

*Cantower XXIV***Infesting History with Hodology<sup>1</sup>****March 1<sup>st</sup> 2004****24.1 The Invitation**

There is a sense in which these next three Cantowers are a recycling, and a poor woman's version, of *Cantowers VII, VIII* and *IX*.<sup>2</sup> Or, indeed, of the entire book, *Lack in the Beingstalk: A Giants Causeway*. But let's not get caught up in the recycling business: let's stay with simplicity for the present. By 'simplicity' I certainly mean straight elementary talk, but also, for me and, I hope, for you, there is also the simplicity of the End-speech, Death-speech, that I quoted in the Epilogue of *Lack in the Beingstalk*, spoken by Emma Thompson brilliantly playing the dying Donne scholar. I might as well repeat that quotation here. The nurse and the scholar have been talking plainly about whether, at heart-stop, to let her go or to initiate efforts at revival : "We are discussing life and death, and not in the abstract, either. We are discussing my life and my death. And I cannot conceive of any other tone. 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>3</sup>

And there is especially here the matter of being kind to yourself, in a realism of envisaging your own concrete possibilities. If you have been with me through the

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<sup>1</sup>Gradually the ten *Cantowers, XXIV - XXXIII*, took on a certain unity. They were written in 2003 and go on line as a unit on Dec 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003, anticipating the Lonergan centennial celebrations. I began thinking of them as the "gestation *Cantowers* ", relating back to the events of 1904. But obviously gestation and infestation are related in my intention: we are considering the birth of a stage of meaning.

<sup>2</sup>Indeed, the two sets of three can be paralleled in the order in which they are written. The larger perspective of note 1 emerged later.

<sup>3</sup>The film *Wit* is based on a play by Margaret Edson. Emma Thompson wrote the screen play; the director was Mike Nichols.

previous *Cantowers*, then you have read my talk of the problem of beginnings, in *Cantower I*, in *Cantower X*. Here we are again, at another beginning.<sup>4</sup> Will this beginning be comprehensible to a beginner, curious about what McShane has been at all along? Those who have been with me in reading the last few *Cantowers* will know that I am venturing slowly into the *Opera Omnia* of Richard Feynman, that great teacher of physics. Today I have been working on the third chapter, or lecture, of one of his popular presentations, and the first chapter is worth quoting here, in the third of my four beginnings.

“This is the third of four lectures on a rather difficult subject - the theory of quantum electrodynamics - and since there are obviously more people here tonight than there were before, some of you haven’t heard the other two lectures and will find this lecture incomprehensible. Those of you who *have* heard the other two lectures will also find this lecture incomprehensible, but you know that’s all right: as I explained in the first lecture, the way we have to describe Nature is generally incomprehensible to us”.<sup>5</sup>

I wont elaborate on the complex of parallels between what Feynman said and what I have previously written, but I shall simply note two points. First, the subject, the rather difficult subject, is you, profoundly more difficult than light and matter; secondly, there is your incomprehensibility, a matter of felt incomprehensibility that the present culture invites you not to feel. Yet in this third beginning I wish to skim over the difficulties and the incomprehensibilities that could be tied in with words like *self-system*, with investigation of a technical meaning of the phrase *anxiety as operator*, with a

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<sup>4</sup>This beginning is obviously associated with the arrival of Bernard Lonergan in history a century ago. These next nine *Cantowers* can be regarded as a tribute to that arrival. The final, December, 2004, *Cantower* will home in on the problem of symbolizing, gramming, adequately, the conception of the elder Lonergan.

<sup>5</sup>Richard P. Feynman, *QED. The Strange Theory of Light and Matter*, Princeton University Press, 1988, 77.

reach for some coherent self-accounting of the ultimate, intimate, meaning of *exigence*.<sup>6</sup> All I am interested in here, if you like, is *A Brief Encounter of a Third Kind*.

The kind here, the kindness here, is a quiet airing of central intention, central direction, but directed to you as a personal invitation. If you think the project is crazy, or very misdirected, than that is what you think and I presume intend to live by and with. I would hope, however, that you would tell me of the craziness, like Joey did in the critique of the proofs of *Phenomenology and Logic*, a critique which required me to removed the original Appendix A from the published work.<sup>7</sup>

In the year since I published the previous 12 *Cantowers* in a single bunch, I have had various welcome critical comments and searchings for light in particular areas. At least, then, I know that I am not just writing to myself or just to a later generation. One critical comment had a positive note. The criticism was that, frankly, I was writing some incomprehensible stuff but then the critic went on to puzzle over the possibility that perhaps that was the point, that I was trying to introduce the tone of mystery and incomprehensibility into the world of philosophic explanation. And this indeed has been a presence in the previous *Cantowers*, and indeed in much of my writing. Can I switch the presentation now to the simpler mode that I used in my teaching to young ladies for twenty years? That is quite a complex question. With those young ladies I was only trying to help them through what was regularly a brutalizing undergraduate degree by identifying them to themselves in the context of cultural codology.<sup>8</sup> Here I am trying, as I shall shortly describe, to infest history with hodology. But yes, as promised in the previous few *Cantowers*, I am struggling towards a type of

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<sup>6</sup>The interested and advanced reader will find a context for reflection on the italicized words in *Phenomenology and Logic*.

<sup>7</sup>The original Appendix A appears as chapter five of *Lack in the Beingstalk*; The critique by Joey (an anonymous male or female) is included there as section 4 of chapter 4.

<sup>8</sup>The two books that helped us with that struggle were *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations. Self-axis of the Great Ascent* and *Process: Introducing themselves to Young (Christian) Minds*, both available now on the Website.

foundational pedagogy. More about that as we go along.

Some of you have expressed interest, considering the project as not totally crazy, looking for further light, concrete directions. Relevant directions are many, and I would hope others would take up the challenge of taking such directions as they diagnose as relevant. Two directions are of immediate interest here. There is the direction of cultivating functional specialist work; there is the direction of rescuing *Insight* from what I call “doctrinal teaching.” The first direction is, you may agree, more immediate and feasible, especially in the context of my slogan, “if a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing badly”. One group has, in fact, taken that direction and should show some results shortly.<sup>9</sup> That is a direction that I take up later, as you may see from the list in the second section. *Cantower XXXVII* takes up the topic “Functional Interpretation” and, with breaks for ventures into the simpler zone of physics, all the specialties are thus dealt with in an introductory fashion by the time we get to *Cantower LII*.

But my immediate interest is in lifting the teaching and reading of *Insight* to a better level, and that is where I go after these three *Cantowers*. I focus on the first five chapters - chapters, really, that are mainly on the sciences physics and chemistry and their methods. There are many reasons for this focus, but I do not wish to delay over them at present. What of biology, the human sciences, the humanities? They are not to be neglected but they do not get, in this million word project, the attention that they require.<sup>10</sup> Still, by the end you will notice that there has been, all along, a drive to rescue those areas from description, reductionism, secularism.

So: there is the project named in the title. “Infesting”? If you suspect a tone of festiveness, good: that is there, a liberation of human searching from pretensions into joy. But think of infesting here more prosaically: like the manner in which the necktie has infested international male dress - mores the pity! I really think that it is only a

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<sup>9</sup>Their efforts will be published shortly in volume 4(2004) of *The Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis*. The focus is on the functional specialty Interpretation.

<sup>10</sup>The *Cantowers* of the years 2009-2011 will give a heuristic context, but the drive there is towards a much-needed heuristics of eschatology.

matter of time before fragmentations and inefficiencies of academic collaboration push the global culture in the direction I advocate: unlike the necktie, this is an essential mode of address and cultural dress. In a millennium I would hope that hodic undress be considered quite uncool (or whatever buzz word is good in the hood!). I have tried to make that point summarily in the third chapter of *Pastkeynes Pastmodern Economics. A Fresh Pragmatism*, and I placed the issue in an ethical context in the third section of *Cantower XVII*. Let's leave it at that for the moment.

"Hodology"? I made up this word of course, but doesn't it make sense? It means "talk of the way", way to go! Depending on where you are in relation to this project this has some level of meaning for you, but you certainly have the minimum notion of a collaboration that divides up the work in any area so that we get from digging up texts and tunes of the past to talking and singing to plain and sophisticated people in a way that is more efficient than the present mess. The rolling stone gathers less mess! The cycling through the specialties is a way of sifting forward good expressions of progress and screening out dysfunctional structures. Talk in the latter dysfunctional vein might be identified as **codology**, but this is probably a word unfamiliar to you: it is a word you would hear in Ireland, but I do not find it in "local" dictionaries in the New World. Not to worry: you can just regard the opposition of hodology and codology as a bit of my codology!

"History"? You may think of that in the two senses that Lonergan mentions in the beginning of his discussion of the topic. I would like to infest both the history written about and the history written. The latter, within the cycling, is dealt with briefly in *Cantower XXXVIII*. The former is the reach of the whole project. The objective is to change the pace and the beauty of human history, but oh so slowly: but best leave further comments on that topic to the fifth section below.

So, it seems sensible, by way of new beginning, to follow this invitation with two sections, one giving you a list, an overview, of the 117 essays as I view them at present. Why 117, you may ask, if you have not read the first *Cantower*. It goes back to my reading of Ezra Pound's *Cantos*, of which there are (pretty well) 117. *Cantower I* would

fill you in more on such things as the Vorticist movement that was a context for Pound. The number also gives me a realistic chance to finish: I will be within a month of 80 years old in December 2011. If I hit escape velocity before that, at least I will have left some pointers to a new eccentric view of an enlightenment that is beyond Zen and Ken, a Then enlightenment.<sup>11</sup>

Section 3 brings together my four words of metaphysics that emerged gradually over the course of the first fifth of the work: W1, W2, W3, W0. They are best named now the basic “hodic words”. To them I add here W4, although the addition is not a new reality but a new name. Peruse this section with as much sympathy as you can muster, indeed that is the extended invitation of section 4, where the interest is in you finding your present stand in some perhaps preliminary way. I say “perhaps” because you may have been on the road, the Way, for some time, and have quite a sophisticated view of your views and your orientations. But at all events the invitation is to a pause, perhaps a pacing round some slope of our little globe, under the  $10^{20}$  (or so) kilometer-high sky<sup>12</sup>, addressing your self-tasting self about your reaction to my strange suggestions. Then, in the final section, I will address you in terms of my views and my hopes.

## **24.2 A Partial List of the 117 Cantowers**

### **2002**

1 April 1<sup>st</sup> Function and History

2 May 1<sup>st</sup> Sunflowers, Speak to Us of Growth

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<sup>11</sup>This notion entered into *Cantower V*: “Metaphysics THEN”.

<sup>12</sup>Size, dispersedness, is not as wondrous a reality as our ‘little’ lonelineses, but numbers are humbling.  $10^{22}$ , which has 22 zeros after the 1, is obviously an extravagant distance. Light travels 9,460,000,000,000 kilometers a year (5,878 billion miles): that gives us almost  $10^{12}$ . The other 10 zeros? It has been traveling for about 13.7 billion years. Far out! The wondrousness of our little lonelineses led me to opposed Stephen Hawking’s book, *A Brief History of Time. From Big Bang to Black Holes*, with my own *A Brief History of Tongue. From Big Bang to Coloured Wholes*, Axial Press, Halifax, 2000.

3 June 1<sup>st</sup> Round One Willing Gathering

4 July 1<sup>st</sup> Molecules of Description and Explanation

5 August 1<sup>st</sup> Metaphysics THEN

6 September 1<sup>st</sup> Gathering Round One

7 October 1<sup>st</sup> Systematics and General Systems Theory

8 November 1<sup>st</sup> Slopes: An Encounter

9 December 1<sup>st</sup> Position, Poosition, Protopossession

### **2003**

10 January 1<sup>st</sup> Foundations: a Place in the Son

11 February 1<sup>st</sup> Lonergan: Interpretation and History

12 March 1<sup>st</sup> “A Problem of Interpretation Arises”

13 April 1<sup>st</sup> Functional Specialization and Chapters 17 and 18 of *Insight*

14 May 1<sup>st</sup> Communications and Ever-Ready Founders

15 June 1<sup>st</sup> The Elements of Meaning

16 July 1<sup>st</sup> Hodics as Science II

17 August 1<sup>st</sup> Hodics as Science I

18 September 1<sup>st</sup> The Possibility of Cultural Ethics

19 October 1<sup>st</sup> Ultimates

20 November 1<sup>st</sup> Intimates

21 December 1<sup>st</sup> Epilodge

### **2004**

22 January 1<sup>st</sup> Lonergan and the Ministry of Mayhem

23 February 1<sup>st</sup> Redoubt Description

24 March 1<sup>st</sup> Infesting History With Hodology

25 April 1<sup>st</sup> Redoubt *Method* 250

26 May 1<sup>st</sup> Refined Woman and Feynman

27 June 1<sup>st</sup> Feynman I, ch. 1, “Atoms in Motion”: *Insight* ch. 1.

28 July 1<sup>st</sup> Feynman I, ch. 2, “Basic Physics”: *Insight* ch. 2.

29 August 1<sup>st</sup> Feynman I, ch. 3, “Physics and Other Sciences”: *Insight* ch. 3.

30 September 1<sup>st</sup> Feynman I, ch. 4, “Conservation of Energy”: *Insight* ch. 4.

31 October 1<sup>st</sup> Feynman I, ch. 5, “Time and Distance’: *Insight*, ch. 5.

32 November 1<sup>st</sup> The Empirical Residence

33 December 1<sup>st</sup> Lonergan and Axial Bridges

## **2005**

34 January 1<sup>st</sup> A Few Elementary Pointers Regarding Interpretation

35 February 1<sup>st</sup> The Focus on Function

36 March 1<sup>st</sup> The Function of the Cantowers

37 April 1<sup>st</sup> Functional Interpretation

38 May 1<sup>st</sup> Functional History

39 June 1<sup>st</sup> Functional Dialectics

40 July 1<sup>st</sup> Functional Foundations

41 August 1<sup>st</sup> Functional Policy

42 September 1<sup>st</sup> Quantum Mechanics and Measurement

43 October 1<sup>st</sup> Quantum Mechanics and Probability

44 November 1<sup>st</sup> Quantum Mechanics and Locality, Temporality

45 December 1<sup>st</sup> Quantum Mechanics and Foundations

## **2006**

46 January 1<sup>st</sup> Energy and Entropy

47 February 1<sup>st</sup> Heuristic Thermodynamics

48 March 1<sup>st</sup> Anthropic Principles

49 April 1<sup>st</sup> Relativity Theory and Real Geometry

50 May 1<sup>st</sup> The Bridge of Categorial Integrity

51 June 1<sup>st</sup> Functional Systematics

52 July 1<sup>st</sup> Functional Communications

53 August 1<sup>st</sup> The International Search for Enlightenment

54 September 1<sup>st</sup> Quantum electrodynamics, Pedagogy, Popularization

55 October 1<sup>st</sup> Quantum electrodynamics and Electrodynamics

56 November 1<sup>st</sup> The Heuristics of Quantum electrodynamics



57 December 1<sup>st</sup> Quantum electrodynamics, Geometry, GUTS

**2007**

58 January 1<sup>st</sup> Tadpoles, Tell us Talling Tales

59 February 1<sup>st</sup> Developments and Evolutions

60 March 1<sup>st</sup> Quantum Chromodynamics in the Field Context

61 April 1<sup>st</sup> Quantum Chromodynamics: Quarks and Quirks

62 May 1<sup>st</sup> Quantum Chromodynamic Bags: No Strings Attached.

63 June 1<sup>st</sup> Considerations of Gravity

64 July 1<sup>st</sup> The Presence of Origins and Ends

65 August 1<sup>st</sup> W3 (BHT, 124): The Guts Diagram

66 - 81 (going to the end of 2008) Explanatory Heuristic Fantasy and the General Logic of Expression

**2009**

[Astronomy and Anthropology]

**2010-2011**

Heuristics of Ultimate Cosmopolis

**24.3 The Hodic Words, The Words of Metaphysics**

The name of what I am doing is not important: think of these “Words” as helpful images, diagrams, phantasms. I am presenting here five Words and, until we arrive at the discussions of *Cantowers LXVI-LXXXI*, I will try to add no further complexity. These Words were introduced gradually throughout the course of the first twenty *Cantowers*, though W4 is only now being introduced as a name for the diagram of the knowing and doing structures. There are, of course, other helpful and relevant diagrams - see for example the diagrams on pp. 108-110 of *A Brief History of Tongue* - but these five are the main fall-back for us. In these next three *Cantowers* I am trying to lead you towards “asking yourself” about your frank - and perhaps hidden! - response to these Words, and it seems appropriate here to recall a key nudge from Lonergan

regarding the need for such crutches. I am quoting the text referred to above the diagram of W3: “*De Constitutione Christi*, p. 80”, now available in translation:

“Comprehension of everything in a unified whole can be either formal or virtual. It is virtual when one is habitually able to answer readily and without difficulty, or at least ‘without tears,’ a whole series of questions right up to the last ‘why?’ Formal comprehension, however, cannot take place without a turning to phantasm; but in larger and more complex questions it is impossible to have a suitable phantasm unless the imagination is aided by some sort of diagram. Thus, if we want to have a comprehensive grasp of everything in a unified whole, we shall have to construct a diagram in which are symbolically represented all the elements of the question along with all the connections between them”.<sup>13</sup>

I place the five words in a peculiar order here, starting with W3. W3 is the ‘overall’ diagram, though it certainly doesn’t contain all the elements we need to connect, nor do the five words taken together. That is a question we will seriously face only in *Cantowers LXVI ff.* At all events, W3 gives an ‘overview’ of the structure of hodology and the strategy of infestation and, further, I add a relevant footnote from *A Brief History of Tongue*: it complements Lonergan’s view on diagram quoted just now.

As I have suggested on occasion, you get a further valuable image if you make an enlarged photocopy, juggle with the page so that you have a tower whose base is “The LINE” in minding with the rest as “the plain”. Obviously this leaves all the ‘bottom print’ on “the plain”, the bottom plane. This in itself is symbolic. The function of the Tower-work is to move the community of serious searchers gradually<sup>14</sup> up to higher planes of understanding so that there is a new meaning to the word “ex-plane”<sup>15</sup>: the task of the tower is to increase common senses’ appreciation of what each and all of us

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<sup>13</sup>B Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 151.

<sup>14</sup>The topic of *Cantower VIII* and of chapter four of *Lack in the Beingstalk*.

<sup>15</sup>The topic of the final section of chapter three of *Lack in the Beingstalk*.

is about in the mystery<sup>16</sup> of history.

W4, as I mentioned is just a name for the diagrams of knowing and doing: perhaps they can be conveniently named W4k and W4d? (k = knowing; d = doing)

W1 is a piece of the W3 diagram: it points (vaguely enough - something to be handled later) to the elements of any material being. So,  $f(p_i; c_j; b_k; z_l; u_m; q_n)$  for a flower has the conjugate-subscripts l, m, and n all = 0.<sup>17</sup> The big cultural difficulty here is with “ ; “. The semi-colon refers to the aggreformic structure of layering, something quite lacking in, and massively necessary to, various studies of complexity, be they in physics, biology or human sciences.<sup>18</sup>

W2 was introduced on page 122 of *A Brief History of Tongue*, and I won't enlarge on its meaning here. It is an introductory symbolization of the connection of words to realities. It is a tough area to struggle in. We shall not be getting into that complexity till 2007.

But the final word in my list, W0, the zero word - perhaps usefully thought of as “Wow!” or “Wo”, meaning halt - is with us as a problem from A (or 0) to Z. It is the word of “the position” that Lonergan invites you to adopt.<sup>19</sup> I have so far refrained from giving a full axiomatics of it: the problem is - as emerged especially in *Cantower IX* - intussuscepting it, a massive personal challenge. The expression given it here is from my first-year teaching in philosophy. Some got the pointing then, but only after weeks of class-messing. It is a major stumbling block in the path to luminous enlightenment.

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<sup>16</sup>This was a topic in section 1 of *Cantower XVII*.

<sup>17</sup>The subscripts stand for the range of conjugates on that level of being. You might think, descriptively, of the properties of plants, or more explanatorily of the various fundamental fields in physics. You might wish to take time out to connect up Lonergan's symbolizations of genera and species of things and conjugates in *Insight*, chapters 8 and 15.

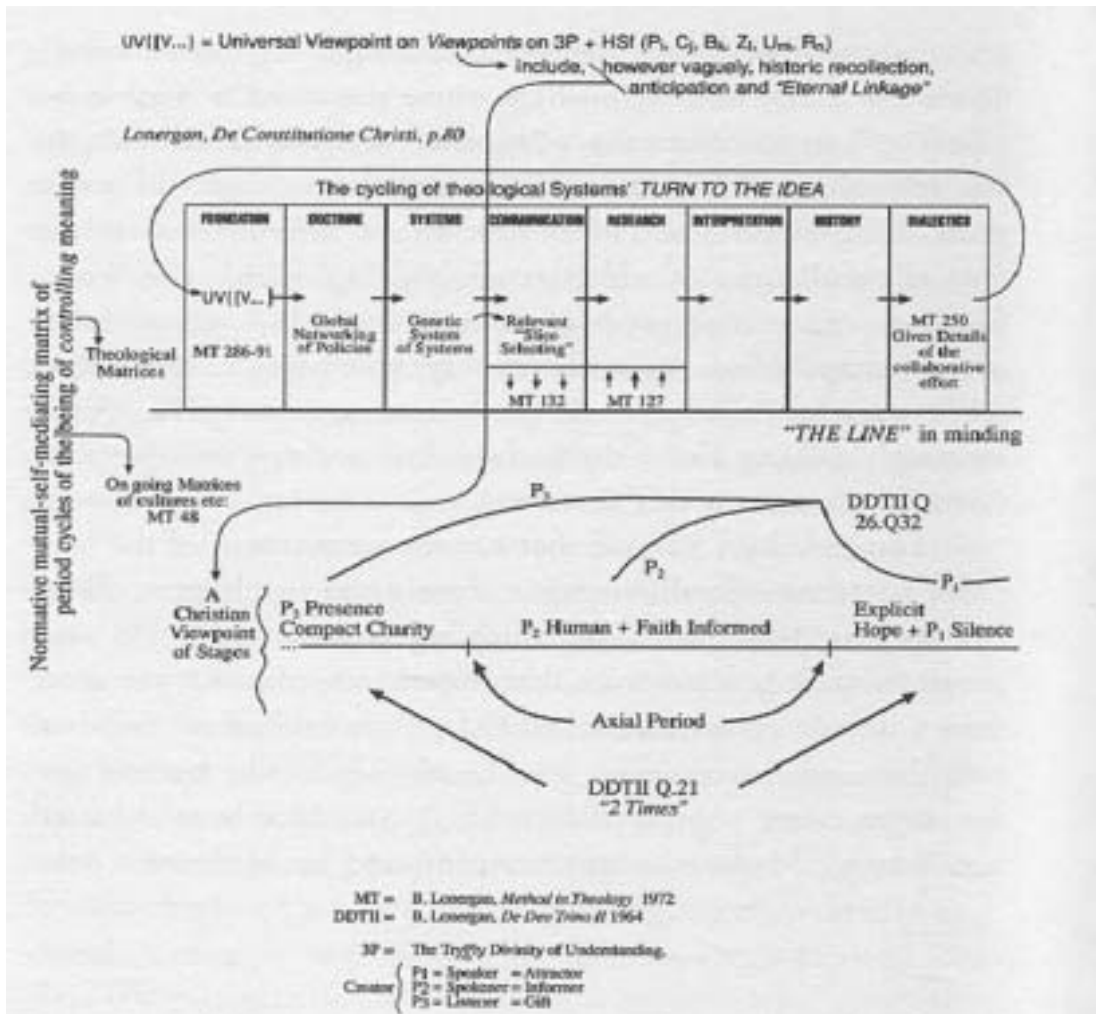
<sup>18</sup>The point was touched on in *Cantower VII* and in *Cantower XV*. It is a central topic in my *Randomness, Statistics and Emergence*. I home in on it again in the central sections of *Cantower XXIX*, where we focus on the aggreformic understanding of the hydrogen atom.

<sup>19</sup>*Insight*, 388[413].

My previous helps in this area are chapter 5 of *Wealth of Self* and chapter 5 of *A Brief History of Tongue*. My “four proposition” certainly need a teacher to gain sense, but the best I can do is refer you to the text of *Wealth*, from which I take the diagram that goes with the four props. W, wonder, is the dynamic that operates (at times!) within the ‘box’ of perception. Judgment is an internal non-comparative achievement.

So: here are the Words in the order in which I introduced them.

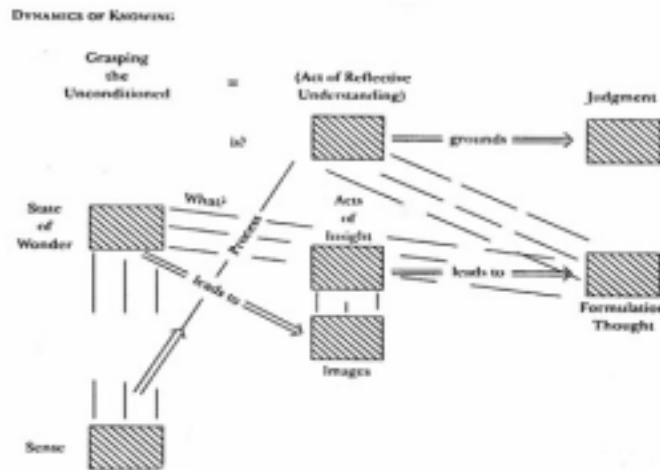
W3<sup>20</sup>



<sup>20</sup>A Brief History of Tongue, 124.

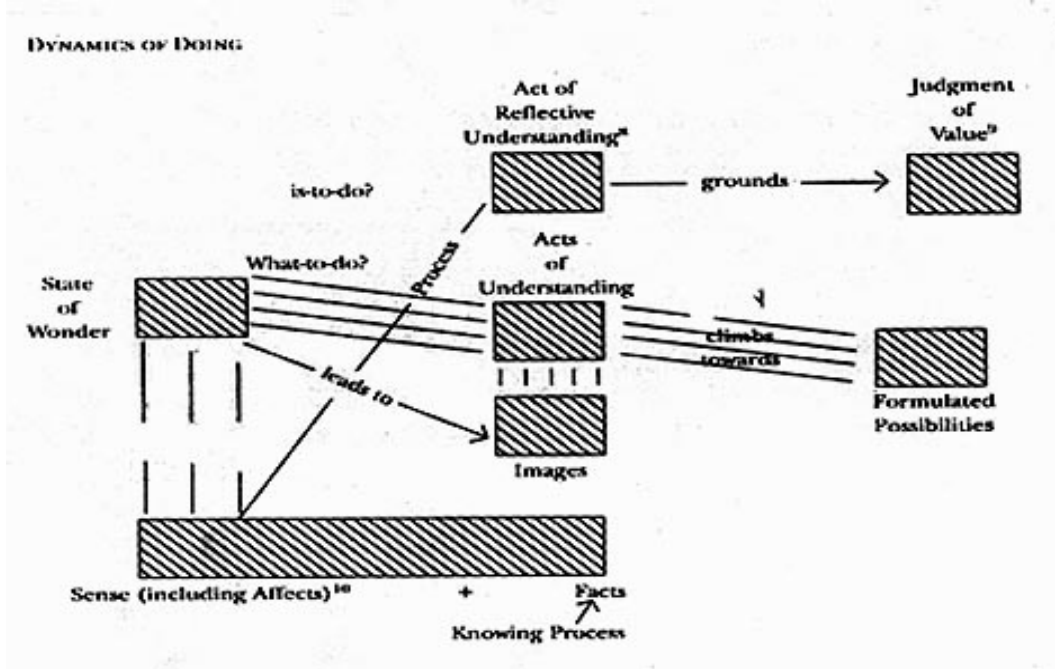
“The diagram in fact introduces complexities such as ‘mutual self-mediation’ which are beyond the present introductory sketchings. The diagram seemed important in itself, an invitation to do one’s own reaching that would always be partial, revisable, open. From that point of view the key reference, near the top left corner, is the reference to Lonergan, *De Constitutione Christi*, Gregorian Press, 1959, 80. On that page Lonergan reaches the 24<sup>th</sup> point of his discussion of the identity of Jesus in which he notes that, unless you have a diagram you won’t have a controlling understanding. Obviously, I took his advice seriously, and have passed it on to you. Further, and paradoxically, the diagram is an invitation not to take fright: as humanity progresses, images necessarily complexify as invitations both to control and to reverence the density of growing meaning. Instead of the notes of birds we have the melodic and symphonic notes, manuscripts of musical genius, mightily beyond our own sensibilities. A good diagram, like the printed image of a piano concerto, calls us, if not to actual reading at least to admiration. So, there is a final general point to be made about the diagram here. It has a central dividing line: above is ‘the turn to the idea’, the rolling of chapter three; below is the zone of general common meanings.”<sup>21</sup>

**W4k**



<sup>21</sup>A *Brief History of Tongue*, 123, note 27.

W4d<sup>22</sup>



W1 (I leave out the H S to give focus on the individual being):

$$f ( p_i ; c_j ; b_k ; z_l ; u_m ; q_n )$$

W2

$$V\{ W(p_i ; c_j ; b_k ; z_l ; u_m ; q_n ) > HS ( p_i ; c_j ; b_k ; z_l ; u_m ; q_n ) \}^{23}$$

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<sup>22</sup>*Phenomenology and Logic*, Appendix A, where the diagrams occur, adds a reflection on the grounds for the modal distinction between ‘what’ and ‘what-to-do’

<sup>23</sup>For context and meaning see p. 122 of *A Brief History of Tongue*.

**W0**

**S.I. (Sensitive integration) = P (Perceptual experience)**

**P: not like Reality (R)**

**Knowledge = Correct Understanding of Experience (CUE)**

**CUE -----> (R)**

#### **24.4 Your View and Hope?**

I have raised this question here and there as we moved through the *Cantowers*.<sup>24</sup> We are preparing now to see how it is central to the effort described on page 250 of *Method*. But at present it is raised in a relaxed fashion, mainly about the previous section, but to some extent about the project contained in the list of 117 essays. What do you think of the List and the Words?

While it is a relaxed question, it does ask for a serious conversation with yourself. It used to surprise me how many Lonergan students, indeed, experts, didn't seem to get round to this. Is it because a "Lonergan follower" assume that his or her foundational position is that of Lonergan? I wish my foundational position was that of Lonergan, but I'm working on it... perhaps even getting there in spots after 46 years reading *Insight!* How are you poised at present?

A distraction here: I find Lonergan's usage of 'position' a bit hard to handle when writing. It really eliminates the question "what's your position?" since if your position isn't the 'position' its not a position but a counter position! So let me adopt the convention of calling Lonergan's suggestion 'The Poosition'. This fits in with the reality of appropriating 'the position'. If you get there, and cultivate its strangeness, getting a "memory of its startling strangeness" in the Proust sense, then you cultivate a strange poise in thinking, talking, even singing and walking.<sup>25</sup> Now obviously my question

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<sup>24</sup>Most conspicuously in *Cantower IX*.

<sup>25</sup>We return to this topic in *Cantower XXXII*, "The Empirical Residence".

about your position also involves W0, but I am not interested now in making you sweat over W0. The question is the more general one: What do you think of the emphasis on diagrams and the need for diagrams in this effort at “comprehension of everything in a unified whole”?

Notice that I am not asking you do you understand the diagrams, the Words. I wish only that you realistically, perhaps very privately, puzzle over your reaction to them. Anxiety? When I was teaching first-year university philosophy there was always a universal nodding when I described the turning of any textbook page that revealed symbols or an equations. An unwelcome sight. Can we turn this all around culturally, so that the reaction would be, Gosh, there is more to this than meets the reading eye, aye! It can be a bit like - I am recalling my own experience - being confronted with ‘reading’ bagpipe music or jazz-music scores. Or more elementarily one might consider a piece of music that one fancies playing. You venture out and buy it, but find as you turn to page 2 or 3 that it shifts gear. I think of that favorite Nocturne of Chopin that dominated the early *Cantowers*, but you may have an illustration in another area. If you played the piano you are likely to have memories of the complex follow-up to the gentle beginning of The Moonlight Sonata!

Here, we are dealing with section 3 as Ungentle Beginnings. You are interested in existential philosophy, but - your gut or heart or culture speaks - these diagrams aren't exactly existential. But my business in this section is to invited, not to argue or nudge. I keep forgetting that! Still, you may find the parallel with music helpful all round. Like myself, perhaps you like to pattered around on the piano or with the guitar. And you gradually find your level. Like Condoleeza Rice, you still enjoy playing the classics but you shift your attention elsewhere. Or you may not be reaching for anything except ordinariness: recall the wonderful Prelude to Georg Eliot's book, *Middlemarch*. “Many Theresa's have been born who found for themselves no epic life”. Everyone's life is in reality a unique wonderful mysterious epic, but I do not wish to go there. I wish rather that you should go towards an expression of your relatively-spontaneous view of your life. I am not, then, thinking of new year resolutions, but old



habits. Further, I am not talking about your Lonergan slant on things but rather on your slant when Lonergan's writings are far from your thoughts.

So, yes, a relatively spontaneous view of your life, but before you go there, a spontaneous expression of your view on the diagrams that I suggest. That expression can range from four-letter words through suspicions that some of this stuff could be useful to "What **is** this jumble in aid of?". Then, certainly, you can venture on to your spontaneous view on What's Real, and on further to questions of your own efforts towards Being Real, and more generally the global efforts towards what you think is progress, which will push you to think out and express what you REALLY think is progress. You might prefer to halt before you get into that. Halt and write to yourself whenever you like. It is however the adventure that comes formally at the end of the *Cantower XXVI*.

So I wont ask you to break off here, though it would be a good move from my point of view. What do you really think of all this effort at generating diagrams?

#### **24.5 My View and Hope**

My hope, obviously, is that you did pause to jot down, to write to yourself, your view of diagraming: perhaps an odd experience, the psychology of which I skip. My further hope is that you, many of you, share my view that such an effort is important, and that you share that view not because you read the quotation from Lonergan at the beginning of the previous section, but because you, literally, can't "get around" without diagrams: (dia-grams, across writing). They are useful in getting and giving street directions; but they are also useful and necessary in giving mind directions. The question of the nature of that use and necessity goes very deep into the dynamics of our wonderbones and we cannot get bogged down in that question here. But a few pragmatic ramblings are in order.

What we are doing now is, in fact, a beginning of a poor version of the struggle down page 250 of *Method*, or rather the struggle with that section 5, "Dialectic: The Structure". Perhaps you have done, in your pause - or will do so in the later adventure

- a sketchy version, with regard to yourself, of the italicized words: some sort of *assembly ... selection*. It has been a feelingful process, etc: having then the characteristics of a seriously incarnate response: so, it has the context of *completion*. Since I am noting that now, you may well pause again to enlarge on your sketch: you didn't suspect all this, when you did your first sketch. You raise your standards: perhaps now you break again, and wish to venture into your "life and times."<sup>26</sup> Your venture may carry you - indeed, may have long since carried you, if you are an old hand at this - into questions of long-term authenticity. "There is the minor authenticity or unauthenticity of the subject with respect to the tradition that nourishes him. There is the major authenticity that justifies or condemns the tradition itself. In the first case there is passed a human judgment on subjects. In the second case history and, ultimately, divine providence pass judgment on traditions."<sup>27</sup>

Notice that what we are doing together here has the character of, are characters in, enlightened dialogue. "Look at it this way"... "I didn't suspect..." "Let's push this way .. or that". So: a "mutual self-mediating".<sup>28</sup> And indeed, it is mutual: my effort to reach you here-now, there-then, is a present illumination for me, a new placement of me, of my minding, in the *field*.<sup>29</sup>

But I do not wish us to push forward overmuch. Whichever way you went in your judgment on the value of diagrams and symbols, it would be as well to "hear me out". And it is worth pausing over the difficulty of that hearing. It helps focus the

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<sup>26</sup>*Method in Theology*, 184.

<sup>27</sup>*Method in Theology*, 80.

<sup>28</sup>Notice that I am quoting here from W3. Much later I shall add maturing reflections on the **to** of our talking to each other in section 2 of *Cantower XXXVII*, whose title is simply "**To**". Nor should you think this postponing or maturing is odd: it is quite the norm in either teaching, say, mathematics or music. It takes the development of subtle poise to appreciate richly the function either of a complex variable or a complex finger-movement.

<sup>29</sup>See the comment on field at the end of my Introduction to *Phenomenology and Logic*, as well as the index entries there.

question about diagrams in that it attends to the simplest of diagrams: a straight line of indefinite length that I take to mean the 'story' of material being:

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We can surely share this image? The broken line at the two ends may represent different problems for us. Thomas Aquinas, for instance, got into trouble because he held the view that you couldn't know, from natural reason, that the line didn't go on and on indefinitely into the past. My original version of W3 included a reference to the place where he discusses this. He had the audacity to assert at one stage "unde non est impossibile quod homo generetur ab homine ad infinitum."<sup>30</sup> The human race could be understood as going back and back and back....! Quite something for a medieval monk taking a stand against tradition. And what about the other end of the line? What is your meaning of the broken line? For me the broken line represents a future struggle that I hope to face fully - either alive or dead - in 2010-2011. What is the character of, what are our characters in, "The Last Three Minutes"<sup>31</sup> and Beyond? And what of the time-length between now and then, Then? In note 12, above, I mentioned the time-length presently given back to the Big Bang (if there was such as a beginning, 'then'): 13,700,000,000 years. And, leaving aside the time-length to the sun's swelling to a red earth-swallowing giant and to a white dwarf, "The Earth could remain habitable for two or three *billion* years hence."<sup>32</sup>

Are you reading that line-image a little differently now? And wouldn't you find it difficult to envisage time-lengths without such imaging? And while we are at this, perhaps we might return to note 12. What do you make of the suggestion that there is and  $10^{22}$  kilometers of space above your head? How do you come to grips with this? Well, you could start with a line to the midday sun, over  $10^8$  kilometers above you.

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<sup>30</sup>*Summa Theologica Pars Prima*, q.46, a.2, ad 7m.

<sup>31</sup>Paul Davies, *The Last Three Minutes. Conjectures about the Ultimate Fate of the Universe*, Phoenix Paperback, 2000.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, 138.

Then try with Andromeda, up there in the night.<sup>33</sup>

That imaging certainly puts us in our place, but I wish us to come back to smaller scale. Still, before doing that I would wish another pause on you regarding our time-soaking of images. This throws you back to the Proustian venture regularly described by me but perhaps new to you, if you are a new reader. Even then you can get and savour the point: the rich decades-long memory of a friend's face or voice, or the gull-call skull-calling you-hauling "walking into eternity on Sandymount Strand,"<sup>34</sup> or any other scape. And, strangely, the image can be any image, even a single line. The line can switch from thinking-crutch to springboard, focusing "the point of intersection of the timeless with time".<sup>35</sup>

So, back to the smaller scale of  $10^4$  years. Ten thousand years. "When we've been there ten thousand years".<sup>36</sup> But I wish you to be *here* ten thousand years, here in slow-minding imagination. I was in my slow-searching forties when I broke through to break the line into three sections, locating myself psychically in what I called the Axial Period. I am not going to inflict on you some summary account of the struggle and the achievement, a growing view of the line that remains startling, open, searching especially for the significance of that 'future' broken line. The Incarnation of a divine person,  $P_2$  in the W3 diagram, is in there, walking the line, possessing<sup>37</sup> you and me and

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<sup>33</sup>Andromeda is one of the two giant spiral galaxies in "Our Neighbourhood", the other being the Milky Way, our own! 2.4 million light years away.

<sup>34</sup>James Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1986, 31.

<sup>35</sup>Recalling T.S.Eliot's *Four Quartets*: "The Dry Salvages".

<sup>36</sup>Verse 5 of the hymn, *Amazing Grace*. The rest of the verse is relevant to reflections on "the line": "... bring shining as the sun, / we've no less days to sing God's praise / than when we'd first begun".

<sup>37</sup>The word points to a set of heavy contexts in Lonergan's Trinitarian Theology, but perhaps you might find a useful start in the fifth chapter of my on-line *Process: Introducing Themselves to Young (Christian) Minders*.

Johnny Cash<sup>38</sup> in the line in history, in the line on this page.

The simple breaking of the line into three periods raises many questions, but the single question in my mind at present is the question of diagrams. Perhaps it is worth your while, or your longwhile, to return to the footnote at W3 and muse over history's generating of images, whether screen or script. The complexification is most evident in music and mathematics. What would a primitive singer make of the score of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony? Yet a great conductor can stand up and "sing" that symphony with an orchestra, without looking at the score, braced only by an internalized image. Illustrations from mathematics would perhaps be lost on you but talented physicists can push their imagining beyond the familiar three dimensions to spaces of variable dimensions in which each point is itself a complex of various spaces of strange dimensions and character.<sup>39</sup>

Think now, fantasize with me, about the future of music in its mesh of East and West, as graduate physicist may think of the future of physics. And there is the future of chemistry and the higher sciences and the spectrum of the arts. The complexification of imaging is only slowly, with patient creativity, imaginable - we shoot for its heuristics in the *Cantowers* of 2008 but you might well take an hour's break in a library to sense the imaging in the last decade of the *Journal of Symbolic Logic*.

Back now to Lonergan's imaging of the Incarnate Word, and the problem of the hold-all diagram that would place that unique  $f(p; c; b; z; u; r)$  in your explanatory possession of history, placing within that possession a sequencing of all the efforts at imaging that dynamic 33 year pilgrimage in music and sculpting and painting and

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<sup>38</sup>Johnny Cash (1932-2003) died this mid-September week, as I finished these notes: does his voice echo on for you?

<sup>39</sup>This is obviously a complex topic quite beyond our present interest. For a decent impression of it see chapter 8 of Ian D. Lawrie, *A Unified Grand Tour of Theoretical Physics*, Institute of Physics Publishing, Bristol and Philadelphia, 1990, particularly p. 164. This is a book I recommend regularly as a supplement and up-date of the Lindsay and Margenau book used by Lonergan as a back-up in *Insight*.

print. Then perhaps you can think of that possession<sup>40</sup>, boned up at the end of The Line, wafting the billennia into a Whole of coloured wholes, self- and selves- and Selves-tasting. Does this bring to mind for you an early imaging in the *Cantowers?*:

*Sun, flowers, Son-flowered,  
 Speak to us of growth  
 Seed cauled, cribbed,  
 Kabod yet confined,  
 Crossed with dark earth,  
 Light-refined,  
 Rill open-ends a trill  
 Annotaste of Throat.<sup>41</sup>*

I am here, obviously, meshing my defense of complex imaging with shadows of my view. In spite of that defense of diagrams I suspect that my view of imaging will not be enthusiastically welcomed by the majority of my Lonergan colleagues. There is a tradition of comfortable prose that holds sway, an unauthentic tradition that is massively destructive of the project of metaphysics, the project of hodics. And what might Lonergan say? What did he say? Is this zone of imaging a zone where his disciples are “left in the unenviable position of always arriving on the scene a little breathless and a little late”?<sup>42</sup> Might one not see something of my demands for image-differentiation in that powerful neglected paragraph of p. 287 of *Method*:

“Such differentiation vastly enriches the initial nest of terms and relations. From such a broadened basis one can go on to a developed account of the human good,

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<sup>40</sup>Everlasting possession is not, however, a function of explanatory possession in this life. The scriptural suggest of “as you sow, so you shall reap” does not point to a simple isomorphism of layered conjugate acts. More on this in 2010-11.

<sup>41</sup>The poem brackets *Cantower II*, p. 1 and p. 30.

<sup>42</sup>*Insight*, 733[755].

values, beliefs, to the carriers, elements, functions, realms, and stages of meaning, to the question of God, of religious experience, its expression, its dialectic development”.

My claim is that Lonergan’s view of my view would be favorable. An element of this claim is the claim that the divisions of the line that I have suggested are little more than a diagramming of his own broader meaning of the total historical process. Is there not a gap between the first and the second phylogenetic time of the temporal subject, between the first and the third stage of meaning? Or did we - Lonergan followers<sup>43</sup> - in magic discontinuity with culture, slide into the third stage of luminous subjectivity as we moved out of the twentieth century?

The axial perspective lends itself to my position on diagrams. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard” the peculiar<sup>44</sup> patterned gramarye of nerves and molecules that will seed human minding in the third stage of meaning: symphonies of address are to replace the solo sound. To that gramarye I am attempting to contribute in a manner that is quite continuous with Lonergan’s work on logic, on aggreformism, on symbolisms. I see no way to avoid such complexification if one is sincere in trying to reach the formal “comprehension of everything in a unified whole” that is named by the slogan “integral heuristic structure of proportionate being”, a slogan that is not static but a global molecular cry for ever-richer conception, affirmation, implementation.

Have I stirred your view on diagrams? I would be pleased to find some few moving in the same pattern of struggle, and even many admiring such struggling, as we admire good athletic performance without having to share the track and *field*. The

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<sup>43</sup>And of course, as followers of other evolutionary oddities like Aristotle and Jesus and Aquinas. Why do I list Jesus here? Not for his contribution to general categories - that was not his Galilean interest - but for his seeding of special categories.

<sup>44</sup>A central peculiarity of that gramarye, one I have called attention to regularly, is to be the development indicated in note 34 of page 88 of *Method*: the lift of expression to a luminous level of linguistic feedback. This lift has to effect all the art forms and all areas of inquiry, constituting globally a new subjectivity. A gentle struggle towards it is part of the lift of these three *Cantowers* that invite you to take self-luminously a position and reach self-luminously forward in and through that position. So, e.g., W4 can become vibrant within subjectivity, as can Rodin’s Thinker, Feynman’s talk.

central diagram of my view, W3, emerged for me on the morning of the Concordia University Conference on Lonergan's Hermeneutics, and it became part of my short presentation a few hours later.<sup>45</sup> What did my colleagues think of it? But the question here, the question for the next *Cantower*, is, What do you think of it, how do you feel about it? It is an invitation to an adult maturity of thinking about being and the beings of meaning that surround us in this millennium. I see ahead of me, in *Cantowers LXVI-LXXXI*, the task of pushing for a still more adequate symbolization: adequate both for me, to hold together formally my glimpse of being and becoming, adequate to the task of lifting explanatory meaning in all areas into an infestation of daily lives of mystery. I would prefer the task to be global and communal.

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<sup>45</sup>I wrote of this conference and the related volume in the concluding sections of *Cantower IX*.