Pastoral linkage between interreligious collaboration, as discussed in the 1965 decree Nostra Aetate of the Second Vatican Council, and the current interest in Medjugorje, Garabandal, Lipa and other sources of visionary reports, may emerge from an application of Lonergan's notion of praxis. To concretize this within the larger context of his "intentionality analysis," it will be necessary to relate it to his "patterns" of experience and to his "horizons" of interpretation, and then to see if these three interlocking titles can somehow be linked up with his fourth title "Religious Consciousness." A brief word on each of these four titles:

**FOUR TITLES**

*Intentionality analysis* (or interiority analysis) is a method of theological reflection on empirical data of consciousness. It differs from an older method, sometimes called "faculty psychology," in that the latter presupposes the Aristotelian thesis that the speculative intellect takes precedence over any other human faculty. Liberated from this presupposition, interiority analysis lays stress on praxis as the higher goal or intentionality of intellectual speculation.

*Patterns of experience.* Experiencing an object, say, a flower,

occurs through a multitude of outer sensations and inner consciousness: acts of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling, imagining, remembering, — all lumped with each other and with immanent factors variously named conation, interest, attention, purpose. This lumped multitude is organized into a unified pattern according to which one can say "This flower is beautiful," or "A lady spoke to me." It can be organized in various ways. One way is by understanding, in a systematic and detached manner, the interrelations of the multiple elements with each other, and this is called an intellectual or a scientific pattern. Another way is by selectively arranging these as artistic re-plays, interlacing them with gestures and figures of speech, in a primordial drama of human living that the theater only imitates. Both the scientific and the dramatic formulations communicate insights that lead to decisions.

Horizon, literally the line where the earth and the sky seem to meet, is the field of one’s experience, knowledge, interests. This field is bounded by a line that delimits one’s horizon. Empirical data beyond this line are not considered.

Religious consciousness is the topic of a number of lectures given by Lonergan after 1975. Selected from this topic are insights from two eminent psychologists. One is Jung’s notion of the "collective unconscious" and the therapeutic function of its archetypes. The second is Maslow’s notion of "peak experience." In his attempt to construct the cognitional superstructure of religious experience, Lonergan anticipates collective religious consciousness to be converging into a unified world mediated by ultimate meaning and motivated by ultimate values. No doubt, this anticipation arose from a need to systematize insights formulated ten years earlier in the Second Vatican Council’s decree Nostra Aetate.

VISIONARY EXPERIENCES

These four interlocking titles are important to the pastoral service demanded by communities trying to respond to the messages reported in the visionary experiences. This service can be communicated according to a scientific pattern, and then it will have to

5. Insight, 185-89.
7. Third Collection, 56.
rely on the latest findings of modern science, especially the validity and limitations of the known laws of nature. It can also be communicated according to a dramatic pattern, and since dramatic styles are culturally conditioned, these are to be understood within the particular context of each culture.

**PATTERNS: LOURDES**

Neither the plurality of cultures nor the distinction between the scientific pattern and the dramatic pattern had been explicitly affirmed in the days of Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes in 1858. And yet both were more than intuitively grasped by the people writing about them.

Written reflections about Lourdes abound. Two of these are here selected to illustrate the contrast and complementarity of the dramatic and scientific patterns. The dramatic pattern is here exemplified by "The Song of Bernadette," a fictional dramatization by Franz Werfel. The scientific pattern is represented by Herbert Thurston in two articles that summarize a three-volume study made by Leonard Cros who had directly questioned those involved in the Lourdes events.

Cros began collecting the documents during the lifetime of Bernadette, and Thurston reports him as being a personal friend of Vital Dutour, the imperial procurator who wrote the early reports about Bernadette's visions. Around that time, legendary hagiography, as exemplified in the martyrology and the breviary's Second Nocturns and particularly their plethora of miracles, had become problematic to critical historians. In no hurry to add to this plethora and with a critical eye to conflicting details of hearsay testimonies, Cros delayed publication for at least thirty years.

In the meantime, a newspaper journalist Henri Lassere published a best-seller that appeared in English translation in 1872 or fourteen years after Bernadette's visions. Lassere's "very picturesque and charming style" must have fascinated novelists like

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Franz Werfel. (Werfel is not a Catholic but a Jew. During Hitler’s persecution, circumstances of his exodus brought him to Lourdes and immersed him in its devotional ambience. In his distress, he made a vow that if he escaped he would sing the song of Bernadette. He also mentions “a far older and far more unconscious vow of mine.”)\textsuperscript{11} This fascination must have inspired him to exercise his “right of creative freedom” and evoked the “need to strike the spark of life from a hardened substance.”

“Hardened substance” aptly describes the three-volume documentary of Cros. Even a veteran scholar like Thurston found difficulty in plowing through its “overwhelming mass of detail and the inevitable repetitions” contributed by many witnesses of varying degrees of reliability.\textsuperscript{12} But plow through them he did. Like Werfel, Thurston was driven by some felt need. Dramatic creativity drove Werfel to strike the spark of life, but the need for a hardened substance from which to strike the spark drove Thurston to the scientific task of retrieval.

Reading Thurston and Werfel side by side, the contrast and complementarity become clear and questions arise: What is the meaning of this contrast and complementarity? How does it help people struggling for authenticity in their response to revealed meanings? Is there room for improvement in this struggle for authenticity?

\textbf{TOWARDS PRAXIS}

Taking up the last question first, an affirmative answer can readily be given. The meanings and values revealed by the events at Lourdes renewed the age-old emphasis on prayer, penance and conversion. But despite the authenticating cures and despite the advertised shrines and pilgrimages, the world at large remains unconvinced about the value of prayer and penance, remains unconverted and under the thrall of spirits of pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, sloth, spirits that have repeatedly led it since 1858 into two world wars and hundreds of fratricidal conflicts between and within nations. There is room for improvement.

Is there any remedy? There must be. But for this, pastoral service must be more efficacious than ever. There must be credibility

\textsuperscript{11} Song of Bernadette, viii.
\textsuperscript{12} See note 10, p. 135.
that is not only ecumenical but universalist, such that even professed agnostics, in the depths of their interiority, can begin to grasp meanings and values being revealed to this agnostic world in the unfolding of visionary history. There must be an adequate response to the increasingly systematic exigence of the modern mind struggling to analyze and synthesize this historical drama. There must be a radical updating of pastoral insights.

Much has been done since the aggiornamento initiated by the Second Vatican Council. But is this enough? Lonergan’s notion of “patterns” is partly illustrated in the contrast and complementarity of Thurston’s and Werfel’s communications. But communication is only one of eight functional specialties of intentionality analysis.¹³ Prior to communication is interpretation.

HORIZONS OF INTERPRETATION

Interpretation differs in different horizons. For example, in a secularist horizon, a mysterium tremendum et fascinans¹⁴ would methodically be dissected into two classes of empirical data: those obtained from outer senses and those obtained from inner consciousness. After the dissection, the latter are arbitrarily rejected (or reduced to indirect discourse).¹⁵ The former are subjected to physical measurements if possible, for physical measurability has shown its fruitfulness in physics. The prestige of physics is prized but unattainable in human sciences like psychology. This then resorts to a technique of quasi-measurement whereby visionary experiences are reduced to their external components and tabulated in a scalar construct ranging from “illusory” to “hallucinatory.” Frequencies of occurrence of illusions or hallucinations in one situation are quantitatively compared with those of other situations. One such analysis, explicitly Freudian, considers a measurable correlation between Marian apparitions and Oedipal tendencies, and between fingering rosary beads and childhood repression

¹⁴. Ibid. 106 note 2. The note about variations of tremendum suggests growth from irrational fear to supra-rational reverence, from lesser to greater authenticity. A secularist horizon would methodically exclude the latter stage of growth.
¹⁵. This rejection is an epistemological blunder, and according to Lonergan (Insight, 235), “... this blunder ... leads zealous practitioners of the scientific method in the human field to rule out of court a major portion of the data and so deny the empirical principle.”
of anal-erotic impulses. The secularist horizon suffers from a reductionist bias. Restriction to this horizon is questionable.

Besides the secularist horizon, there is also a horizon that is not biased against the data of consciousness and is here called a "sacralist" horizon. However, this too is faced with difficulties of interpretation, for here, interpretation involves the cumulative fruits of personal verification through decades or centuries of sustained dialogue. For example, the process of canonization of Bernadette was not completed until 54 years after her death or 75 years after her visionary experience. There is need of research institutions and archives that outlast generations of contributors and remain secure from the vicissitudes of wars and catastrophes.

In the sacralist horizon as elsewhere, human authenticity cannot be taken for granted. False visionaries, false prophets and religious wars are historical data. Insufficient control of scientific meanings sometimes leads to a magical mentality that endangers hermeneutic authenticity. In some cultural situations, addiction to peak experiences can provoke psychic contagion. Both Thurston and Werfel include reports about false visionaries at Lourdes who for a time succeeded in deluding the credulous by aping the visions of Bernadette. This historical datum gives rise to the question whether such contagion can recur in succeeding decades or even centuries after 1858. (The question may be asked about a 1988 rash of retinal burns in Metro Manila where curiosity seekers tried to see the "dancing sun" reportedly announced in an alleged vision.) The question of psychic contagion is valid and very relevant.

The possibility of contagion as an on-going historical process can be met by following Lonergan's proposal to apply Ricouer's distinction between a hermeneutic of recovery and a hermeneutic of suspicion. Freudian tradition systematically suspects that unconscious factors can be present in religious impulses. Repressed envy of Bernadette's popularity was present in the false visionaries who aped her.

However, a hermeneutic of suspicion by itself could be divisive, even nihilistic, and so must be sublated in a hermeneutic of recovery. The recovery of empirical data arising from the depths of

16. See note 14. The term "sacralist" here does not exclude unauthenticity as the term "religious" might.
17. Third Collection, 156.
18. Ibid. 157.
consciousness, though beset with great difficulties, must be achieved in a manner that integrates both the secularist and the sacralist horizons.

This integration is a desirable ideal. But is it attainable? Concretely, an investigation that integrates scientific and religious elements would be possible only if the investigators, eminently skilled in scientific methods, are also eminently free to make religious acts of faith and hope and love.\(^{19}\)

This has been carried out in a limited way within confessional boundaries. Understandably, its fruitfulness is also limited and has so far failed to grow to the world-wide dimensions implied in the messages. Perhaps there is need now to transcend these boundaries and to try interreligious dialogue.

**INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE**

In October 1986, at an interreligious meet on world peace held at Assisi and attended by Animists, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Judaists, Moslems, Shintoists and Zoroastrians, Pope John Paul II called for "repentance for our failure as Christians to carry out our mission of peace and reconciliation."\(^{20}\) This looks like a call for help from world religions. *Indeed how can world peace be attained without the total involvement of world religions?* The messages reported in visionary experiences merely repeat again and again that world-peace cannot be attained without world-wide prayer, penance and conversion.

Hence this present attempt to link interreligious dialogue with visionary experience. There is need of faith that transcends particular beliefs. There is need of hope that all may be one as God is one. There is need of self-effacing and self-sacrificing love.

The essence of interreligious collaboration is concretely illustrated in the composition of the commission that passes judgement on claims of miraculous cures at Lourdes. A 1957 listing contains the names of 1,453 participating physicians of every description: unbelievers, Protestants, Masons, Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, Confucianists, Eastern Orthodox, etc. A 1947 listing contains the names of 47 university professors from London, Glasgow, Liège,

\(^{19}\) Ibid. 158.

Padua, Geneva, Lyons, Paris, Lille, etc. Its medical office is well-equipped and is continually being updated to conform to the highest standards of scientific research.\(^{21}\)

Scientific analysis is only part of the interreligious process. Spiritual discernment will also be needed, for the main problem is how to understand religious meanings and values in visionary experiences.

**DIALOGUE GASPING FOR BREATH?**

Both the Second Vatican Council’s decree *Nostra Aetate* and Lonergan’s article about converging religions specifically mention Buddhist, Christian and Hindu religions in an anticipated dialogue.\(^{22}\) Efforts in this direction are being made, but they reveal problems.

At an interreligious consultation held in Singapore in July 1987, and continued in Taipei in December 1988, it was noted that interreligious dialogue was “gasp for breath.”\(^{23}\) Why? One reason given blamed the Christian dialogists for imposing a “technological epistemology” on the dialogue, contrary to the contemplative and non-analytic ways of Hindu and Buddhist Asians. In other words, the Christian dialogists gave the impression of speaking mainly from a secularist horizon. Asian dialogists, more at home in the sacerdotal horizon of *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, were less at home with intellectual speculations that seemed to attract the technical minds of the westernized Christians and often led to fruitless controversy.

In two such controversies, the hermeneutic of suspicion has clearly been at work within the Christian household (*oikos*) in generating unecumenical accusations of Mariolatry and Bibliolatry. Their survival through the centuries can only be explained by malign influences of principalities and powers capable of deceiving Christians into distorting the divine injunction against idolatry.

The hermeneutic of suspicion also distrusts contemplative passivity and relies more on political activism controlling the meanings

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\(^{22}\) *Third Collection*, 55-73.

\(^{23}\) *FABC Papers* No. 49, 32-52.
of any *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. For example, at the Lausanne II meet held in Manila in July 1989, a criticism of Christian "clericalism" and its bureaucratic implications were singled out for publication, and some readers suspected this criticism to be a political move to prevent a recurrence of the 1986 EDSA exercise — where clerical garb was very much in evidence — that weakened a rightist ideology. The same hermeneutic can be expected to escalate this to the counter-suspicion of leftist sympathies or partisan triumphalism. Thus to everyone's sorrow, Christian ecumenism is being choked by political constrictions. All these may help to explain why interreligious dialogue is gasping for breath.

When Christ told His disciples to announce the Good News to all nations, He was telling them to perform a messenger service. This evangelical mission does not automatically qualify Christians, whether lay or clerical, for the chairmanship of interreligious dialogue. They have neither been missioned nor elected to this post. If they usurp the post on grounds of technological competence or political power, the gasps that we now hear may become terminal.

By way of resuscitation, the 1858 happening at Lourdes might be tried as a topic of interreligious meditation (rather than a gasping "dialogue"). Inspired by the 1986 happening at Assisi, such an exercise might include, say, some Theravadan practice of a "one point focus," dwelling on the tiny stream of water flowing by the river Gave. If some such invitation can be made from a pure motive of faith, hope and contrition, and if it can be accepted from the same motive, it may lead to renewed study of scriptural origins of the call for prayer, penance and conversion. It may enlighten the pastoral service demanded by a world-wide congregation to respond to this call. For the call to prayer, penance and conversion is writ large in Buddhist, Christian, Confucianist, Hebrew, Hindu and Moslem scriptures, and writ even larger in the hearts of unlettered believers in elemental religions.

**COLLABORATIVE PRAXIS**

What can the response be? Proclamation of a dogma? Erection of a shrine? Such responses were considered adequate in the context of cultural uniformity. But the Second Vatican Council is
now more intent on the reality of cultural pluralism and responds to this with a pastoral aggiornamento. In a strange way, this has led to the Assisi happening when the Pope voiced an awareness of the Christian “failure” to promote a world-wide mission of peace. The doctrinal and liturgical responses of the past sometimes appeared in the cultures of other religions as more triumphalistic than humble, and more parochial than universalist, as though gifts were for hoarding rather than for sharing. Hence the absence of collaborative praxis. Without this praxis, humanity will continue to be drained of its spiritual energies by deep-seated conflicts. Wars and political threats of wars are unmistakable symptoms of deeper pathologies and the whole world is crying for therapy.

Therapy could be attempted by integrating the sacramental and secularist horizons of religious experiences with scriptural sources. Then an interreligious approach may conceivably ask such questions as these: Is the collective unconscious possibly moving under divine guidance? Under malign influence? Both? Are its archetypes culturally conditioned? What is the function of the feminine archetype? Does it respond to the therapeutic needs of a world brutalized by wars and macho aggressiveness? Does it have unifying power in matriarchal cultures? In other cultures?

Besides the scientific pattern of questions suggested above, a dramatic pattern is also possible. For drama involves catharsis that can be psychotherapeutic, especially a drama of maternal concern and sibling conflicts. When Werfel’s “Song of Bernadette” was shown on film, the world was just a spectator watching as it were from the outside. Perhaps a recasting of the dramatis personae can now be planned to include the whole world pilgrimaging through the centuries. The drama can then be viewed as a recurrence of symbolic dreams and dream-like experiences of a war-weary world crying out for a maternal presence.

**PEAK EXPERIENCE: COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS**

This view does not intend to reduce Marian apparitions to mere dreams but to show how even a scientific mind with a reductionist bias need not be prevented from regarding visionary reports at least as “peak experiences” or symbol-laden affects, like signposts on the royal road to the collective unconscious. As symbolic, they
point to meanings and values, and to repress these may be a pathological symptom of a Jonah complex.\textsuperscript{24}

Is the world, like Jonah, running away from a challenge, trying to evade responsibility for building world peace? Is it trying to ignore this peak experience throbbing in its collective unconscious with a maternal call for prayer, penance and conversion? Is it daunted by uncertainty? Indeed, there is no certainty of success. In the face of the world’s uncertainty, one can only hope.

INTERDISCIPLINARY HYPOTHESIS

A sign of hope is sensed as Lonergan reflects on Maslow’s observation that “peak experiences really were common, that most people had them, but that few were aware of the fact.”\textsuperscript{25} Thence emerges an interdisciplinary hypothesis that combines Maslow’s “peak experience” with Jung’s “collective unconscious.” This hypothesis can be broken down into nine interlocking statements:

1. life of the human collectivity constitutes a unified “organism”;
2. while in process of gestation in the terrestrial womb, this organism is not yet fully conscious;
3. peak experiences are beginning to occur in its awakening consciousness;
4. the internal reality of this external phenomenon named “organism” in scientific language is named \textit{mahakaruna} in the mahayana language being rediscovered by modern Buddhist historians;\textsuperscript{26}
5. and “christogenesis” in the bio-mystical language of Teilhard de Chardin;\textsuperscript{27}
6. these three languages are three culturally nuanced and partially overlapping expressions of the same reality; all three continually develop in mutual interaction;\textsuperscript{28}
7. the awakening of this organism includes peak experiences of a femi-

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Third Collection}, 118.
\textsuperscript{27} According to Teilhard de Chardin, “christogenesis” is a process in which all creation is becoming incorporated into the mystical body of Christ. See his \textit{Phenomenon of Man} (New York: Harper & Row, 1961) 297.
\textsuperscript{28} This is partially based on V. Gregson, \textit{Lonergan, Spirituality, and the Meeting of Religions} (Boston: Univ. Press of America, 1985) 107-9.
nine archetype of maternal concern;
8. gifted mystics and simple children find no difficulty in perceiving the activity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in these peak experiences repeatedly arising in humanity’s collective unconscious;
9. institutional validation of this perception and promotion of its meaning can be greatly enriched by interreligious collaboration.  

HYPOTHESIS OR HOPE?

A secularist mind might be tempted to reduce this hypothesis to wishful thinking induced by poetic fancy or science fiction. Even so, grace can overcome this temptation and sublimate such hypothesis into a fully conscious and fully intentional act of hope. Love evokes hope and the substance of things so hoped for is faith.

When these charisms become globally operative, when subsequent discernment shows this view to lead to global increase of faith and hope and love, then perhaps an interreligious directorate might emerge and be inspired to undertake the task of promoting the meaning of the dream. Perhaps only thus will universalist praxis respond to a maternal invitation: a world in anguish is being invited to prayer, penance and conversion.

29. This nine-point hypothesis may be seen as an exercise in reorganizing a set of empirical data according to Lonergan’s “generalized empirical method” outlined in Third Collection, 140-44. It will probably take a long time before it is accepted, for it depends on psychological insights that are as yet of little interest to theology departments.