

Reaching for a Heuristics of the Eschaton

I recall Karl Rahner's last talk, in which he emphasized the failure of the tradition to think its way forward in eschatology. Yes, indeed, is this "existential gap"¹ not strange? "I am going somewhere wonderful out of pilgrim twilight"? O.K., Paul, "eye hath not seen not ear heard," but is there not the unlimited **what** that calls us, cauls us, to "fuse into a single explanation"?² The fusing is not full and fulsome till there is a oneness quite beyond pilgrim "overlap and interlace."³ Then the last line of Lonergan's spread of word winds all Dionysian searching into Dionysian poise.⁴

Might we not pause over Rahner's point, and pause over Thomas' pointing, somehow turned into an *Assembly*? I recall my last conversation with the great Irish physicist, Lochlainn O'Raifeartaigh⁵: he talked of the importance of thinking out origins, what is popularly talked of as "the first three minutes" after the Big Bang. He was optimistic about his future work that day, but he 'left' that year for his part of the Big Convergence. Yes, in physics too there is talk of "the last three minutes" with no help from finitude's "constitutional monarch."⁶ Lochlainn was left pretty lightless by his Catholic theologians who are, it seems, happy to live lightless, sloganizing and preaching vague postmortemisms.

¹ The reference is to the two final chapters of *CWL 18, Phenomenology and Logic*, where Lonergan appeals for the closing of our gap in effectiveness both ontically and phyletically. Here I am adding an appeal to battle the gap in our heuristics of the total Field (See *CWL 18*, 199, "the field is *the* universe, but my horizon defines my universe"; 306, "... they have to be people in whom the horizon is coincident with the field. If they are not, then all they can possibly do is increase the confusion and accelerate the doom".)

² *Insight*, 610, line 9.

³ *Method in Theology*, 51[50].

⁴ See note 63 on page 15 of [The Future](#) regarding the Dionysian poise needed regarding, re guarding, the last line of the word-spread of *Method in Theology* 48[47].

⁵ Lochlainn was my colleague in Graduate work in mathematical physics in Dublin. He went on to be a world authority on group theory's applications in quantum electrodynamics. He was head of the Institute of Physics "invented" in the 1940s by Prime Minister DeValera for Erwin Schrödinger.

⁶ "If philosophy is to include a philosophy of science, if in some sense it is to be a *regina scientiarum*, not merely a constitutional monarch – you do no wrong because you do nothing – but an effective monarch that exerts real influence" *Phenomenology and Logic*, *CWL 18*, 126.

The character of our post-pilgrim life has intrigued me in full systematic mode since the early 1970s. Later there emerged the nudge of Fred Crowe's effort, "Eschaton in the Mind and Heart of Jesus," *The Eschaton: A Community of Love*, Villanova University Press, 1974, variously unsatisfactory, particularly in relation to the molecularity of love. In concluding my [Cantower](#) series I wandered around the topic.⁷ Finally, in 2013, I had a survey shot at the mystery in *The Everlasting Joy of Being Human*.⁸

I do not think I should enter into serious musings about that shot. Were you in possession of that book you might pause over Lonergan's scribbles at the bottom of a page of his 1934 course on *De Novissimis*,⁹ presented on page 19 of *The Everlasting Joy of Being Human*. The beginning of the scribble is translated by me on page 17: "a prior methodological question: why do we thus proceed?" In 1961 I was doing the same course with the same title when he and I walked round Dublin musing over the same question.¹⁰ The Epilogue of *Everlasting* reaches for a grip on his later broad answer: "Starting into Functional Collaboration." But *Everlasting* is more of an old-style ramble round viewpoints, not worth much work, apart from the strange Prologue, which pauses over various meanings of *betweenness*. You might pause seriously over two pointings in the section on *Durations*, where I invite dwelling on and in Chopin's final little 100-second work.¹¹ What is the neurodynamic time—or eternity—of that little *Mazurka*? Then pause over the end of the section, a piece of Thomas that I quote several times in *Everlasting*. "Just as the soul which enjoys the divine vision will be filled with a kind of spiritual lightness, so by a certain overflow from the soul to the body, the body will in its own way put on the lightness of glory."¹² The only other pointing I make here weaves round the puzzle of that "its own way." For me there was the take-off point for the following years of reaching, and it occurred only in the final note of *Everlasting*, where Thomas excludes animals and plants from the final reality.

⁷ See the final essays of the series [Field Nocturnes Cantower](#). In particular there are the two *FNC* 49, "Desire Undistanced. Part One," and *FNC* 116, "Desire Undistanced. Part Two. Phylogenesis"

⁸ Axial Publishing, 2013. Referred to below as *Everlasting*.

⁹ "About the Utmost." The word *novissimus* has, more properly, the meaning of recent.

¹⁰ *Everlasting*, 14.

¹¹ The section runs from 70–76. For Chopin see 70, 74.

¹² *Everlasting*, 75–76. A fuller quotation is on page 12. It is from Charles O'Neill's translation of Thomas' *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Bk. 4, ch. 86.

That exclusion helped me stumble forward¹³ towards the neurodynamics of glory that is sketched in the scribbles below. They form section 20 of my “*Insight and the Trivialization of History*.”¹⁴

I halt abruptly here, ending with that section, but wish to mention two contexts needed to reach a contemporary explanatory fullness of this “fuse into a single explanation,”¹⁵ Explanation. The first context is the sixth section of CWL 12, *The Triune God: Systematics*, where there is a treatment of the Divine Missions that needs to be lifted out of a descriptive scriptural context into a relevant explanatory context.¹⁶ The second context is that of “Finality, Love, Marriage,”¹⁷ where Lonergan struggles towards a rescuing of sexuality from the horrors of Hebrew-Christian negativities.

20. Eschaton

My second last start simply invites us to ask, with full, if limping, contemplative W₃ seriousness, where is this kindly light called *Insight* leading, what is our best thinking of “terminal value” in the display of *Method in Theology* page 48?¹⁸ I enlarge on this start here merely by quoting two

¹³ There is desperately needed a heuristics of this stumbling forward that would be a thematic of ontic adult growth seeding a phyletics of belief and climbing, especially in the realities of evolutionary sports such as Lonergan. A lead to this is my identification of kataphatic prayer as advancing within an Interior Lighthouse quite foreign to such contemplatives as Theresa of Avila. See, [Ecconomics 16](#): “Locating Teresa of Avila,” and for a broader view, the five essays, [Prehumous 4–8](#), on Foundational Prayer. The character of The Interior Lighthouse has been a frequent topic of mine in the past decade.

¹⁴ *Divyadaan. Journal of Philosophy and Education*, vol. 28, no. 1 (2017).

¹⁵ *Insight*, 610, line 9.

¹⁶ The final *Explanation* obviously points to the Proceeding Word. But the broad pointing is to the need to lift that section 6 of CWL 12, in the decades ahead, out of the scriptural context and into a full contemporary effective theology. This is a massive challenge both for scripture studies and for the full road to contemporary pastoral outreach. My website has abundant indications, but best just reference the single recent book, [The Future: Core Precepts of Suprachemistry and Nanochemistry](#). Think of the supermolecule that contains bones, mentioned in the next note’s quotation from *Ephesians*.

¹⁷ *Collection*, CWL 4, 17–52. This rich essay needs massive expansion and the same explanatory heist as was mentioned in the previous note. Think of the challenge in Lonergan’s nudge: “theologians. Let alone parents, rarely think of the historical process” (*ibid.*, 47). Think of our “incorporation in the body of Christ. For now it is ‘because we are members of his body, made from his flesh and from his bones ...’” (*Ephesians* 5:30). A context for the struggle of these two notes is my [The Road to Religious Reality](#) (Axial Publishing, 2012), where I solve Lonergan’s problem of *Insight* 763 about the treatise on the mystical body.

¹⁸ Recall the reference to Schweitzer in note 1 [of the *Divyadaan* essay] above, with the issue there of a geohistorical grip on the climb to the meaning of finitude. I am not recommending a plunge into those puzzlings of Schweitzer but his confused brooding on eschatology needs sublating into the full heuristics

previous footnotes: [A] note 6 of *Disputing Quests* 1, “The Disputed Location of Disputing Quests”; [B] note 24 of *Cantower* 33, “Lonergan and Axial Bridges.”

[A] Here it seems useful to simply add some scribbles I sent to a colleague in September 2016 regarding a follow up on the essay, *HOW* 11, “Into the Neurodynamics of Jesus.” Various Beginnings, BL text from Rome. (see beginning of my *The Everlasting Joy of Being Human*.) 2002 *Cantower* project + Rahner’s lecture (*Theol Stud.* 2000, 3-15: lack of eschatology. See *Cantower* 33, note 24.). Your beginning now perhaps, questions of terminal value and enlightenment and happiness within broad cosmic destiny. Paul Davies *Last Three Minutes*. Terminal values: MIT 51. Relate to *Insight* 18, 1.3. Relate to *CWL* 10 TED, source of *MIT* 48 spread. Relate to contemplative climb *HOW* 13, and of course, *HOW* 11. Back to *Cantower* project, to *Cantowers* round 117. On to *Contra Gentiles* IV, 83-88, re Thomas messing with old cosmology; [I leave you to think out (i) 83, no food, O.K.; sex? Think out neurodynamics; (ii) the judgment stuff and the punishment stuff, towards a rescuing of all]: on to 97, however: door-opening, “the entire bodily creation will be changed”, + “no plants or animals”. *CG* IV, 97 {5}, which leads on to endnote 86, p. 125 of of EJBH. [Neurodynamics of memories of pets to be handled.] Cosmic negentropy and neurodynamics of the resurrected Jesus, “that he might fill all things” Eph 4¹⁰, quoted in *CG* IV, 87 re ‘place’: articles that follow need note 13, page 13 of *CWL* 18). And add energy = material prima. Two useful numbers 10⁸⁰ and 10²⁵, recalling Eddington number of cosmic protons: 1.5 by 10⁷⁹; then number in brain. More re neurodynamics and chemo-needs of ‘isolated’ brain, e.g. oxygen, spinal fluid, etc. [Google: “is it possible to keep a brain alive detached from its body?” but the question needs a much broader context]. Crown of the positive Anthropocenic. “With these eyes” (Job 19:26–7), *CG* IV 84 {14} but put in the broad context of the previous brackets: full contemplative achievement of “so it comes about” (*Insight*, 537, 11 lines from end): existential dimension of ‘seen’ street molecules e.g. in autos, tied in with *Insight* 722, end lines, sublated into Notional Act of Clapping, etc. [enlarging bottom of *W*₃ and also meaning of “+” at top]. The destiny of these molecules of mine. Kim Noble pointer: 50+ year old woman/painter with 100+ personalities. Jesus: 100 billion+ persons in the Eschaton. Again, memory problem e.g. re Old Jerusalem

I am recommending. He nudges towards “the recognition of the eschatological character of the Preaching of Jesus and of the Teaching of Paul, though it may pose the question of the Hellenization of Christianity” (*The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, ix). It poses the question of the contemplative science of the destiny of Christianity.

included in New Jerusalem e.g. the remembering of the donkey of Palm Sunday. The integrally-minded in the non-Noah's ark (cf. *CWL* 18) of divine minding: but Trinitarian. The core holding contemplative climb up through the 26 places in chapter 19 + on through q.27 *Summa*. Relate to "God not an object," [MIT, 342] and connect to "originating values and terminal values can coincide" (MIT 51). The whole perspective give a mighty lift to the 'characterization' of the historical causality of Christ (see *Allure*, 244, note 36: add note 44 on page 246, an everlasting 'Hello'), to St. Paul's and St. Patrick's perspective on Christ's presence, to Crowe's efforts in *History of the Word*, to Sacrament of the Present Moment stuff. Also think of the new twist on 'this is my body'. Finally back to re-read *Insight* 544, line 13: "the universe can bring forth its own unity in the concentrated form of a single intelligent view". Think all out in the contemplative of you being one of the secondary intelligibles of the 14th place, [*Insight*, 683] , you being thus practically Thought of lovingly, in the subjectivities of God, as thinking here-now the full Eschaton that includes the positive opposite of God, energy, as meshed with God through Incarnation, Sonflower-blossomed.

I am talking here of the tower reach, functional prayerful cycling, but there seems increasingly [e.g. science + fictions like *Voyager* etc.] a pastoral-outreach culture-context. The whole thing gives a quite new and rich perspective on *Romans* 8's groaning cosmos. All the molecules etc since the big bang yearning for, bent on being in, the minding of the Second Person and that Person + 100 billion persons in a final dynamic of Agonbite of InWithTo. [but now the contemplative problem of *HOW* 13 weaving into common sense: this seems to me to be the central problem of present culture, in and out of the Tower of Theology: adult growth in Kataphatic contemplation: see the appendices in *Allure*.]. Can give a popular better grip on 'where we are all going', a grip on the sensed world, an optimism about the 'salvaging'—Christoffering, [recall Christoffel tensor stuff: *Lindsay and Margenau*, 362] of physic-chemical. Pet problem and 'garden' context have to be handled: need for virtual reality stuff and neurochemistry of memory.

[B] Shortly after I wrote the above¹⁹ Rahner gave his last address, recently presented in English (Karl Rahner, "Experiences of a Catholic Theologian," *Theological Studies*, 61 (2000) 3-

¹⁹ I was writing about "courageous searching for a post-medieval theology." [Cantower 33](#) "Lonergan and Axial Bridges" contains the article I wrote for the periodical *Compass* in 1984 to celebrate Lonergan's 80th birthday. He died a few weeks before the birthday.

15). He spoke with humble realism about the state of theology, its relation to the sciences and to questions of eschatology. The points he raised have preoccupied me in the two decades since, and I would hope to bring the questions of science and eschatology into a fuller focus gradually—it is a central aim of these [Cantowers](#). I return to issues of Rahner’s eschatological reflections briefly in Cantower XXXIX, but I would draw attention here to this area as a clear instance of the failure of theology to take up the challenge of fundamental Christian questions in the context of modern astronomy. “It needs to be said why and how this Jesus is the only One to whom we can entrust ourselves in life and in death. What kind of answer can we give to this question?” (*Ibid.*, 7).