



# The Positive Anthropocene

University British Columbia

July 8-12, 2019

## Conference Topics

- ✚ Implementation
- ✚ Global Leadership
- ✚ Economic Reorientation
- ✚ Detruncating Education
- ✚ Initiating the Spiral of Progress

## Fee and Accommodations

- Conference fee: \$75 CDN. Includes break provisions, reception and final dinner, and a copy of *Divyadaan* 30/1 (2019) "Religious Faith Seeding the Positive Anthropocene Age"
- Carey College housing : <http://live.carey-edu.ca/rooms>
- UBC housing : [information@housing.ubc.ca](mailto:information@housing.ubc.ca)
- UBC Pacific Spirit Hostel : <http://www.suitesatubc.com/>
- TransLink Vancouver transport : <https://www.translink.ca/Fares-and-Passes/Fare-Pricing.aspx>

"The Anthropocene Age, recently formally recognized, is the period of evolution in which humanity's discoveries and decisions give manifest tone to evolution's dynamic. The early negative Anthropocene was a stumbling period of local tribalism without large-scale warping of global dynamics. The following axial period added not only large-scale toxicities to evolution but also a solid and growing detriment to humanity's neurocraving in twisted grammar-structurings and truncated educational identifications of the dynamics of humanity. You and I need a Dionysian fantasy to begin to seed the distant positive Anthropocene."

Philip McShane (M.Sc., Lic. Phil., S.T.L., D.Phil [Oxon]), director of the conference.

Further information & registration:  
[robert.henman@msvu.ca](mailto:robert.henman@msvu.ca)



Sponsored by  
St. Marks College

## THE POSITIVE ANTHROPOCENE AGE: SEEDING A NEW POPULAR CULTURE

International Conference July 8–12, 2019  
Corpus Christi College, Vancouver, British Columbia

My *Webster's Dictionary* gives as first meaning of conference, “the act of consulting or conversing on a serious matter,” and so shall this gathering be. Prior to the conference, people may certainly exchange papers or drafts of papers presenting their stands or their questions on the topics broadly raised for each of the five days.

The serious matter is what is named in the title. The serious matter will be taken in five stages, detailed better as we move along. Participation need not involve attendance at the gathering: conferring at a distance is welcome all the way to next July and beyond.

Let me first briefly name our five problem-topics: (1) implementation; (2) global leadership; (3) economic reorientation; (4) det truncating education; and (5) initiating the spiral of progress. Next I express my own initial take on these. I would note that the reach, from now until long after the conferring, is for concrete cosmic guidance towards seeding progress. Such concrete guidance is to blossom from scribbles of those willing to participate in the search symbolized by the smaller gathering in Vancouver.

Monday, July 8<sup>th</sup>

Our first-day focus is the effective transformation of “Common Meaning and Ontology” (CMO). The focus is to be mediated by some grip on Lonergan’s “Standard Model” for such an inquiry: a common sense grip on *Insight* (I) and *Method in Theology* (M). Our focusing, of course, aims to be effective in lifting our communal intentions with regarding to that grip. The day is to home in effectively on Lonergan’s outrageous demands that metaphysics include “implementation” (I. 416) and that theology aims at “fruit to be borne” (M. 355).

Tuesday, July 9<sup>th</sup>

We shift to the crisis of religious leadership in that effectiveness, perhaps neatly posed by Lonergan in *Phenomenology and Logic*, first, the positive challenge: a leadership “to be a resolute and effective intervention in this historical process” (*Phenomenology and Logic*, 306): secondly, the failure of a leadership, assumed to be tuned to the Field of Being, but who operatively “retire into an ivory tower and exert no influence upon society at large: then we have a situation where the people who can do the most harm are doing it and the people who could do the most good are not” (306–7). The recent history of this embeddedness in the second stage of meaning is the topic of the first four articles of *Divyadaan* 30 (2019), which is to be supplied.

Wednesday, July 10<sup>th</sup>

The issue concerning us on this third day is indicated by the title of the fifth article in the *Divyadaan* volume just named: “Finding an Effective Economist: A Central Theological Challenge.” It will be 51 years in 2019 since Lonergan made the request, “find an economist.” This is perhaps the most obvious instance of failure to

implement, to bear fruit. So it will be the most revealing of the defective procedures of our times. On page 766 of *Insight*, Lonergan wrote that “theology possesses a twofold relevance,” but the relevance is at present vague, ineffective, “effete” (M. 99). Our challenge is to grasp effectively that ineffectiveness in ourselves and in our cultures. The accumulation of a fresh existential poise in these three days is to bring us to concrete strategies of the necessary finding of economists. Obviously, the strategy includes enlightening conversations in the face of present blockages.

Thursday, July 11<sup>th</sup>

So, our climb in understanding our present standing and the remedying of it slowly and globally, leads us deeper. The failure noted and ingested on the third day is certainly rooted in the difficulty of educating economists of our acquaintance. What is this failure in its fullness and how might we lift culture to a new center of gravity, of seriousness? “That shift in the center of gravity, that habituation to a differentiated consciousness, is the fruit of education” (*Topics in Education*, 116). The issue is to search for and find—cyclically—the recurrence-schemes of ontic and phyletic shifting.

Friday, July 12<sup>th</sup>

The cyclic issue was nursed as a problem by Lonergan since his 29<sup>th</sup> year: the problem of “providing a statistically effective form for the next cycle of human action that will bring forth in reality the incompleteness of the later act of intellect by setting it new problems.” (*Essay in Fundamental Sociology*, 1934). So, we return to the first day’s topic, but with the “cumulative and progress results” (M. 4) of a communal “invitation to understand something about the process of human history, and a summons to decisiveness at a rather critical moment in the historical process.” (*Phenomenology and Logic*, 300). We return to the fifth chapter of *Method*.

\*\*\*\*\*

Further details of the conference dynamics will thus emerge. But it seems neat to conclude with my own basic suggestion: that the focus of the conference should be on implementation, on FSs, but bracketed by a foundational perspective on it (so, a personal triple-positioning on it—my concluding paragraph will capitalize it—à la *Lonergan’s 1833 Overture*) and by constructive functional attention to C<sub>9</sub>. That constructive attention is to be massively creative. The articles in *Divyadaan* 30/1 (2019) drive us towards thinking out redemptive isomorphic structures for contemporary situations and topologies of psychosocial structures and their referents.

But now, during “the animalization of man on the higher level of his achievement” (*Analytic Concept of History*, 1934, conclusion), we must face, with graceful gallantry and gantring, towards a genesis of quite novel pyromorphic structures. “It is, I fear, in Vico’s phrase, a *scienza nuova*” (*Shorter Papers*, 223). It? IT? Has not this IT something to do with the IT of page 232 of *The Allure of the Compelling Genius of History*? Is IT not to weave forward the website series, “[Questions and Answers](#)” with concrete effective Internal Topologies that would fire up a global meaning, for example, of [Question 51](#), “You Make My Skin Caul” and [Question 56](#), “Breaking Forward to Global Care”? So that our conferring might lean us, seedily, globally, towards an Effective Interior Lighthouse Poise of “IT Makes Our Skins Caul”?

Phil McShane  
November 2018