

Chapter 9 Interpretation

By now we are used to the operations of the Ovalteam, and the manner in which the cycling moves towards cumulative and progressive results. In so far as the operations are highly successful, there is better than a Bell curve distribution of successes in work undertaken. One might indeed suspect that with cunning selection of tasks, almost all tasks are progressively completed. That would mean, in the present case, that a task of interpretation suspected and selected would be pretty sure to be a positive addition to the next specialty: in its own modest way, then, reinvent history. In what sense? We leave that question to the final lecture.

The task of interpretation was the topic of volume 4(2005) of *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis*.¹ There, certainly, is a place to start if one wishes to lift Lonergan's treatment of interpretation in *Method in Theology* to a new precise functional level. The poise of the volume, however, seems quite different from the mood of that chapter 7 of Lonergan's book. Indeed, there are various problems that come with Lonergan's effort in that chapter that would distract us here from the main drive. So it seems best to stay in the perspective that we have been generating all along here, a perspective much more related to the achievement of the book *Insight*. That means that we are pushing for some follow-up on Lonergan's footnote at the beginning of chapter 7 of *Method*, which points to a distribution of the task of interpretation, as it is defined or described in *Insight*, across the functional specialties.

We shall return in the conclusion to broader problems due to the *Method* treatment of interpretation, reaching thus towards our reflection on history.. Here we proceed in the style of that volume 4(2005). And it seems most enlightening and simpler to proceed roughly in the manner in which I myself undertook the task there. I sought

¹<http://mun.ca/jmda> , a Memorial University, Newfoundland, Website.

an interpretation of a single word in the canons of empirical method of chapter 3 of *Insight*, the word 'complete' in the title of the fifth canon, 'The Canon of Complete Explanation'. What I eventually reached, in that article, was a hypothetical expression of my interpretation, one indeed which I put in the mouth of Lonergan. No need now to rush back to that article, but its eventual reading will help to shift the heuristic of the cyclic operations, the community's TUV.

My effort here is strategic: it is, I might say, luminous towards the cyclic lift. All our interpretative effort should be thus operated, or quasi-operated, to use suggestively that odd word that Lonergan has in his article 'Mission and Spirit'.² A pause to think concretely over this is worthwhile. The doctorate student searches out a respected director. I think here of Lonergan with Boyer, or Feynman with Wheeler. But you and I can think of less fortunate ventures, perhaps in our very own cases. There is the luck of finding someone who knows the scene, who can point you to a gap or a glimpse that might just seed a change of pace or mood in the entire science.

In the present case I am my own director, happily untrammelled by institutional demands in the bad sense expressed to me by Lonergan regarding my own struggle of the 1960s in Oxford, when he advised me to 'give the fellow what he wants'. What I am able to aim at here is not giving what is wanted, but sniffing out some need of the cycle, filling that need, and giving expression to it that may well annoy generally but find acceptance to the potential Ovalteam who are alert to such lifts. I am writing here, I would recall for you, of an existential category, an incarnation of crisis mood in this present deep crisis of method. '.... an existential category. It is a constitutive component of the group as human. It is an aesthetic apprehension of the group's origin. The aesthetic apprehension of the group's origin and story becomes operative whenever the group debates, judges, evaluates, decides and acts - and especially in a crisis.'³

²A *Third Collection*, 29.

³Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, 230.

I am aiming here, as we will gradually grasp, at a very central problem and a very basic lift to the cycle. But the orientation is, or is to be, a common thing. I think now of the history of patristic scholarship and lifts along the road, and of the Why of certain selections and the mood and mode of their undertaking and their achievement, but that is a topic for our final lecture on re-inventing history. However, it is an advantage to have some illustrations of detailed interpretation in mind as we venture into this tighter topic. So I appeal to one book that relates to a surge of interpretation at the end of the twentieth century. The book is *Ambrose of Milan and the End of the Arian-Nicene Conflicts*.⁴ It is one of many such works that are emerging in recent decades, and I do not select it for any more profound reason than it being to hand at the moment.

“The book is the revised product of a Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Toronto. The conflict between Christian Confessional groups in the fourth century presents quite a number of historical, theological and prosopographical challenges which the current renewal in fourth-century studies has only begun to address.”⁵

The questions I would wish you to nurse regarding this book, or an equivalent work that might interest you - for example, the Fiorenza work mentioned in the previous chapter that nudges forward biblical studies and the Preface - are questions that enliven the inquiry of *Insight*, chapter 17, section 3. But lift them existentially into the context that we struggle towards. In particular, envisage them as lifted into the context of the challenge of the second half of page 250 of *Method*, about which we hovered in the third chapter. Think, perhaps, of a graduate student of patristics reading *Ambrose of Milan and the End of the Arian-Nicene Conflicts*. In parallel fashion, you might think of the undergraduate students listening to and reading Lonergan’s *De Verbo Incarnato* in Rome in the early 1960s, or now in translation. Think, as I do now, of your

⁴ Authored by Daniel H. Williams, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995. I shall refer to this work below as Williams.

⁵ Williams, vii.

own undergraduate days, and ask such questions as the key one I pose at the end of this chapter, What was and is this minor real distinction all about? For me, then; for me now; for us now, for all of us that are (about)³. Does it have a luminous place in “the current renewal of fourth-century studies”⁶? The question asks implicitly about viewpoint: viewpoint of author, teacher, reader, viewpoint of interpreter in all the meanings of that word.

Back now to my present selection for the task of musing over interpretation together. Like the choice of a next note in a sonata, the selection takes on an inevitability when it is made and followed, chorded, carried forward. The note that I wish to strike here, or write here, or right here, seems to me to anticipate that inevitability. What might one select in order to bring forward Lonergan’s functional view of the second specialty? Can one get any closer to the center, and to the crisis, than the interpretation of the canons of interpretation that he provided at the end of that elusive chapter 17 of *Insight*? That last footnote points to their remoteness from present interest, something Lonergan anticipated in that heave forward of solitary meaning of 1953. Why not, then, tackle this heart of the matter, pushing for a hypothetical interpretation of these canons of interpretation that would shift the statistics of their operability, their future operating in the cycle.

I would point out here, though I would hope that the pointing become more and more superfluous as the decades pass, that my writing here is doctrinal. In the lecture associated with this written effort there is a shift to foundational pedagogy, indeed to commonsense illustration. Doctrinal writing is programmatic, and sometimes brutally so: “be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect”. Or, to take some more homely examples “you’ll have to spend a few days acclimatizing at Camp 4 before tackling the last 200 meters of the push for the top”; “you’ll have to spend some months controlling your cello-bowing technique to be able to reach the proper tones for that sonata”.

⁶Williams, vii.

Importing this orientation of mountaineering or music-making into the challenge of the verbal meaning-climb is a massive present cultural challenge.

I must, I feel, continue a little on this topic, recalling chapter 5. I raised it in 1971, when I was editing the second volume of the Lonergan Florida conference: my introduction focused in the question of how we stand on the shoulders of the past.⁷ I wrote there about studies of animal thirst: it remains a massive complex problem of zoology. But the ethos of zoology recognizes that: there seems little of an equivalent ethos in the case of the thirst for understanding.

My work of the past decade leaves me more inclined now to talk about physics, with which I regularly draw parallels. There is the relevant parallel that I use between TUV and TUT, tentative unification theories in physics that reach for those elusive GUTs, grand unification theories. The present Tentative Universal Viewpoints that we, and I mean you and I, possess, are, frankly, pretty feeble realities, and that will appear as we struggle towards a hypothetical expression of the canons here. Struggle towards? Am I forgetting that this essay is doctrinal? No: but you see how easy it is to think that, really, we can in fact do some serious climbing, even though we are just reading a map?

And, to console the philosopher or the theologian, I would recall that the cultural ethos is such that even that apparently mature zone of higher mathematics suffers from the bias. Learned articles and books there can throw in the translation into German or Japanese of the silly claim, 'it is easy to see from this'. So, it may not be so difficult for my sympathetic reader to accept my comment about the canons of hermeneutics, 'it is not easy to see from this', from this reading or many discussions around the reading, what Lonergan meant by the canons, what Lonergan would mean by the canons within the larger context of functionality. I recall now Lonergan writing about the problem of presenting his economic theory 'To discover such terms is a lengthy and painful process

⁷See Philip McShane (ed), *Language, Truth and Meaning*, Introduction, Gill Macmillan and Notre Dame, 1972.

of trial and error. *Experto crede*,"⁸ and can claim something similar about my struggle with these canons. Only similar, and indeed more closely similar to my experience with the reading of that economic theory in its 1944 version. Lonergan sent me that typescript of 130 pages in 1968: by 1998 I understood it enough to edit that volume 21 of his *Complete Works*. My *experto crede* then is not that of one who struggled to create a theory but of a struggle to understand what had been expressed.

The canons, like the economics, are expressed densely, doctrinally. What else could the man do? Let us pause over this issue. It is the issue of paradigm shift, but it is best thought of as a massive metatheoretic shift. And to help us on, I call in a parallel from physics, but a parallel theoretic and metatheoretic shift that is not some shift in higher geometry, but the simple shift that is appealed to on the first page of chapter 1 of *Insight*. This is convenient for me pedagogically since I have dealt in detail with the relevant shift, that of Archimedes, elsewhere.⁹ All I shall do here is quote, with tongue in cheek and the memory of my own struggle with the first sentence of *On Floating Bodies*, the first paragraph of Archimedes famous book: 'Let us suppose that a fluid is of such a character that, its parts lying evenly and being continuous, that part which is thrust the less is driven along by that part which is thrust the more; and that each of its parts is thrust by the fluid which is above it in a perpendicular direction if the fluid be sunk in anything and compressed by anything". We are a long way here from 'weighing the crown in water,' indeed we only get to that in Proposition 7 of the book *On Floating Bodies*. Archimedes had mused over his discoveries for such a sufficient length of time, that he could comfortably pitch them all into wondrous axiomatic form. So we have, as we do in Euclid, an unteachable format, expression.¹⁰

⁸*For a New Political Economy*, University of Toronto Press, 1998, 112.

⁹In Cantower 27.

¹⁰The problem of such expression is discussed in elementary ways in *Introducing Critical Thinking*, Axial Press, Halifax, 2005 (John Benton, Alessandra Drage, Philip McShane).

Might we say the same about the musings of Lonergan that led him to these canons? It seems a plausible parallel. Might there be another, more helpful way of getting at the methodology that he is suggesting? Might we reach a hypothetical expression of his meaning that would jive with these canons but be accessible to us mortals?

Quite easily: and here I jest, of course. I have been grappling with these canons since 1958. It was only after about 25 years that I tackled the task of bringing this set into some type of comparison with the set to be found in chapter 3 of *Insight*. I never published that effort of the early 1980s, but the article I wrote then appears as the first part of Cantower 14, 'Communications and Ever-ready Founders'. The Cantower, in fact, is written to parallel *Insight* chapter 14, and to twine round chapter 14 of *Method* on 'Communications', shifting that *Insight* chapter's axiomatics of implementation into a heuristics of local foundational operations. So, the effort there is cousin to the push here, and is a relevant diversion now for the serious reader.

Here I dodge repeating myself, and simply point to two displays that I gave in *Cantower* 14. The first display is in section 14.1.1, The point of that display is to draw a parallel between the shift to thing-to-thing in physics and the shift to that relates interpretations to each other, not to the interpreter. The second display is a paralleling of the two sets of canons, a good exercise for you now. There are two columns, with the first column giving the Canons of Empirical Method in the right order. Corresponding to Canons 3, 4, 5, 6, in that column are Canons 1, 4, 2, 5 of the hermeneutics list. Let us call the first column E, empirical and the second H, Hermeneutic. Nothing very surprising in the pieces of the listing mentioned already: both E3 and H1 are named canons of relevance. E4 and H4 and Parsimony. E5 is titled Complete Explanation and H2 is titled 'Explanation', and we know from the previous exercise that we can drop the

word 'complete' from the first to give precise symmetry.¹¹ Finally E6 deals with 'Statistical' Residues and H5 deals simply with 'Residues': there is no serious problem in making them parallel.

So, we turn to the top of the list, to E1 and E2. There is only one canon of hermeneutics left to put into correspondence with these two canons, 'The Canon of Selection' and 'The Canon of Operations': it is H3, 'The Canon of Successive Approximations'. What might we make of this? What I made of it in the list can be seen there: roughly, the canon of selection coincides with the first two principles of criticism and the canon of operations coincides with the third and fourth principles of criticism. We skip repeating detailed comments. What is important to ponder immediately is the disordering of the canons of hermeneutics. H1 comes third in the list in the new order, and it is useful to think of this in relation to Archimedes' first principle in his work on hydrostatics, quoted above. Lonergan's first canon 'demands that the interpreter begin from the universal viewpoint'; Archimedes first principle demands, as you find in those first pages of the text, that the reader get a grip on the floating apple or the flowing stream from the viewpoint of someone who sees the surface of the water as coincident with a great circle of the earth. How many of us are comfortably, luminously, at home with the notion that the surface of our local lake lies on a patch of a sphere?

"Weigh the crown in water"; would it not be better to start with Archimedes in the bath, with his ecstatic selecting and operating? Would this not be 'eminently relevant, sane and solid,'¹² as Lonergan remarks about his account of interpretation in *Method*, which he ties in with Bishop Descamps nudge away from the broader viewpoint of the divine plan.

What Lonergan adds immediately here in *Method* requires our serious

¹¹See my reflection on "The Meaning of 'Complete' in the Fifth Canon of Empirical Method", *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis* 4(2005): <http://mun.ca/jmda>

¹²*Method in Theology*, 172.

consideration in the context of our problem here and of our suggestions regarding the ethos of the Ovalteam. So I had best quote it in full.

“Many perhaps will hesitate to agree with the rejection of general presentations of the divine plan running through scriptural history. But they too will come around, I think, when a distinction is drawn; such general expositions are highly important in the functional specialty, communications; but they are not the vehicle by which the exegete communicates his results to the theological community.

It remains, however, that the basic mode of expression, just described, has to be supplemented.”¹³

How is it to be supplemented? Again, it is better to quote directly from later in the same page. The rambling, believe it or not, carries us forwards towards the hypothetical expression of the canons that is our objective: but only if you have time to muse and digest all this!

“What is needed is not mere description but explanation. If people were shown how to find in their own experience elements of meaning, how these elements can be assembled into ancient modes of meaning, why in antiquity the elements were assembled in that manner, then they would know it in all its suppositions and implications, they could form for themselves an exact notion and they could check just how well it accounted for the foreign, strange, archaic things presented by exegetes.”¹⁴

I recall now conversing with a frustrated Lonergan around 1966, at the time when he was envisaging those early chapters of *Method*, pacing his room asking ‘what’ll I do? I can’t put all of *Insight* into chapter one of *Method*!’

Might I suggest that “weigh the crown in water” has a parallel in those “sane and

¹³*Ibid.*, 172.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 172-3.

solid"¹⁵ suggestions about understanding object¹⁶, words¹⁷, author¹⁸, self¹⁹, and following up with some refined judgment²⁰? What of the supplement? Well, that should emerge, if only with massive slowness. Indeed, with the slowness of the functional cycle's early stages, treacle-twirled against clinging conventions.

Pause again over those quotations from page 172 of *Method*. All of *Insight* was not to be tossed into chapter one of *Method*, an indigestible meal for present exegetes. Indeed, even the functional business was not brought to the fore. But a respectable beginning of half-decent exegesis is described - not explained. That respectable style of exegesis makes possible a communication with the present theological community, such as readers of Williams or Fiorenza. But where does such a respectable performance stand in the challenge faced by the Ovalteam? I would claim that it stands in that zone that I usually name C₉, the zone that goes out into common sense and common nonsense, a going out that is 'concerned with theology in its external relations.'²¹ In my fundamental diagram of the cycle W3, in its flat or Tower form²², it is one of the two zones of external exchange, of non-baton exchange, in the cycle. The guidelines of chapter 7 of *Method*, indeed, are not only reasonable for discussions with exegetes of all types; they are a quite decent set of pointers for a church-group bible study.

And they are a quite decent start for a move forward towards determining

¹⁵*Method in Theology*, 172.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 156-58.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 158-60.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 160-61.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 161-62.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 162-65.

²¹*Method in Theology*, 132.

²²See **Joistings 8** for both.

canons of hermeneutics. But we must think of that decent start in terms of the gap between Greek physics and the physics of the 21st century, if we wish to get to grips with the place of the canons in history. This is not easy for those unfamiliar with serious physics, but perhaps we can make do with the general tone of popular physics, however misleading. We have presently left behind, on the serious front of physics, not only Greek but Newtonian physics. Leading physicists are grappling with particle relations and variations in terms of complex fibre-bundle geometries and Lie algebras. At present two Ovalteams can be detected in physics, standard model and string theory proponents. But they 'layer down' to a unity of empiricity despite their frontline differences.

In hermeneutics one might say that one can detect two teams: the standard model of exegetes and the 'string theory' or Ovalteam formula. But there is this difference. The Ovalteam has its parallel in either of the contemporary pushes in physics. While both these teams in physics suffer from popularization distortions, neither team converses, when seriously working, with popular consciousness. The split in hermeneutics is between a serious scientific collaboration that is struggling to emerge, and a standard model that is conservative in regard to communicability in a manner that weighs heavily on their success: "even indefinitely prolonged labours may merely move around in an inconclusive circle."²³

Now it happens that I am quoting here from the first paragraph of the third canon of hermeneutics, the canon that I moved up the comparative column to place it parallel to the first and second canons of empirical method. "There is a canon of selection, for the empirical inquirer is confined to insights into the data of sensible experience. There is a canon of operations, for he aims at an accumulation of such insights, and the accumulation is reached, not in the mathematical circuit through insights, formulations, and symbolic images, but in the fuller circuit that adds

²³*Insight*, 588[610-1].

observation, experiment, and practical application.”²⁴

In Lonergan’s later functional context, that fuller circuit becomes the eightfold way and it is important to leap into that context for the moment to get a grip on the contrast between Ovalteam work and standard interpretative work. The demand for Ovalteam work is gradually emerging in physics. As it emerges, it illustrates the clear gap between seriousness and common sense or popularization. The first principle of criticism of the 3rd canon of hermeneutics “is supplied by the demand for a universal viewpoint”. In the emerging functional physics, that demand has its parallel in the demand for a GUT - or more realistically of course, a TUT - operating in each and every specialty. So, cyclotronic observational results are best read through the spyglass of the most up-to-date theoretic, and new equipment is molded by that same theoretic, indeed is generally at the front edge of the theoretic. Similarly with functional hermeneutics: and so you can grasp better now the recurrence of UV across or round that W3 diagram. The tower image helps here: the tower climbs with a relatively horizontal roof. This image counters the terrible tendency to imagine that somehow one climbs into theory up through the first three specialties and then climbs down to commonsense in the last three. Research involves high theory, and so does Communications.

This is a very necessary perspective and imaging in all this matter. And we might enrich it by merging in, with slow seriousness, the comment that concludes *Insight’s* first discussion of interpretation and the possibility of revision.²⁵ How does the Tower climb? A revision, even ‘a basic revision’²⁶ can bubble up in any specialty: some researcher finds a strange scroll; an eighth-type specialist exploits a novel nano-process of communicative intimation-potential.

Back now to E1 and E2 and to the parallel with H3. Can we detect significant

²⁴*Ibid.*, 70[93].

²⁵*Insight*, 162-4[186-8].

²⁶*Insight*, 166[190].

pieces of the parallel? Well for starters, to the various subtle layers of sensible data one can parallel equivalent data in manuscripts, though Lonergan amazingly makes no mention of manuscripts till the word *documents* turns up in H5.²⁷ Might it not be better to get these in earlier in our hypothetical expression? Next, we could detect - an illuminating exercise that would be a separate chapter - the parallels between the canon of operations and the principles of criticism. The demand for the universal viewpoint is simply, in physics, that hidden thing that drove early Egyptians and Greeks and Chinese to formulating and re-forming nature's ways in the cumulative²⁸, constructive²⁹, verifiable³⁰, impartial³¹, systematic³² dynamic that blossoms into higher viewpoints.³³ One can sniff out the parallel drive in relation to the data of documents, and the weave towards higher viewpoints.³⁴ But the weave here raises more explicitly the issue of the dynamics of the weavers. The sources of cumulative meaning are in there in the data, as Annie Sullivan **told** Helen in those famous five weeks of 1887.

So, the second principle of criticism throws in a wild subjectivity into the data: what the primitive Helen means now by water is a far cry from Annie's meaning, which of course includes Helen, the five weeks, and a Proustian lifetime of tea and water. Could Annie "form for herself an exact notion and check just how well it accounted for

²⁷*Insight*, 590[612].

²⁸*Insight*, 74[98].

²⁹*Insight*, 75[98].

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹*Ibid.*

³²*Ibid.*

³³*Insight*, 76[99].

³⁴The structural pattern of the 'higherness' shift us into genetic and dialectic searchings.

the strange"³⁵ that was the old Helen, that is the new Helen?

At all events, the parallel to E2 has a discouraging complexity that is intimated well by the distinction between W1 and W2 in my list of metaphysical words.³⁶ And that is only a beginning of the required, demanded, control of meaning.

Are we getting closer to a useful attempt at a hypothetical expression of Lonergan's canons, one that would be perhaps not only 'a simple interpretation'³⁷ but a reach for a reflective interpretation?³⁸

Yes, I think we could have a shot at a better expression of the task, role, institution, of later hermeneutics. But, before taking that shot, note its presuppositions of luminosity. Are we clear and luminous on what we are doing, what is going on, going forward?³⁹ Is my control of meaning such that I could switch to another audience different from you early 21st century people? If I had such a control, it would somehow hover over all possible hypothetical expressions, like a master inner word but meshed with a masterful supra-linguistic expression, a pure meaning that a latter-day Plotinus might savour. Best refrain here from that necessary digression on that.⁴⁰ Why not have an initial shot at a hypothetical expression, helped along by those canons of empirical method?

³⁵*Method in Theology*, 173, with a few twists.

³⁶See Cantower 24.

³⁷*Insight*, 562[586]

³⁸*Ibid.*, 563[586].

³⁹We are back to the meaning of (about)³, but also within the problem raised by Lonergan in his discussion of the obscurity of the evolution of doctrine, *De Deo Trino, Pars Dogmatica*, Gregorian Press, Rome, 1964, 17-29.

⁴⁰One might enter the topic through P.McShane, "Obstacles to the Control of Meaning", *Method. Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 2006.

Then we make our pedagogic start with types of manuscripts, the parallel of data.

Next, we must do some justice to the complexification that is added to water and *water* by Helen's new meaning of both and the vast history of analogous complexifications. The canon of operations is enriched by the presence of immanent sources of meaning.

Thirdly, we need the flowering of that enrichment that somehow is to give the Plotinian purity to the whole operation, or to the canon of operation for the new hermeneutics. But that flowering is not one that can be shared with any given audience: like a summary presentation of Lie Algebras or ultra-modern geometries, it is a meaningful word only to the wise.

Yet, fourthly, it is that flowering, or the reach for it, that can ground a decent hypothetical expression to stand out there as obviously equivalent to some original expressed suggestion: in our illustrative case, to Lonergan's account of canons of hermeneutics.

Fifthly, this strange complex of operations does not get out of control: the hypothetical expression has to fit, in our case-study, into Lonergan's *opera omnia* documents, into the genetics and the dialectics - if any - of his growing perspective.

I have leaped along in those previous paragraphs. They could well become a book, not a few hundred words, if I were to shift from doctrinal statements to a pedagogy of a climbing-companion style. But have you as yet got my little, but deeply significant, joke? What was I doing in those five paragraphs? I was suggesting, as a decent hypothetical expression, a summary of Lonergan's actual expression that is the middle of *The Sketch*! My five-point paragraphs echo with relative accuracy the five points of that deeply obscure sketch. My full hypothetic expression would indeed coincide with Lonergan's actual five-point expression in *The Sketch*.

Before going on, let me illustrate that obscurity and the slow pedagogy of the climb to luminosity. Take, then, the unhelpful introduction to "pure formulations" in

the third point. What are they? Well, we are told that they are a type of gnostic business: they are spoken by the pure of mind only to the pure of mind.⁴¹

It is important to brood over this illustration, for from such brooding can emerge an appreciation of the complex of problems that are associated with Lonergan's teaching of Christology in Rome and with our struggle to re-structure the layers of ChrISt-appreciation that are to become a dynamic intrinsic to history. The basic image here is that which dominates the Cantowers: the Ovalteam **can tower** over commonsense in its TUV appreciation of ChrISt: they read Peter's confession of ChrISt in Mathew 16:16 in incarnate luminosity that is still doubly focal mystery.⁴² The commonsense faithful share that double darkness, and paradoxically the tower top is no nearer Vision than the plain.

But let us now pause over pure formulations: they are shared properly only by the community of TUV.⁴³ We need illustrations of that problem of sharing, and fortunately Lonergan provides them in his treatise on *The Incarnate Word*, and this in a way that opens up our topic considerably.

What was the real issue of the Council of Ephesus, of the debate and vote on June 10, 431, that centered on the two letters of Cyril and Nestorius? The real issue was the reality of, and the comprehension of, an inadequate minor real distinction.⁴⁴ What was the real issue at the second Council of Constantinople? The real issue is a subtly 'analogically-drawn'⁴⁵ minor real distinction. But what is the real issue here, in this

⁴¹I am being positive here, in the manner of Origen as quoted in the Preface.

⁴²Recall the reflection on Rahner at the beginning of chapter 3.

⁴³Note that they are only verbal to those outside that community. So, there can develop a scholasticism that is only verbally beyond the struggles of pre-Nicaean Christianity.

⁴⁴Thesis 3, preliminary note 1.

⁴⁵ Thesis 4, part 2, which contains several pages relevant to our topic.

context of the problem of interpretation, in this context of the meaning of 'pure formulation'?

What is the real issue in telling someone that $E = mc^2$? The real issue, in our context, is that neither the speaker nor the listener may have any serious grasp of the meaning of the formula. The formula may be merely a formula, the outer skin of a formulation. $E = mc^2$ is (points to: think of Helen and Annie Sullivan and the formula *water*) a relatively pure formulation if speaker and listener share the best TUV. What of Lonergan's students in the Gregorian University? What of his present readers of the translation from the Latin of *De Verbo Incarnato*? What of the readers of Williams' book? What of you? Are you genuinely comfortable with the subtleties of that first section of chapter 16 of *Insight*, dealing so briefly, doctrinally, with distinctions? And if you are comfortable only to a certain measure, are you sufficiently luminous about that measure? Without that sufficient luminosity there will be illusions about teaching and preaching, or even 'the arrogance of omniscient common sense.'⁴⁶ 'The New Testament emphasis on the function of priests is that they are to be leaders, teachers, preachers. In the measure that a diocese or a religious order wishes to provide the church with leaders, teachers, preachers, it will do all it can to make the leaders far-seeing, the teachers profound, the preachers wise. The formula for that is simple: they will themselves live the Christian life that is the sublation of the whole of human living, and they will know a theology that thematizes the sublation of the whole of human living.'⁴⁷

We are back at our basic image: there must be a kataphatically contemplative community tuned to the times and its differentiated meanings, reaching out gently, profoundly and wisely, to the global pilgrims. That community, living in "the sublation

⁴⁶B.Lonergan, *Collected Works: vol. 17*, 'Questionnaire on Philosophy: Response'. 370.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 360-61.

of the whole of human living” that is the Satisfaction of Christ,⁴⁸ is perhaps to be a reality before the end of this millennium: but only if we listen now to all pondering pilgrims. Then we bring to our interpretations of life and scripture a fresh version of Origin’s ‘despoiling of the Egyptians’ of which he wrote to Gregory.⁴⁹ ‘We need great application when we are reading divine things, so that we may not be precipitous in saying or understanding anything concerning them As you apply yourself to divine reading, seek correctly and with unshakable faith in God the sense of the divine Scriptures hidden from the many.’⁵⁰ Such application makes us distinctly strange participants in the Triune dynamic. ‘May you be such a participant, and may you always grow in such participation, so that you may not only say, ‘We have become participants with Christ’ (Heb. 3:14), but, ‘We have become participants with God.’”⁵¹

I halt abruptly with that bow to Origin’s place in the history of the quest for the Dark Tower. At the beginning of this chapter I touched on problems associated with how that quest flowed on in ups and downs through those early centuries, and now perhaps we have a larger map of how our times must wind that quest into the cycling of a viewpoint that would generate in this millennium an integral scientific consciousness. The Egyptians are no longer outside the walls. But we had best leave this doctrinal grappling with the third order of consciousness to our final chapter on ‘Reinventing History’.

⁴⁸See **Joistings 8**, “Cycling Satisfaction” the a discussion of the creative minority’s participation in Christ’s Satisfaction.

⁴⁹The ‘Letter to Gregory’ is available in English translation in Joseph W.Trigg, *Origen*, Routledge, 2004, 210-13.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 212.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 213.