a point which has always seemed true to me. A central problem for him in writing *Method* was:

> How do you reconcile doing theology and at the same time being accurate historically? That is the fundamental problem in *Method in Theology*.[41]

The interview also reflects on Boyer and his doctoral thesis, the meaning of ecstatic,

reflections on Marrou - *The Meaning of History*, Gadamer, beliefs, and Chesterton.

The second interview on March 30, 1971 took place just after Method was finished. It discusses history, Heidegger, revelation, meaning, carriers, the smile. Discussing artistic meaning he remarks that the artist's inspiration initially is something that he has not yet objectified. Art is the objectification. He goes on:

> It holds in general for any form of inspiration. For instance, you want to write a book. And before you have it written, you do not know exactly what is going to be in it, but you are totally dedicated to it. ... And it is only in writing and rewriting that you find out what you wanted to do. (389)

The remark is obviously autobiographical, and refers to his experience of writing both *Insight* and *Method in Theology*.

The third interview on December 30th, 1971 is entitled "Grace after Faculty Psychology". It opens with a discussion of the shift from faculties to operations and levels of consciousness. It explores the question, "what is not the gratuitous gift of God?"; Philip the Chancellor on the two orders; intellectual, moral, and religious conversion, liberty, good will and good performance. At this point Cathleen Going brings the discussion into the present by asking Lonergan why he was preoccupied with method - what is so important about method. He replied:

> I taught theology for 25 years under circumstances that I considered absurd. And the reason why they were absurd was for lack of method, or because of the survival of a method that should have been buried 200 years ago...I conceive theology as reflection on religion. And you need that reflection on religion because any human movement, artistic, political, social, literary, and so on, the longer it lasts and the further it spreads, has to reflect on itself and decide precisely its aims are and its purposes, what purposes, what its assumptions and ground are. Otherwise it can be captured by anybody, and turned in all directions. ... Method is a framework for creative collaboration.[42]

His earlier interest in method in general was sparked off by his experience of the way theology was done. Interesting in the second paragraph is the problem of direction again; method is concerned with keeping the collaboration and religion attuned to its proper direction. He goes on to discuss the different tasks in theology and the problem of not letting any one of them dominate the enterprise, at the expense of the others. Is the method confined to Catholicism or Christian religions? Well, it is up to each to decide what he wants (410).

The fourth interview on March 28th, 1980 dealt with economics. It discussed the Basic and surplus stages, macro-economics and history; Vatican II and Jesuit scholastics (426-7), Congar (428). On p 421 Lonergan acknowledges a clear chronological distinction in his education between literature and aesthetics, on the one hand, and philosophy on the other:

> The aesthetic side was my formation at Loyola and within the juniorate which was all literary, pre-philosophic. I had that formation, but my ability to say things came with my study of philosophy. I remember Bolland asking me if I had any interest in philosophy. I said: I'm very interested in Butcher's The Theory of Art. "Oh! That's not philosophy!", he said.

Up to Loyola Lonergan has an extensive literary and aesthetic education. It was not until he went to Heythrop College in 1926 that his philosophical education and interest really began.

V

Eric O'Connor's last Convocation homily in the Loyola Chapel of Concordia University was on Sunday, June 8th, 1980 just under six months before he died. The title was "Questions In-Between." The influence of Lonergan, Fry, Penfield, and Voegelin are again there. But it seems to me that the melody is changing subtly. Bernard Lonergan had surprised him one year by emphasizing that falling in love changes the knowledge of a person.[43] To know, for Buber is to embrace lovingly. It is only love that sustains our knowledge. Penfield brought out the sense of the deviousness of Providence in the journey of human curiosity. In his last homily, reflecting on Voegelin's notion of the in-between of ignorance and knowledge, of quest and destination, he was I believe beginning to recognize, perhaps for the first time, who knows, that in the experience of the liberation of one's wonder and curiosity into its life journey, into its attunement to its direction and destination, and in the devious but sustained pursuit of that destination is to be discerned a most fundamental expression of the love of God.

My belief is that God is just as present in our questions as in our answers. In fact God is the one who leads us, who draws us on,[44] who goes before our questioning, and leads it to its destination. In this sense it is fitting that it is wonder, and its expression in questioning that is the core of the "in-between". For of all the operations that are conscious it is the most significant one from that standpoint of the "in-between."

The last recorded discussion group led by Eric O'Connor on October 29th 1980 took as its set reading Olsen's ballet text, *The Born Dancer*. Some participants wondered, how could someone be born a dancer? Do you mean to say that life is a matter of becoming what we are? Surely we make ourselves what we are? Well how could...

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Curiosity at the Center of One's Life*, Thomas More Institute Papers /84, Thomas More Montreal, 1987, p 556. Lonergan himself was also familiar with the deviousness of providence in the unfolding of his own questions. In an extra-ordinary self disclosure in *The Question as Commitment* pages 10 and 32, he made clear that his interest in the question of method, of the surd, and of economics came extremely early and had a quite devious unfolding in his life. "The secondary source is interesting

people and interesting books. I read books. If you find a book that hits you, you can say it is research, or luck, or what I called "emergent probability" (a notion that I developed in *Insight*: the probability that something that fits in will come along: or, ultimately, Divine Providence." The same kind of experiences is recounted by Collingwood. As a small boy he tells us that it came to him with some force that his task was to think. But he had no idea at all what he was to think about. There was no special question. He was, as he put it, wrestling with a fog (pps4-5). In retrospect he now knew that at that time the problems of his life's work were taking, deep down inside him, their first embryonic shape. The *Autobiography* is the story of how from such obscure origins the problem of the philosophy of history became his life work. To this add Schopenhauer's essay "Transcendent Speculation on the Apparent Deliberateness in the Fate of the Individual", pps 201-223 in *Pargea and Parlipomena, Short Philosophical Essays*, Translated from the German by E.F.J. Payne, Vol I, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1974.

2. *Inquiry and Attunement*, Thomas More Institute Papers/81, Montreal 1981, 9f. This will be referred to hereafter as IAA.

3. CCL 123f takes up the issue of the directions of openness and adult choice. On page 139 a dissenting voice remarks that openness does not seem a characteristic of Catholicism. Pps 147-8 - move in the direction of openness.

4. IAA, pps 11, 24.

5. *Conversations with Eric Voegelin*, Thomas More Institute Papers/76, Montreal 1976, hereafter referred to as CWEV; *The Question as Commitment*, Thomas More Institute Papers/77, Montreal 1977, hereafter referred to as TQAC; *Dialogues in Celebration*, Thomas More Institute Papers/80, Montreal 1980, hereafter referred to as DIC; *Inquiry and Attunement*, Thomas More Institute Papers/81, Montreal 1981.

6. DIC, p 50.

7. Lonergan gave two courses in the Thomas More Institute related to *Insight*, the first in 1945-6, the second in 1951-2. In the second the emphasis was much more focused on the questioning activity and its significance so it is a question - was Eric O'Connor talking about only the first course, or possibly the two?

8. IAA, pps 1, 13, 15.

9. CCL 118-9.

10. DWEV, 101f.

11. Answer to exam in the course; "*The Alerted Mind - Arousal, Inquiry, Performance*" in April 1969 by Mrs Ages Sunderland, CCL vi.

12. IAA,p 6.

13. CWEV, 25.

14. CWEV, 25.

15. R.W. Bibby, *Fragmented Gods, The Poverty and Potential of Religion in Canada*, Irwin Publishing, Toronto 1987, in particular 19-21 for the situation in Quebec.

16. IAA, p 5.

17. IAA, 5.

18. IAA 2,3.

19. CCL 92.

20. See CCL 273-293 for a discussion of this methodology.

21. CCL 92.

22. CCL 91.

23. IAA, 4.

24. CCL 152-3.

25. CCL 95.

26. DIC pps 50-1. See also CCL pps 98-101.

27. CCL pps 76-7, on critical involvement. The quote comes from p viii of the Preface.

28 For parallels between O'Connor and Buber see Daniel Murphy, *Martin Buber's Philosophy of Education*, Irish Academic Press, Dublin 1988, especially chapters V, VI, and VII.

29. QAC, p 130.

30. see W. Mathews, "Wonder as Narrative" in *Philosophical Studies*(NUI), Vol XXX, 1986-7, pps 258-279.

31. As Buber at the end of his life came to appreciate the importance of his own personal history and story, so also I believe with Lonergan and O'Connor. But there was some resistance. See CCL 373, for Lonergan on "being-in-love" and personal histories, Method in Theology notes, p 587 for comment on identifying grace in one's psychological experiences. CAM 16-8 for his reading of Progoff; 197-9; For O'Connor, CLC 213 "It has been said cheaply, casually, everybody has a story which is their own life story. I think this is highly questionable. I think we may at the end of our life have written a story, but I don't think the story is there yet. I wonder if when we change roles, the role of say a priest, a teacher of mathematics, a lecturer to you people...? In these roles, in a sense, we are in a different story, a slightly different story. We take a different stance. ... is there any way to modify that in a person's story?" (CCL 213)

32. DWEV, p 45.

33. CWEV, p 62.

34. The first part of the quote is from CCL, p 210; the second from IAA, p 40.

35. *Time and Narrative*, Volume 1, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1984, p 3, repeated pps 6 and 52.

36. Chapter 1 of *Method in Theology* offers no clues as to the temporal unfolding of the transcendental notions. My "Wonder as Narrative" was an attempt to do this.

37. see Paul Trainor, "Autobiography as Philosophical Argument: Socrates, Descartes, Collingwood," *Thought*, Vol LXIII, No 251, December 1988, 378-396, as well as "Wonder as Narrative."

38. op. cit., p 382.

39 Brian McGuiness, *Wittgenstein, A Life: Young Ludwig (1889-1921)*, Duckworth, London 1988, p 313.

40. CCL, p 381.

41. CCL, p 386.

42. CCL, pps 408-9.

43. CCL, p 568.

44. CWEV, p 83f.