

**Cantower XXIII****Redoubt Describing****February 1<sup>st</sup> 2004****23.1 From Policy to Plodding**

I might claim and hope that, one fifth of the way through the adventure of these 117 **Cantowers**, we - some of us - are ready to reach towards that heart of darkness that yet is the “spark in our clod,”<sup>1</sup> our plod. With Ortega y Gasset and Lonergan, we may be lifted a little towards “*The Luminous Darkness of Circumstances*”<sup>2</sup> within our own corner - which is an anastomotic all - of galactic glory. The teaching and reaching take on now a new character and we become a class of new characters: but not yet.

Let me be prosaic about this, in a manner that repeats without being boring: for I am repeating a message learned in, by, from, teaching mathematical physics more than four decades ago. Had I taught it badly, the first 23 classes might well have resembled the first 23 of our **Cantowers**. But there was no need to teach it badly, at least in those days, in that university.

Each morning’s minions were breath-caught in the mastery of the thing<sup>3</sup>: the culture carried the best of us forward: not the humanly best of course, but simply the best there-bent. There was no need to justify “this basic enterprise of human

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<sup>1</sup>The precise reference in Lonergan escapes me at the moment. The spark is the *exigence* for the *field*. Both these words are key in Lonergan’s discussion of phenomenology. See the Introduction to the index of *Phenomenology and Logic*, and the entries under both those words.

<sup>2</sup>I am referring here to the article, available on the Website in English, but originally published in Spanish: “Towards a Luminous Darkness of Circumstances: *Insight* after Forty Years”.

<sup>3</sup>Why would I echo Hopkins’ rhyme of the wind-winged bird at the beginning of a searching of the subtle updrafts and downdrafts of description? Might it not be an image of “the achievement, the mastery” of a later humanity’s control of meaning, making the “plod down sillion shine”? See below, at note 43.

intelligence”.<sup>4</sup> There was no need to battle with the students “to secure a firm orientation and a tendency that in the long run is efficacious”.<sup>5</sup> There was no need for an elaborate justification of the spirobic effort, certainly not 23 classes of it. We moved forward in a mix of doctrines, exercises, ecstasy.<sup>6</sup> Certainly there were drop-outs - it was encouraged<sup>7</sup> - but centuries of serious physics had made possible and actual an ethos that, at least in this elementary zone of human yearning and learning, left no room for a Gorgias.

But alas, when we move beyond such elementary yearning, even beyond classroom ethos in that elementary learning,<sup>8</sup> then Gorgias and Fontenelle reign and rain on the parade of human wonder. The depth of the long axial cycle of decline is measured by the gap between the heard call of linguistic imagings of meaning and the herd’s crawl in a trivial governing of the tongue. That crawling, cawing, is not just of

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<sup>4</sup>*Insight*, 514[537].

<sup>5</sup>*Insight*, 526[549].

<sup>6</sup>Ecstasy is a key ingredient in good class-work: a visionary lift, particularly glimpsing where we are going. Doctrines fix smaller destinations: whether Newton’s laws in certain circumstances, or a corner of the periodic table of chemistry, or of a garden or farm, or of the tale of the tribe. But the exercises: they were and are the journey of adventure in the being a physicist, or a botanist, or a biblical homebird. Doctrinal teaching without the exercises is indoctrination. Doctrinal reading without the exercises is also indoctrination.

<sup>7</sup>I have recalled before, and now call up for your musing, the advice to me of the chair of mathematics, when I puzzled over what to do with the class of over twenty students. “Talk over their heads for a couple of weeks: you’ll clear out the non-starters and then have a great year”. The same eccentric professor entered the second year honours lecture room that week. A few students, who had come through the previous year with what they took to be reasonable results, had gathered. One reported to me in astonishment later that the professor entered, looked at them and remarked in his delightful Ulster accent: “there’ll be no honours class this year. Is that all right?”, and walked out. Nothing like this would happen in the Canadian universities of my later life. Would it happen now in Dublin, I wonder?

<sup>8</sup>You will recall Lonergan’s comments on bad teaching in physics, and on *haute vulgarization*. See Volume 10: 145; Volume 6: 121,155.

those who cast news, but of those who graduate through comprehensives that are not comprehensions. Talk is a technique, and technical competence can guide both armed and unarmed forces, but with subtler destructiveness as one moves away from the dogs of war.

My packed paragraphs may point you to ecstasy, to encouragement, to effort that could tie your time and talent for years, glorious years of a suffering climb. But that does not help the immediate climb. The words may have the sweep of a song of songs, but they do not “catch the foxes, the little foxes, before they ruin our vine in bloom”.<sup>9</sup> I do not wish to plunge us into reflection on the varieties of foxings that distort finality, no more than Lonergan felt “any need to flog a row of dead horses” in the world of economic malice and stupidity.<sup>10</sup> My hope is to contextualize the efforts of some few of my readers who are eccentric enough to pursue the question, What is describing?, in a manner that conduces to the emergence of the new culture of luminous living.

There is first the need for a context within culture of tolerance and encouragement: something equivalent to the communal taken-for-grantedness of students not being insane in spending a year on Newton’s laws in order to get beyond describing the movements of the heavens. And then there is the deeper, personal, need, of cultivating one’s own eccentricity and courage, if the bent I am writing of is present in you. Of course, Lonergan readers will recognize that what I am “dealing with” is the

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<sup>9</sup>The Song of Songs 2:15.

<sup>10</sup>The reference is to *For a New Political Economy*, 36. Nor is that reference anyway random. Immediately in the text Lonergan writes that “a flick at a particularly nauseating one is enough”. And there is a particularly nauseating aspect of Lonergan discipleship that I wish to flick: or positively there is a particular strategy of following up the central question of this *Cantower*, “what is description?” that I wish to recommend. In other words, if you wish to discover painfully the limitations of description, come to grips with Lonergan’s efforts to lift the present massively-destructive muddled descriptiveness into the realms of effective explanation. Lonergan claims that it will ground genuine democracy:

problem of commonsense eclecticism and general bias, but the dealing with here seeks to be different, existential. I should pause over this double problem of context, an existential pause that we can share without you being threatened.

I suspect that there are people who are as daft as I was and am regarding the question, What is describing? There is, I would hold, a massive need to encourage such people: we will push for more light on that need as we struggle through these next sections. But are you sympathetic to the suggestion of spending a month or a year asking the question, What is describing?<sup>11</sup>

In the privacy of this present reading you can certainly reach for honesty. A large number of Lonergan disciples would consider it quite beside the point: don't we have those handy definitions in Lonergan, 'thing-to-thing', 'thing-to-us' stuff? From such a community there is no encouragement to ask about this fundamental aspect of human life, the agony and the ecstasy of daily linguistic meaning, reaching out, so often in vain, with words of understanding or distress, commitment, love, terror, ecstasy. Yet it is a core question in this transition phase of humanity, from Zen reachings and Ken searchings to Then luminosity regarding reachings and searchings. It is a core question on the long road to adequate differentiated enlightenment.

But we will twist round that issue in the following sections. Indeed, it is as well now to look forward through those sections to give you a sense of our limited enterprise. Perhaps the central limitation is the most important for you and I to attend to: I do not, cannot, tell you What describing is, in these few pages. Here, of course, I am again positioning myself: how do you position yourself?

And that, really, is the main pointing, positioning, of this first section: that there is a distinction between policy and plodding, between doctrine and system. Is this a

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<sup>11</sup>You may recall here that there are schools of philosophy that seem to home in on this question, like the phenomenologists or the British analysts: but I would prefer you to keep a homely focus here, thinking rather of a sort of non-professional daftness that one might image in Cezanne's attending to Mt.St.Victoire or J.M.W.Turner attending to the sea.

precise and clear distinction? Only after much plodding.

The next two sections are brief reflections on the heights and horrors of describing. The titles of the two sections may remind you of a previous use of such phrases: ‘the upper ground of loneliness’, ‘the lower ground of loneliness’, and that reminding, or minding, does indeed add a larger context to our struggle.

In the fourth and central section we come to the simple key question. The answer, as you no doubt already expect, is like the Zen master handing you a bow to bend, a flower to place.<sup>12</sup> Or answering the question, What is it like to play a Rachmaninoff’s Piano Concerto?

In the fifth section, with its odd series of Whats, we pause over the problem, the difficulty, of finding the answer. Then the sixth section points towards the place of our reachings in the full context pointed to by the previous **Cantowers**. In the seventh section we are alone with ourselves, with you and me; or more truly you are alone with yourself, like Newman or Luther, taking what can only be either a tentative fresh stand - if what I have written is new to you - or an old stand for or against my position, if your mind has already been made up or down.

But please do make your mind, up or down. Describing is “all about” you, inviting you to flight or floor. On the world stage, if you are to strut and fret as a fool, ‘twere better to be a self-luminous fool, even perhaps better to be a latter-day Dostoevski *Idiot*. So, the final section picks up the biographic question of the end of section 4 and invites us to pauses around the description of a little life-long Proustian moment in the childhood of Bernard Lonergan.

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<sup>12</sup>I have long since lost track of my two books, *Zen and Archery*, *Zen and the Art of Flower Design*, but perhaps such books are familiar to you? I recall the Zen education in Bow proceeding for years before an arrow was provided.

### 23.2 The Upper Grounds of Describing

There are stories of both Flaubert and Joyce, struggling for days to bring forth a sentence. Herman Hesse writes about saying it all, saying all, in a word. Pound writes to Joyce of words stirring inner patterns.<sup>13</sup> There are the famous ten Ox-herding pictures attributed to the 12<sup>th</sup> century Zen master Kakuan Shien. “Those stately horns, what artist could portray them?”<sup>14</sup> “Ox and man alike belong to Emptiness. / So vast and infinite the azure sky / that no concept of any sort can reach it”.<sup>15</sup> And no word or any sorting of concept-caressing words. Yet there is the aspiration: Joyce or Shakespeare reach for the anastomotic word,<sup>16</sup> and “Yeats told of his aspiration to a form of utterance in which imagination would be ‘carried beyond feeling into the aboriginal ice’”.<sup>17</sup>

I think of that wonderful remark of Lonergan to me one evening, as he talked of Dante and Beatrice, waving his hand in the air, “Life is about saying ‘Hello’”.

Hello, you there! The ‘hello’ is multiplied, but I hope not monotonous.<sup>18</sup> Biography speaks to biography in history, and molecular patterns hold or withhold the baited listening: perhaps “we will some new pleasures prove, / Of golden sands and

<sup>13</sup>The context all along here is *Lack in the Beingstalk*, chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>14</sup>I quote from the verse-commentary on the third picture, “First Glimpse of the Ox”, *The Three Pillars of Zen*, Roshi Philip Kapleau, Doubleday, 1989, 316. The Pictures are reproduced there.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, the eighth picture: “Both Ox and Self Forgotten”, 321.

<sup>16</sup>See the conclusion to chapter 2 of *Lack in the Beingstalk*.

<sup>17</sup>Seamus Heaney, *The Redress of Poetry*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1995, 156-7.

<sup>18</sup>I am recalling here for you that odd wordsmith, Chesterton, writing of Francis of Assisi, words worth repeating here. “Whatever his taste in monsters, he never saw before him a many-headed beast. He saw only the image of God multiplied but not monotonous. To him a man was always a man and did not disappear in a dense crowd any more than in a desert” (St. Francis Assis, London, 1951, 114).

crystal brooks, / With silken lines and silver hooks”.<sup>19</sup> My lines are not silken: so you must strain to weave the web of yearning. For the buried exigence of yearning is what it is all about.<sup>20</sup> “Is it somehow intimated? Is the intimation fleeting? Does it touch our deepest aspirations? Might it awaken such striving and groaning as would announce a higher birth?”<sup>21</sup>

Steiner writes of the sad reality of humanistic scholarship and science: “They may communicate only haltingly the jealous fruit of an utter inwardness”, and in the following page he notes that “ A worthwhile university or college is quite simply one in which the student is brought into personal contact with, is made vulnerable to, the aura and threat of the first-class”.<sup>22</sup> The first class is, of course, the cosmic word within you and me, symphonically speaking in each our little words, echoing piccolos of our small hellos.

But how might I add to that contact and that vulnerability here? I would have you take note of, knot into your nerves, a refreshing me-ning of that describing that concert-hauls us innerrou. But the noting and the knoting is another level of innerrou, one that may well lead you to the longer journey into joy of a perilous pilgrimage with Shakespeare’s *Pericles*. You must find your own art and heart but now to be cherished,

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<sup>19</sup>John Donne, “The Bait”, lines 2-4.

<sup>20</sup>“Man’s artistry testifies... What is he to be?”(*Insight*, 185[ ]. It **presents** (the emphasis is in Lonergan’s spoken lecture) the beauty, the splendor, the glory, the majesty, the ‘plus’ that is in things and that drops out when you say that the moon is just earth and the clouds are just water. It draws attention to the fact that the splendor of the world is a cipher, a revelation, an unveiling, the presence of one who is not seen, touched, grasped, put in a genus,, distinguished by a difference, yet is **present**” (Topics in Education, 222). One needs the full context of Lonergan’s pointings De Ente Supernaturale (On Supernatural Being, of which a translation into English by M.Shields is available). See also the index, under *exigence*, in *Phenomenology and Logic*.

<sup>21</sup>Lonergan, ”Mission and Spirit”, *A Third Collection*, 1985, 26.

<sup>22</sup>George Steiner, *Errata: An Examined Life*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1997, 42-3.

embraced, in that heart-reaching. Yes, it is philosophy of art under another name, but perhaps in another aim. It is “not only to read .... but to discover oneself in oneself.”<sup>23</sup>

We will return to that reading in its fresh beginner’s steps in the seventh section, but it seems well, before going on, to share a sense in which it is indeed a matter of new reading rather than more writing. Certainly, the new writing will emerge, like *Finnegans Wake* flying from *Ulysses*, but discontinuously deeper in its innerout.<sup>24</sup> But there is a new reading of old texts and old towns, old toons and old tone poems lurking yearningly in the seed of the subjectivity of the second time of the temporal subject. Then a new endorfrend politician will see and seize the sea of the old Pericles<sup>25</sup>, and the rivers of James Joyce<sup>26</sup> and of J. M. Turner<sup>27</sup> will bring new tidings to

<sup>23</sup>*Method in Theology*, 260. Read .... ? The work referred to in the text is *Insight*, but in the third stage of meaning self-discovery will become normative regarding any text. It is the normativity to which you may have been led by the pointings of *Cantower XVIII*. I am implicitly applying that normativity to Langer’s work etc in the text above.

<sup>24</sup>I am pointing toward sophistications of that luminosity hinted at by Lonergan in note 34 of *Method in Theology*, 88: “At a higher level of linguistic development, the possibility of insight is achieved by linguistic feed-back, by expressing the subjective experience in words and as subjective”.

<sup>25</sup>You will recall the discussion of Shakespeare’s late play *Pericles*, and the dominance of images of the sea, in *Lack in the Beingstalk* 61-77. This is very different from the world captured by the brutal two-line poem of E.E.Cummings: “a politician is an arse upon / which everyone has sat except a man” ( 100 selected poems by E.E Cummings, Grove Press, New York, 1954, 77. That world is the world of the lower ground and grinding of describing, undifferentiated consciousness in this axial stage of meaning.

<sup>26</sup>I think of that section of *Finnegans Wake* the writing of which was a massive struggle for Joyce. “O / tell me all about / Anna Livia! I want to hear all / about Anna Livia. Well, you know Anna Livia? Yes, of course, we all know Anna Livia. Tell me all. Tell me now.” (FW, 196). And again, there is the sea, which rivers reach with gravity, “Loonely in me loneness.... till the near sight of the mere size of him, the moyles and moyles of it, moanamoaning, makes me seasilt saltsick and I rush, my only, into your arms”(FW, towards the conclusion).

<sup>27</sup>I am thinking (and pausing over my copies) of Watercolours in the British Museum, Marly sur Seine (1831), A View of *the Rhine* (1844), *Florence From San Miniato* (1828). Could not Helen Keller and Turner and Smetana and thousands of chemists hold hands in the search for the meaning of



democracy.

### 23.3 The Lower Grounds of Describing

You will have noticed a certain densification of reference in the closing of the previous section: particularizations. Such particularizations are the sinews of the shift from doctrine to pedagogy: when flexed and developed they give body to the meaning of incarnate meaning; when merely remembered - Bergson's 'memory that catalogues' - they mock meaning, ground pretentiousness. The memory that relives is quite other than the familiarity of subtle contempt or of exam-cram. It is a wondrous journey into joy, perhaps little but never small, the haunted name, the call of a flower, some few twists of a sonata,<sup>28</sup> to be revisited in strangeness, "over and over./ To listen to the song for ever in blessed pain, / To the song that could make me happy."<sup>29</sup>

But our road here is still doctrinal, taking the pedagogical turn beyond the "one-fifth" mark of the total **Cantowers**. Oddly, this reverses the strategy of an earlier and younger effort to draw attention to the *Wealth of Self*, a work in which the "four-fifths" of

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water?

<sup>28</sup>I think now of some few bars of a piece of Schubert that caught me in 1947. I am still listening on the edge. Proust is, of course, an inspiration here, and indeed I was thinking as I typed the text above of the famous "little phrase", indeed in all the contexts conjured up by the quotations from Proust in **Cantower XXI**, note 22, 30, 46. Readers who have met Proust through me much earlier - in chapter 4 of *The Shaping of the Foundations* - will have noticed the change of edition in the references. In mid-November of 2002 I went financially irresponsible and bought that revised translation in six volumes, and began again, but also sneaking to the final paragraph, to smell the new translation's sea-wording of what these **Cantowers** are all about: the reality of you and me capable of "being perched upon living stilts which never cease to grow until they sometimes become taller than church steeples"(Proust VI, 531). And the twists of Proust make it possible to move from Flanders's Fields to the sea; "the sight of a single poppy hoisting upon its slender rigging and holding against the breeze its scarlet ensign, over the buoy of the black earth from which it sprang, made my heart beat like a traveler who glimpses on some low-lying ground a stranded boat which is being caulked and made-sea-worthy, and cries of, although he has not yet caught sight of it, "The Sea!" (Proust, I, 195).

<sup>29</sup>Hermann Hess, "To a Chinese Girl Singing", *Poems*, Translated by James Wright, Cape, London, 1971, 37.

pedagogy came first, followed by a turn to doctrinal density. The final chapter of that book, “The Notion of Survival” talked of micro-autonomy in the context of functional specialization, which has been our topic so far in these *Cantowers*. And the prior two chapters are worth drawing attention to now, since they bring out the present problem from a fresh angle.

The title of chapters 8 and 9 of that book were, respectively, “Technico-Aesthetic Objectifications of Self-Assets” and “Aesthetico-Technic Objectifications of Self-Assets”. The second topic vibes with the topic of the previous section. The first topic is cousin to the present section. Only a cousin. While chapter 9 aimed at intimating the higher ground, the previous chapter, still with mainly pedagogical bent, aimed at a simpler communication. It begins by noting the ease with which one may mistake the rules of logic with the laws of thought, and recalls a previous struggle with the rules for getting square roots.<sup>30</sup> Then there is talk of breakdowns of buses and their parts, and their repair. But what “if the parts be persons? I would hope that the reader would eventually pursue such reflections. But my interest here is narrower. I wish to give indications of how self-attentive methodology opens up the possibility of a radical renovation of logic, mathematics and their foundations.”

My interest now is broader: it is not pedagogical, but doctrinal and anecdotal, still written in the hope that the reader “will pursue such reflections”, reflections that require Zen patience. And it is worth noting where those two old chapters in my life fit in with this future reach. The symmetry of the two old titles brings out the fact that I was reaching for an acknowledgment of integral response to both sign and symbol, and indeed I was hoping for an openness to a middle ground: the drama of our daily lives can rise up from the mere technical, glimpsing the heights in darkness or in brightness.

We will consider thin sign-control presently, but there is no such reality as mere sign. Indeed, the ‘mere sign’, the *strange* equation, the wrong road-sign in the fog, can

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<sup>30</sup>*Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations*, 19-22.

be frightening. And what of my hope for a middle ground? Strangely, it has shifted to a distant hope for a higher ground, where cultural meaning can tower and plain plane meaning can be up-plaind ex-plaind<sup>31</sup> to an integral revitalization of primitive compactness, when words did not fork but clung to lung in love and violence.

“So, if I were given long enough to accomplish my work, I should not fail, even if the effect were to make them monsters, to describe men as occupying so considerable a place which is reserved for them in space, a place on the contrary prolonged beyond measure, for simultaneously, like giants plunged into the years, they touch the distant epochs through which they have lived, between which so many days have come to range themselves - in Time.”<sup>32</sup> And here Time, for me, is time past and time future, now. Especially does the task involve Remembering the Future. *In Search of Lost Time*, then, the title of the translation that I am now using of Proust, captures better than Proust’s French or previous Englishing of it, the task. All of time has been lost in the loss of compactness: all of time must be regained; fact, but also the fantasy that is the rainbow of future luminance.

But it is not my work or yours that will regain and regain the incredible brightness of being, but the plodding that cunningly slopes the **Cantowers** with their Redoubts in these next centuries. Meantime, there is the simpler impossible task of drawing our attention to the lower ground that we seem to strive so dedicatedly for in cultural necrophilia. Is a wink really as good as a nod? Have you some sense of this sickness? Does it lace into your life, lash into your soul, batter your nerves and your guts, your bloodstream? It pummels us, we pummel ourselves, at all ages; depriving the kindergarten of daydreams and locking the graduate in the thinnest control of words. In my blessed retirement from the academy, teenage serial killing discomforts me now most, as I try to tutor some few through the abominations of grades 11 and 12

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<sup>31</sup>See *Lack in the Beingstalk*, the conclusion of chapter 3.

<sup>32</sup>Proust, VI, 531-2.

text books in mathematics and science.<sup>33</sup>

And in the academy that I escaped there remains, of course, - precisely in my topic - the dedication to thin and subtle meaning of both phenomenology and British philosophy, in a silly and falsely-abstractive descriptive talking of descriptive essences or of word-usages, or of lives of searchers and achievers.<sup>34</sup>

### 23.4 What is Describing?

We are back, perhaps, with John Donne's "The Bait": "Come live with me...." and perhaps the word of the dying Donne scholar that I have quoted before are relevant: "Now is not the time for verbal thought-play. Nothing would be worse than a detailed scholarly analysis of erudition, interpretation, complication. Now is the time for simplicity. Now is the time for, dare I say it, kindness".<sup>35</sup> Yet I muse of "kindness" in ambiguity, an ambiguity contained in my wish that my reader treat me with kindness even if we are not of a kind. This section pirouettes round a single sentence of Lonergan: "Prior to the explanatory conjugates, defined by their relations to one another, there are the experiential conjugates that involve a triple correlation of classified experiences, classified contents of experiences, and corresponding names."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>I have more than once drawn attention to this type of problem. Perhaps you are in a position to tackle the abomination? Writing a decent text for any grade is certainly "worth a life" - Stephen McKenna's sentiment when he tackled his translating of Plotinus.

<sup>34</sup>My sweep here undoubtedly will annoy. It needs the backing of a massive dialectic effort. I can only make a small contribution to this in the remaining 4/5s of these *Cantowers*, devoted mainly to the problem in relation to the most elementary zone, physics.

<sup>35</sup>I am recalling here my Epilogue to *Lack in the Beingstalk: A Giants Causeway*, titled "Sharing the Intussusception of Progress". I am quoting again those final words of the Film, *Wit*, spoken so well by Emma Thompson.

<sup>36</sup>*Insight*, 555[578].

This, read properly, is “a methodological doctrine”,<sup>37</sup> to be cognized as a nudge towards Zen-Ken-Then plodding.

You are, at this stage, pretty clear on the fact that this essay is very much a positional presentation asking for a positional response. The ‘kind’ response I seek is primarily the few respondents who would do something like what Stephen McKenna did when he read Plotinus’ *Enneads*, writing in his diary on his 36<sup>th</sup> birthday “this is worth a life”.

Often, as I struggle on in these **Cantowers**, haunted by Bachelard’s glorious statement - “Late in Life, with indomitable courage, we continue to say that we are going to do what we have not yet done: we are going to build a house”<sup>38</sup> - I suspect that I am really only addressing seriously those few who are mad enough to try the Aristotelian thing of fulsome contemplation. It is that fulsome ‘ting’ that is captured by Lonergan in what I call the **Tomega Principle**: “Theoretical understanding seeks to solve problems, to erect syntheses, to embrace the universe in a single view”.<sup>39</sup>

Yet I also suspect that there are those among that few lunatics who are massively discouraged by present academic culture from searching for enlightenment. Shortly after the **Tomega Principle** Lonergan describes (yes, describes... what is such describing if the audience is academic?) the sophisticated stance of most of that academy. “It lauds the great men of the past, ostensibly to stir one to emulation, but really to urge one to modesty”. Certainly, I would stir many to modesty: for many this is just not their ting, especially in present culture. But there are those few, like perhaps

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<sup>37</sup>*Method in Theology*, 295.

<sup>38</sup>Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1969, 61.

<sup>39</sup>*Insight*, 417[442]. I introduce my view of this sentence in **Cantower IV**. The reflection there draw attention to a fulsome meaning of the word ‘embrace’ which, thought central to our topic here, cannot be more than mentioned now as intimating a loving and total molecularity, a “psychic force that sweeps”( *Insight*, 723[745]).

you, who edge towards oddness. I would wish to push you over the edge, corrupt you, plunge you to be vulnerably new.

*“Good souls, to survive select  
Their symbols from among the elect -  
Articulate, suave, corrupt.*

*But from corruption comes the deep  
Desire to plunge to the true;  
To dare is to redeem the blood,  
Discover the buried good,  
Be vulnerably true.”<sup>40</sup>*

I can try to corrupt and encourage by autobiography. One of my favorite life-madnesses is imaged in Cezanne, setting out regularly in the pre-dawn light to see, seize, canvas the help of, Mt.St.Victoire. For me, in the present context, it was a matter of an evening walk to The National Library in Dublin where I sat day after day for a month, canvassing the help of the green lamp above my table. I was trying to read that central sentence of Lonergan, about the triple correlation. I still have those notes of over thirty years ago - it was about 1970 - 50 careful pages of foolscap reflection. I got some distance. Are the notes worth my sharing with you? Doubtfully.

But that is not the issue: the issue is, is the climb I undertook worth your sharing? Should there be people seeking enlightenment who seek to become self-luminous in regard to this uniquely human capacity-for-performance, beyond the angels, beneath God, the capacity to describe?

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<sup>40</sup>Brendan Kennelly, “Good Souls, to Survive”, *Selected Poems*, Allan Figgis, Dublin, 1969, 37.

My next large-scale plodding was a component of twenty years of teaching that paragraph of *Method in Theology* that briefly describes - yes, describes - Helen Keller's five weeks of struggle towards meaning 'water'. Do my few pages on that five weeks capture that core of all describing? The leap in Helen to the word 'water' was a leap born of our common deeper thirst, and I am led to recall my comment of thirty years ago on the lesson to be drawn from zoologists' long battle to understand thirst: "if the understanding of animal thirst is a remote goal of the zoological enterprise, the philosopher should hardly consider the understanding of human understanding or thirst for understanding as some youthful achievement prior to doing their own thing".<sup>41</sup>

I was certainly quite beyond youthfulness when I again tackled the question of the triple correlation. Now it was a week of the summer of 1992, sitting on a bench eyeing and ayeing a cow on New Brunswick marshland, mouthing the name 'cow' to my crazy self, reaching for the full metaphysical heuristic of wording. I already wrote of that week and of the difficulty of communicating its findings.<sup>42</sup> But it did originate my second word of metaphysics, W2 of ***Cantower XVII***, typed out fully there and in other parts of these ***Cantowers***, contextualized in its meaning by chapter 4 of *A Brief History of Tongue* and by the first three chapters of *Lack in the Beingstalk*.

Yet none of these mark out the "sheer plod down sillion shin"<sup>43</sup>-ing path to a

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<sup>41</sup>P. McShane, "Zoology and the Future of Philosophy", *Shaping of the Foundations*, 1976, 86. I would note that I was struggling there, especially in note 42, page 167, with the problem of adequate expression, through subscripts and superscripts, of differentiated understandings. The first and second words of metaphysics, to which we turn in the text shortly, are simple pointers to such complexity.

<sup>42</sup>*Lack in the Beingstalk: A Giants Causeway*, 53.

<sup>43</sup>Hopkins' Windhover is discussed in manner that points towards bone-refreshing in the Epilogue to the new edition of *Music That Is Soundless. A fine Way for the Lonely Bud A*, Axial Press, Halifax, 2003.

new control of descriptive meaning that would freshen one's bones and tones, one's tongue. That path -founding and --finding must initially be solitary until it become revolutionary and then cultural. We are, in fact, talking about what will eventually be undergraduate exercises in features of W2, but which are at present quite absent from expertise in linguistics, in phenomenology, in British linguistic analysis, in child studies.

What I might call the "Keller Core" is not absent from these groups: for, they talk and write. What is missing is what I risk calling the Keller Kor<sup>44</sup>, an **Appreciation**<sup>45</sup> of the core. Helen describes its being made present, and we can sense the surge. But *appreciate*? I am bringing you back, or forward, here, like a voxherding pixie, to the ten oxherding pictures. If at more that seventy years I still struggle towards that appreciation, I know that, even if others share the climb and the partial achievement, it is not a community holding. The "being at home in transcendental method" is here a lone riding, "Riding the Ox Home": "He hums the rustic tune of the woodman and plays the simple songs of the village children. Astride the Ox's back, he gazes serenely

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<sup>44</sup>Hebrew, *kor*, cousin to *homer* from *hamar*, to surge, to swell up. It is, in fact, a unit of measure. No doubt I am straining here, tying *kor* in with the Greek *nomos*.

<sup>45</sup>I am, of course, in trouble here. I could use the word *understand* but it is a tired word. I could rightly call in Lonergan's slogan "thoroughly understand what it is to understand" (*Insight*, xxviii[22]), and it would be correct here: thoroughly understand that core insight of language and you have taken the measure of language, the *kor*, the heart of prime matter. Instead I am making an attempt to rescue the word *appreciate*, which seems to have a better chance of resonating up and down the layers of living. "Our poetry is haunted by the music it has left behind" (George Steiner, *Errata*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1977, 66), but are there some words, like *appreciate*, that can be resouled? As you may know - say, from the first section of *Cantower XVII* - my goal is a resouling, a haunting, of all words as they brim out of lung and brain, flow into brail or belly. Is the word *appreciate* a probable? Teenagers may learn the calculus and supposedly **understand** it, but *appreciate*? That could be a calculus of a different colour.



at the clouds above”.<sup>46</sup>

And perhaps I should hum the rustic tune of the second word of metaphysics and identify materially our corner kor and our crisis corner of this **Cantower**.

But, no. A twenty hour pause finds that just another doctrinal direction. What to do?

Perhaps I must ask you to go back and contemplate the challenge indicated in **Cantower IX**. The asking that I am concerned with is an asking that is an advanced asking, someone who has risen to the Keller Kor pointed to by the second word of metaphysics, the W2 of **Cantower XVII**.

But that word points to much more, of course. One aspect of that complex more, paradoxically, brings out the simple hearty issue of describing: the aspect captured in one of my favorite quotations from *Insight*: “Study [ - self-study - ] of the organism begins from the thing- for- us, from the organism as exhibited to our senses. A first step is a descriptive differentiation”.<sup>47</sup> But how deceitful that first step can be! Yes, its sophistication can give rise to the mindful and molecular rhythms and resonances of poems and prayers; but another sophistication can ground the banal embossing of “papmongers of or propagandists of whatever stripe...power’s windowdressers everywhere”,<sup>48</sup> be they priests or politicians. So, the second and third steps, heartheld, need to be communally cultivated if we are to mediate the question, What is describing?, towards a redemptive luminosity that would show it, streetwise, to be our edge of the galactic glory.

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<sup>46</sup>Quoting the sixth Oxherding Picture commentary, from Kapleau, *op. cit.*, 319. And if you like you can try the substitution, *Wordswoman* for *woodsman voxheard* for *voxherd*.

<sup>47</sup>*Insight*, 464[489]. I have been trying to draw attention to this shocking page for forty years, without success.

<sup>48</sup>Seamus Heaney, *The Government of the Tongue*, Faber and Faber, London, 1988, 61.

### 23.5 What, What, What, is Describing?

But that cultivation cannot be effective without the prior cultivation of the vortex motion that is the concern of these 117 *Cantowers*: The goal is a third stage of meaning, an open edging of the exigence that is the spark in our clod, releasing in “the world of sense .... its yearning”.<sup>49</sup> To reach that goal is to lift, with cunning and embarrassment, the frail failed efforts of describing describing to a new tonality, a new poise. It is to give operative meaning to the three ‘What’s’ of the title.

I have been describing compactly levels of describing: the upper levels of describing give release; the lower levels, as existentialist writings intimate, exanimate. The question then arises, What is describing? And a variety of answers, of method of answering, emerge that also exanimate - unless they be cast in an upper level of describing.<sup>50</sup> To the spontaneity of human linguistic expression is added further reflective expression which is opaque to its own source of luminescence.

So, one has a British analytic philosophy’s concern for description, and a different bent in phenomenological concern. There is a range of logics<sup>51</sup> of concern, some of them internal to psychology and sociology. And there are what I might call ranges of Lonerganesque concern, the most evident of which is a rather simple-minded unconcerned clinging to distinctions that Lonergan made in the book *Insight*.

One surely gets from reflection on this and on the previous section - which did not at all answer the question, What is describing? - a sense of history, of stages, of a needed, now imminent, transition - something like the long haul of chemistry through and beyond alchemy? You will recall, as illustrating the problem and the tactics of that

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<sup>49</sup>*Insight*, 725[745].

<sup>50</sup>This is an enormously tricky question, a question for precise dialectic: perhaps illustrated sufficiently by the implications of the note on Seamus Heaney’s work, note 48 of *Cantower VIII*. One may think in this context, for instance, of Heidegger’s work.

<sup>51</sup>See *Phenomenology and Logic*, the index under *Logic*.

transition, the reflections of the first part of *Cantower XIV* on the hermeneutics of descriptive meaning? A page or two here can only invite the expansive reflection of fantasy, of a visionary spiration towards an ongoing genesis of methods.

What to do? The title is my lead: it points to a triplicity that I was nudged towards more than a decade ago by archival material of Lonergan recently made available by Darlene O’Leary.<sup>52</sup> If you have read the first chapter of *The Redress of Poise*, “The Value of Lonergan’s Economics for Lonergan Students” - and, as I noted earlier, that is a value laced into the present challenge - then you have met, at the conclusion of that chapter, the curious challenge of reaching for “discernments of discernments of discernments”.

More elementarily, I have repeated here and there the distinction between i) spontaneous, or relatively spontaneous, linguistic activities, ii) reflection on such activities which Lonergan would call a second order of consciousness, and iii) a third order of consciousness which would be to the second as zoology is to animals. The distinguishing of third and second order consciousness points to a precision of the distinction between methodology and methods. There is an ongoing genesis of species handled by evolution theory: there is the ongoing genesis of methods to be handled by methodology. As Felix Klein would have it, method in mathematics can change each decade, and there is no difficulty in moving up through parallels in the sciences to find both Gooch and Haydon White giving parallels for 19<sup>th</sup> century history and to notice the longer sweep of methods in theology.

What, then, of my three ‘What’s’?

The first *what* refers to initial meanings, a difficult topic in itself.<sup>53</sup> Spontaneity, or quasi-spontaneity, generates the triple correlation that gives naming, but it also

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<sup>52</sup>Darlene O’Leary, *Lonergan’s Practical View of History*, Axial Press, Halifax, 2003

<sup>53</sup>See the reference to Langer given by Lonergan, *Insight* 544[567]. This is a domain of concern for a sublated phenomenology.

generates ever so slowly the emergence of science. You may conveniently associate the second *what* with Lonergan's second stage of meaning and you would then find it interesting to figure out the difference of stress in my suggestions: section 10.2 of chapter 3 of *Method in Theology* is titled 'The Second and Third Stage of Meaning'. By focusing on describing I am stressing here the continuity of the first and second stage,<sup>54</sup> and by drawing attention to initial meanings, I am bringing out a peculiar aspect of the transition to method.

Drawing attention and bringing out? Not really: that is the function of the third order of consciousness, with which I associate the third stage of meaning.

The second *what* can and does emerge quite soon in the wake of spontaneity's reach beyond naming. In the West one associates it with Socrates, and with Plato's Socrates one finds a sound beginning of light on *mere* naming. The second What is to lead to a scientific understanding - as will slowly appear, there are deep difficulties here of axial meanings - of **describing** in particular instances. Again, the handy if inadequate parallel is the investigation of a particular animal within zoology. Problems of cart before horse emerge here: we are back with the troubles of a general heuristic, and of "the use of general categories".<sup>55</sup> *Solvitur ambulando*, but the walk is the walk of the third *What*.

What is required is a dialectic of spontaneity's bundle of deviant initial meanings, a dialectic which would include deviant methods' deviant products, pseudo-scientific accounts of description. What is required concretely, of course, is the slow sloping up and round the hodic vortex that was described in ***Cantower VIII***.

Nor is there any point in further dense description. Present initial meanings

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<sup>54</sup>I would not labour this point. There is a great deal of work to be done, beginning with *Method in Theology*, to detect Lonergan's view, winding through the book, of the shift from content to questions of method. It is a large issue in the history and dialectic of science, the zone of the third *what*.

<sup>55</sup>*Method in Theology*, 291.

miss the core already mentioned, and in many cases are simply closed to the data of consciousness. And even initial meanings that blossom from the three words of metaphysics must battle with an axial abstractiveness that would make scientific understanding something less than the vibrant harmonious development of the neuromolecularity of describing that constitute characters of discernment.

And what, you may ask, am I doing here, in this section, in this **Cantower**, in this entire project or at least in this fifth of it? I am **describing**, with a lift I hope to higher ground that might indoctrinate effectively a creative minority, seeding and breeding foundational characters of a new millennium.

### 23.6 “So it comes about”.

It? *Humanity*. It? Not you or I except in some sporting evolutionary sense, Spandrel-Wise.<sup>56</sup> But I had best quote fully the central write of passage, of turn-about, that I am interested in us intussuscepting positionally, poitionally, protopossesively, where *us* is not you or I but a much later global and galactic group. We are at the heart start of the pedagogical stage of our reach for the vortex-slope described in **Cantower VIII**. Twenty three **Cantowers**, one fifth of the total project, brings us to read this passage - descriptive still but - with a fresh reach.

“So it comes about that the extroverted subject visualizing extension and experiencing duration gives place to the subject orientated to the objective of the unrestricted desire to know and affirming beings differentiated by certain conjugate potencies, forms, and acts grounding certain laws and frequencies. It is this shift that gives rise to the antithesis of position and counter-positions. It is through its acknowledgment of the fact of this shift that a philosophy or metaphysics is critical. It is only by a rigorous confinement of the metaphysical objects to the universe of being

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<sup>56</sup>The notion of spandrel, borrowed from architecture, comes from Jay Gould, whose massive book on evolution was criticized in **Cantower XV**. See there, at note 9.

as explained, that this basic enterprise of human intelligence can free itself of the morass of pseudo-problems that otherwise beset it.”<sup>57</sup>

“So it comes about”. What a *Turn-Around!* I am thinking here of my first reference to that work by Vladimir Valkov, *The Turn-Around*. It is worth quoting now, fifteen years later, as an encouragement for other outsiders, evolutionary sports. I spent that year writing in Oxford in an eccentric avoidance of the Oxford academy. I met no academic during that time (September 1988 -June 1989) unless you count the marvelous Robert Morley, who caught me scribbling at an amateur play and asked me was I rewriting the script. Needless to say, I didn’t tell him I was trying to reright, right up, turn around, bring about, history. Are you interested in the right up?

So, I quote myself about the random illustrations of then and now.

“These are just random illustrations. The fundamental drive is towards an enrichment of what have been conventionally called theology and political economy through a vortex meshing of ultimate and proximate concerns with the mesh and mess of world-spirit process. And that personal enrichment can be honed neurally by resonating with literature’s objectifications of displacements, be it as ancient as Indian, Chinese, or Hebrew exile-lore, as available as Vladimir Valkoff’s account of *The Turn-Around*,<sup>58</sup> as close-cutting to home as Joyce’s focus on epiphanies.<sup>59”60</sup>

I did not then envisage that I would still be spelling out in larger writ that same unheard challenge fifteen years later. This entire **Cantower** project is but a commentary on the paragraph of Lonergan that I have quoted. What is the meaning of

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<sup>57</sup>*Insight*, 514[537].

<sup>58</sup>Vladimir Valkoff, *The Turn-Around*, Bodley Head, London, 1981, 214-285. (Translated from the French, *Le Retourneement*, 1979, by Fr.Alan Sheridan).

<sup>59</sup>See Morris Beja, “Epiphany and Epiphanies” in *A Companion to Joyce Studies*, edited by Zack Bowen and James F.Carens, Greenwood Press, Connecticut, 1984, 707-726.

<sup>60</sup>*Process. Introducing Themselves to Young (Christian) Minders*, 101.

“So”, that strange little Anglo-German noise? The community’s come-about is the twisting sloping described in these **Cantowers**, described for the lone stranger by Lonergan’s *Insight*. Are you one of those strangers? And if you are not, could you please be kind to strangers?

### **23.7 “One step enough for me”<sup>61</sup>**

I recall reading somewhere of Newman being asked about his state of mind when he wrote the dark lines of the hymn from which I take my title. He answered that he was not at all in dark spirits: as I recall, it was Bloomsday, 1833, and he was sailing on the Mediterranean. You have sailed thus far with me in this March **Cantower**. Are you in good spirits, or in the dark of “encircling gloom”? My only wish here is that you resonate with the title, ‘one step enough for me’, with some seriousness, in regard to the project of controlling the meaning of describing. You alone know where you stand, biographically, circumstantially, philosophically. We are back at the Hellos of an earlier page, with me not knowing how to open up that next step.

If you are a Christian, the next step could be a lift to the being-in-the-world of contemplation, a new fix on ‘The Contemplation for Obtaining Love’ that ends St. Ignatius’ *Exercises* or on the *Little Way* of the Little Flower. If you are simply a beginner in Lonergan reading, then the next step is very much still a beginning, a new patience with yourself but one that will separate you from the mood of the vast majority. It may separate you only in the sense of giving you a new supporting tolerance for those who might turn to the described idea; but it may also have caught your neural willingness: then you will steal time as I did in my twenties to cherish the seeing of green or hearing the lark, the loon.

The end of section 4, of course, is a plain pointer, with its opposition of papmongers and plodders, calling towards the exercises and words of metaphysics. At

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<sup>61</sup>I am recalling Newman’s hymn, *Lead Kindly Light*.

the moment the struggle I write of here is a graduate task or truly much more than a graduate task: for graduates, beyond the Zen tradition, are not coaxed and cudged towards contemplation. But perhaps you have come far enough to have an edge on genuine explanation, appreciation: slogans just will not do to hang your heart on. So you can now ask, with more patience and courage, in fresh ignorance and identification,<sup>62</sup> what indeed does it mean for my human living to “involve a triple correlation of classified experiences, classified contents of experience, and corresponding names”.<sup>63</sup>

“In every experience one may distinguish between content and act, between the seen and the seeing, the heard and the hearing, the tasted and the tasting”,<sup>64</sup> but might I be the one who tries this lonely appreciation of the distinguishing of content, A, and act, A’, in a way that is not just a new naming? And since it is the drama of my life that is at the stake, I do not wish to lose the search or the searcher in tracking either A or A’, so I must surely search the third way, lifting Proust’s search for taste to an intimation of a later stage of meaning.

“In the third case, one will be employing experiential conjugates and further information will be needed to settle whether one is working towards the goal of natural science or of cognitional theory”.<sup>65</sup> But the new information that global molecular finality seeks is an information and a formation that will spread the sporting evolutionary eccentricity through a new academy, thus settling for and setting off

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<sup>62</sup>*Insight*, ch. 17, section 2.5.

<sup>63</sup>*Insight*, 555[578].

<sup>64</sup>*Insight*, 81[104].

<sup>65</sup>*Insight*, 81[104].



towards a common Kor goal at home in generalized empirical<sup>66</sup> me-t-hod that will not leave A or A', but will cherish our descriptive springboard to the Eschaton.<sup>67</sup>

### 23.8 What Is Biography?

I suggested above the replacement of the word 'understanding' by the word 'appreciate'. It is not an important suggestions: it is not words that are at issue but realities, here the reality of being human and developing harmoniously as a human, as neuromolecular spirit. A nominalist Platonism haunts the globe and it is allied with Christianity and poetry and prose in their present poise. Unwarranted sophistications abound, yet the spark in our clod can still sneak through, heartholding. The **Cantower** task is to turn the sneaking into a sparkling by slowly changing that haunting and that poise.

My contribution to that task, by writing these **Cantowers**, will be discovered to be one of many hidden searchings: hidden searchers that a global netting can mesh with a larger community of critical mass to radiate in luminous darkness "a mystery that is at once symbol of the uncomprehended and sign of what is grasped and psychic

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<sup>66</sup>I should repeat, I suppose, the later definition of generalized empirical method that is at issue here, but reminding you that it is sublated into a further ethical vortex newness: see section 3 of **Cantower XVIII**, "The Possibility of a Cultural Ethics". We have then from *A Third Collection*, 141: "Generalized empirical method operates on a combination of both the data of sense and the data of consciousness: it does not treat of objects without taking into account the corresponding subjects; it does not treat of the subject's operations without taking into account the corresponding objects".

<sup>67</sup>This is, you could surely say, no place to rant about the brutality that surrounds the use and abuse of the descriptive documentation of Christian Faith. The hiddenly-tripersonal Earthspirit named God, close to the hearts and hopes of ancient peoples, wafted and wafts a molecular and mysterious Way in a Middleman that is sadly, all too regularly, reduced to an obvious Jesus. We need a new servants' song .... "long before she wrapped her long blue arms around the sea there was a love this aching love rolls on" (extract from "Long before the Night", a hymn (music and words) by Carolyn McDade, 1988, reproduced as no. 282 in *Voices United*, the hymn book of the United Church of Canada).

force that sweeps living human bodies, linked in charity, to the joyful, courageous, whole-hearted, yet intelligently controlled performance of the tasks set by world order in which the problem of evil is not suppressed but transcended”.<sup>68</sup> The question ‘What is appreciation?’ is to be answered in the new asking of the second time of humanity’s time, a self-luminous search for lost time.<sup>69</sup> But here my interest is only a slight all-slice of that time, a moment in the rose garden.

I am thinking of that man behind my effort, this *Cantower* of February 2004 oddly celebrating the centennial of the edge of his conception. There was a moment, in the mid-1970s, when I played for him a recording of Beethoven’s *Kreutzer Sonata* for violin and piano. He sat back in my old armchair - we were in my Halifax apartment - smiling, bright-eyed, one hand moving. Later, time regaining, he told me of the first time he had heard the Sonata: he was a small boy in a garden, hearing his mother playing a piano version of it, and he told me of pausing, bright-eyed.

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<sup>68</sup>*Insight*, 723-4[745].

<sup>69</sup>As I have intimated before, one has to lift the implicit analogue, Proust’s *Time Regained*, into the context of a remembrance of the future. There is a lost time in restricted fantasy, and human fantasy lives within the reality of an absolutely supernatural exigence. It seems unfair of me to touch on this central human issue in a note at the end of this cycle of the Cantowers and, indeed, to leave it there in my commitment to a specialized pursuit. But the context for a serious thematic of the dynamic of self-appropriated sentiment is just not there yet. Ramon Fernandez, in a short essay “In Search of the Self” (reprinted in *Proust. A Collection of Critical Essays*, (Greenwood Press, Connecticut, 1962, pp. 136-49) from Fernandez’ *Messages*, translated by Montgomery Belgion, Harcourt, Brace and World, 1927), contrasts Proust unfavorably with Newman (142ff). As part of his conclusion he remarks: “sentiment is therefore situated on a plane of consciousness intermediate between intellectual activity and sensible impression. One cannot say that it is a truth, since it is based upon an ineffable intuition which can be proved only in action; but neither can one say that it is a state of purely passive receptivity, since it participates in the activity of the mind and enables the latter to accomplish its most eminent function, which is to conceive with certainty the future”(146). This just does not cut it, no more than Fr.Crowe’s reflections on feelings that I criticized in the previous Cantower. Reflective culture must humbly struggle to lift itself into the discomfort of the four words of metaphysics, W1, W2, W3, W0. But I must halt now abruptly by noting that my appeal to Proust is more a matter of mood than metaphysics (see, for example, note30 of *Cantower XXI* above, or indeed my general use of quotations from Proust).

In the morning, at the airport, I offered him the record, but he smiled and said he had no way of playing it in his room at St.Mary's Hall in Boston College. Later we managed to get a small player to him, supplying him gradually with records. As I recall, the last record I gave him, on one of my visits to Boston, was Beethoven's Late Quartets. When I arrived back in Halifax, I phoned him and - foolishly - asked him what he thought of them. His reply: "I don't think, I feel!". In his last year he was moved from Boston back to Canada, a move he was less than enthusiastic about. I reminded the Boston people of the importance of his little player and his few records. They were left behind by his Toronto minders. They could not have been left behind by people who appreciated him.

Like M. Swann, whose name graces the title of the first volume, *Swann's Way*, of Proust, Lonergan "had another almost secret existence of a wholly different kind".<sup>70</sup> That secret existence can be reached only in the world of theory, of appreciation, a world which biographic description can so easily and brutally betray. I have before me here two different copies of the piano version of the *Kreutzer*, one version of which I suspect and like to think was eyed for hours by Lonergan's mother<sup>71</sup>, and I think of the small boy, poised in the garden. What did she hear, what did the small boy hear, when she read those first bars of the *Kreutzer*? Did they not hear, distantly, like the elder Pericles of Shakespeare, "The music of the spheres"?<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>Proust, I, 21.

<sup>71</sup>The piano version is the work of Charles Czerny. The older of my copies is a photocopy of an early foolscap version in French. *Grande Sonate de Louis van Beethoven*, edited by Simrock in Bonn (no date). I am indebted to my old school friend, Sean Ronayne, one time leader of the London Symphony Orchestra, for tracking it down. (His violin playing in the 1940s was part of the musical inspiration of my early teens). The other copy, "copyright for the British Empire by Alfred Lengnick" of London, but produce "for alle Landen von N.Simrock, Berlin" (no date) is the likely candidate for being a copy of what Lonergan's mother possessed.

<sup>72</sup>Shakespeare, *Pericles*, V.ii.231. My full context, however, is Chapter 2, section 5, "Reaching Buds: Kavanagh, Shakespeare, You and I", where I present Kavanagh's reflections on the

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elder Shakespeare and merge them with the anastomotic reach of the final chapter of Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*.