

*Cantower V***Metaphysics THEN****August 1st, 2002**

go where never before
 no sooner there than there always
 no matter where never before
 no sooner there than there always.¹

1.1 I will build my Love a Bower

“....upon the gilded tower in Ecbatan
 Lay the God’s bride for ever, waiting the golden rain”²

You will be relieved, I expect, to read that Pound and I part here, as I quote from Canto IV and leap at the end of this *Cantower V* to the last page of the final Canto CXVII. Certainly, someone with more literary talent than I have could exploit that rich imagery that lifts forward

¹These four lines, and the five lines that end this note are previously unknown lines from Samuel Beckett, recently printed in *The Irish Times*. My source for them is Dr. Conn O’Donovan. Both short pieces were sent a few months before Beckett’s death in 1989, the first to his biographer, James Nelson, the second to his publisher, John Calder. How does one contextualize the concrete quest for luminously dark luminosity that is Metaphysics Then? Obviously, *Lack in the Beingstalk* is an immediate context that I would wish you to share: but that is asking too much. At least take the Endtakes of Shakespeare (end, chapter 2) and Joyce (end chapter 3) and Donne(the Epilogue) into your Thentake. Obviously, the problem of the nature and future of metaphysics cannot be solved in a single *Cantower*. Further clues emerge in *Cantower VII*, section 3, and in *Cantower IX*, section 6. The problem of hermeneutics as metaphysics will haunt the 84 *Cantowers XXII - CV*. And indeed might one not read that same problem haunting the last lines of Beckett: go end there / where never till then / till as much as to say / no matter where / no matter when

²Ezra Pound, Canto IV, *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, 16.

from the first lines: “Palace in smoky light, / Troy but a heap of smoldering boundary stones”. Certainly one could weave round even that beginning a chant of the *status quo* that is so calmly described in the treatment, at the end of chapter seven of *Insight*, of a smoky cosmopolis and the smoldering boundary of general bias. And how else can we break our stone nerves to sense the horror of our axial schizothymia? And what of the golden rain?; “what have we done to the rain?”

The seed to be sucked in those last few lines of my first paragraph is foundational: it is a cousin of the seed sown in Lonergan’s struggle of February 1965: explanation is simply not explanation without its molecular undertow. But I am not going there at present.

Instead I title my four sections here, unobtrusively, with the four lines of a verse from Francis McPeake’s lyrics of an old Celtic tune. Unobtrusive? The cording melody may well hearthold the thinking. So let us now turn to plain prose.

The problem is: foundational directives. Aquinas’ style is doubly inadequate: 2000 pages of *respondeo dicendum* is like suggesting a Messien symphony to halved-hearted tune-seekers struggling with plain chant. His hymns were a better bet. Aquinas is certainly in conversation with himself and his beloved; but, first, his song was not tuned to his students or to his thirteenth century audience; secondly, his canticle was not tuned to history. The bower, then (not THEN) was a contemplative heart reaching in and for a *Shobogenzo* that was alien to the axial airs. Dogen’s (1200-53) anaphatic bent was more tuned to halved-hearted searchings in East and West. In plain prose, Aquinas’ metaphysics was not efficient; Dogen’s metaphysics was not sufficient. To live in adequate minding, adequate enlightenment, is to tone the molecular cosmic stream with a bowerbird’s now-bowered song.

The bower, the strong bow-anchor, of Lonergan’s ship-shaped metaphysics of the mid-1950ies had a better pull than Dogen or Aquinas: tugging towards the “palace in smoky light”, quite clear on smoldering stoniness of art and heart’s failure, but hopeheld in a search for an adequate auxiliary. Aquinas’ two deficiencies had been detected: there is a problem of shareable

but unshareable vision; there is a problem of implementation.

By the mid-1960s there was a visionary answer to the problem of implementation, but the problem remained of sharing the vision. I have been round and about those two problems for some four decades now, but it seems good to recall once more conversations with Lonergan in the mid-sixties about the sharing. “What am I to do? I can’t put all of *Insight* in chapter one of *Method!*”. My reply to Lonergan at seventy would be deeply different to my reaction then, at exactly half that age. It would be a pragmatic “Don’t!”. Later, as I worked on the index to the book at the age of 38, I was extremely pleased to identify his solution the problem in his categorial statements of pages 286-7, and his later “not only to read *Insight* but to discover oneself in oneself.”³ But that too was foolish. Certainly he should have had, on page 287, a categorial listing (10) of functional specialization. But, more pragmatically, perhaps he should have omitted the solitary visionary list and placed the suggested (10) at number (1). What is foundational reality? “It is only within the social group that elements accumulate and it is only with century-old traditions that notable developments occur.”⁴

While “the social situation deteriorates cumulatively”⁵ in a global molecular inward stress, the notable developments are the fragmentational screamings of a village webbed together. Both the pin and the pen cry out for layered but luminous divisions of labour that would push for the functional dignity of seven billion pilgrim-organisms dream-bent on everlasting being. “The consciousness of self as animal, vegetable and mineral, and the delight we feel in plunging down into that consciousness, is by no means degrading. It is good to know the fundamental life at our roots, while we reach out towards that higher life which is completely attained only in

³*Method in Theology*, 260.

⁴*Method in Theology*, 269.

⁵*Insight*, 229[254].

flashes of insight and in dreams".⁶

1.2 By Yon Clear Crystal Fountain

So we may move to that wondrous ambiguity of luminous darkness, yon fountain, yoni-dark⁷, the formed molecular calling to organic operational unity. It is the fermenting organic global humility that might be called the first foundational conversion, and its cultural core is the hodic turn. Have you some intimation of a vertical finality, driving up obscurely from Lucy's Africa of three million years ago? The process has just begun, like the wandering bars of Beethoven's first symphony reaching for a key. "When the process has not yet begun, obscurity prevails and questions abound. 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 new and higher birth?"⁸ Only so so slowly, only in so far as, gently, "vertical finality enters into evolutionary perspective. It does so inasmuch as emergence, unfolding, development, maturity, follow the analogy of evolutionary process".⁹ There is no good ground, in our axial times, for the seed of that perspective: finite spirit, in collective reaching, must cycle eon-wise conned-wise slowly to the fullest vision possible of an ultimate Then that yet reaches for the nowthen of concrete probability-schedules.

But what is needed here now is, not the Densification of the first page of our Nocturne that is the fifth page,¹⁰ but the invitation of a folk-song. Thus, a single minded vision of the cycle

⁶George Sand, 1852, *The Intimate Journal of George Sand*, Trans and notes by Marie Jouney, Haskell House Pub., New York, 1976. (Preface by Aurore Sand), 182.

⁷Yoni: Sanskrit for womb; of significance in Hinduism.

⁸Lonergan, "Mission and Spirit", *A Third Collection*, 26.

⁹*Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁰I refer to the echo of bar 1 ff. in bar 55 ff. of the six-page Nocturne of Chopin, Op. 48, no. 1, (see note 13 of *Cantower I*) which was our beginning musical symbol of the first six

shabby-shared could be the chaos-breeze blowing whirlwind, Viconesque. What is needed in the seed, though, is the sense of sunflower hope.

For me that sunflower hope burst into explanatory mode when Voegelin and Toynbee helped me beyond Jasper's narrow axiality to a phylogenetic grip on Lonergan's two times of molecular subjectivity. Then the fullness of time became a beginning of impressed word and the longer cycle of decline became a pre-adolescent confusion laced with malice.¹¹

Might not the impressed expressed word become, in twistings of a hearty symbolized linguistic feedback, a cosmopolitan fertilization of redemptive seedings? But I must try to be crystal clear if you are to buy, and not pass by, this crystal founding.

As I puzzled over this problem during the week I was amazed at how simple, clear, it has become. I struggled first over the possibility of complexifying language during my work on zoology at Cambridge University, England, in the late sixties. It blossomed, without me knowing it, in the first word of metaphysics that I spoke of and spoke in Cork University Ireland some years later, repeated in an extract from its printed context in Appendix 1 of *Cantower III*. That speaking and printing needs further contextualization now, if I am to be efficient in fostering effective listening. The topic here is the same as that of chapter four of *A Brief History of Tongue*, "Thoughts, Tongues and Tides: The Drive of Foundations", where the first word is again printed and commented on,¹² complexified to include language through a reduplicative symbolism,¹³ and lifted into a fuller geohistorical symbolization.¹⁴

Cantowers.

¹¹One might return here to the problem of sublating into the new context the third chapter of *Topics in Education*.

¹²119, and ff.

¹³122.

¹⁴124.

But let me move back from such complexification to what I might claim is a clear crystal founding: I wish us to pause over the simplest version of the first word, one that omits the cycling built into its different printings. Here, then, let you look, look puzzled, perhaps initially take fright, but slowly come to admit and sense that the peculiar naming does open up the possibility of a convenient and broad, humble and outreaching, adequate control of meaning.

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

Certainly I can sympathize if you react as Fr.Fred Crowe did when he first read this in the mid-1970s: Do we have to learn mathematics to do philosophy? Well, I suppose I have to say Yes, we need suitable symbols in order to hold down complex meanings. Further, my inspiration for this statement and for the strategy behind that ‘first word of metaphysics’ came from a reading of Lonergan that impressed me deeply when I first read it in 1960: “you wont be able to hold this together without a diagram”.¹⁵

So, it is convenient to have some such summary expression of the hierarchy of layers of historical reality. Such summary expression has two main benefits, both reached by Lonergan’s view of ‘holding together’ your understanding. There is the benefit for the beginner that relates to the way in which school and first-year-university texts print the periodic table inside the text’s cover. “Hang on to this: it will help you move into the topic”. And there is the benefit for those at the front of the field: those, indeed, who use the symbolism to generate even more complex yet seemingly simple symbolism. So, one has Maxwell’s Equations as a control, but one gradually moves to an invariant relativistic version of them that Maxwell would find strange.

But let us ponder this convenience in the present case, in an elementary manner that I hope will not bore the experts.

So, **H** is a handy symbol for real history - not just history as written, which is included.

¹⁵My loose translation from his *De Constitutione Christi*, p. 80. It is the twenty fourth point regarding the constitution of Christ.

What does **H** mean? Well, it depends on talker and listener and of course brings in already, in the single letter, all the problems of interpretation and adequacy-of-expression. What might **H** mean for Toynbee, for a grade ten student? Here I must digress regarding blocks that people might have. Yesterday I had a lengthy conversation on the phone with a young lady who was struggling with Pythagoras' Theorem. What emerged was that the real block was the transition from arithmetic to algebra: she eventually spoke of asking the teacher who 'introduced' algebra and how he brushed her off. Why, why, why do you go from 1,2,3,4, ... to **x**? 'Let **x** be the number of apples...' . The answer takes a little wonderful work and patience. And the answer can grow in meaning, over years of the new education¹⁶ until the phrase "name the unknown" takes all the vibrancy of an embrace¹⁷ of the dark universe, the hidden history of the cosmos.

What does **H** mean? I would, of course, have it MEAN in the full sense of that later stage of meaning. But at least here we can sense, and perhaps sense a little better together - "and we'll all go together" - that its reference is concrete. "What is good, always is concrete" and though we may not easily jive with Sachmo's Jazz about the beautiful world, or vibe with the vision of *Life is Beautiful*, this is the only story, an incomplete symphony, that we've got. And our first letter of our first infant word of what has been called by a long tradition 'metaphysics' takes it all in.

This may not seem much of a foundational claim - and what I am doing in this *Cantower* is making some foundational claims in a relatively **adequate** manner - but it cuts and reaches deep into desire. Lonergan's "integral heuristic structure" may come to mind: but it was, so to speak, already in mind. And that brings out a twist of meaning of **H** that is perhaps remote, hidden in a later stage of meaning and linguistic feedback.¹⁸ **H**, sitting here page wise, a wise

¹⁶More on this in *Cantower VI*.

¹⁷Recall the reflection on that word in *Cantower IV*.

¹⁸The context is by now perhaps familiar, but the text is worth recalling here: "At a higher level of linguistic development, the possibility of insight is achieved by linguistic feed-back, by

inner neural paging of your wise domain, points to all history and its conditions; it points to you thinking molecularly, with no spontaneous omissive tendencies, all history. This is surely a golden-mouth normative claim for the peculiar self-possession, child of a generalized empirical method, that might be called metaphysics? And Goldmund speaks to the solitary yet all-embracing Narcissus that is you and me, “not a poet’s fancy, but a pilgrim’s fact: ‘often, as I write some Greek letter, Theta or Omega, I have only to give my pen a twist, and the letter spreads out, to become a fish, and I, in an instant, am set thinking of all the streams and rivers of the world, of all that is wet and cold; of Homer’s sea, and the waters on which Peter walked to Christ. Or else the letter becomes a bird, grows a tail, ruffles out his feathers, and flies off.’”¹⁹

And what does, can, **S** mean in that first word? When I first used the formula, in that strange lecture on Cork University Ireland, the S was in fact a sigma, a Greek Goldmund letter. Its primary meaning then was ‘sum’, the sum, of all, with emphasis on all humans, and it had a subscript and superscript, that I cannot reproduce here, a + above and a + below, that eventually were better identified as a double openness: to the lower ground of loneliness and to the upper ground of loneliness. These two open nesses, to being in its empty possibility, to being in its fullness, will require further reflections, a little of it later in this *Cantower*. The meshing of these open nesses was the hidden topic of the meditation on sunflowers of *Cantower II*, with its

expressing the subjective experience in words and as subjective.”(*Method in Theology*, 88, note 34). I do not wish, at this stage, to complexify our beginnings, but it could be important for a more advanced reader to pause over this and intussuscept the massive shift in writing, sculpting, whatever, and in the readings these meanings, that one can anticipate when luminosity is, so to speak, a character of the letters, the pigments, the notes.

¹⁹I am quoting here the text of Herman Hesse, *Narcissus and Goldmund*, Penguin, 61, as I introduced it thirty years ago, leading up to my first introduction of that first word of metaphysics. (*Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations. Self-Axis of the Great Ascent*, in the Epilogue, “Being and Loneliness”, 105. In the late 1990s I introduced with the help of Rilke’s wonderful reflection on the emergence of the first word of a poem (*A Brief History of Tongue. From Big Bang to Coloured Wholes*, 116) and perhaps that context might be a help to present reflection.

strange bracketing poem. It will be the topic of the final *Cantowers*. But., at all events, the **S** here can be taken as a **Here Comes Everybody**, **HCE** of *Finnegans Wake*, including obviously **ALP**, **Anna Livia Plurabelle**, “all the streams and rivers of the” woman, of femininity, curving forward with Proustian ‘tay and cake’ of the song to wake an axially-adolescent Finnegan. But I am slipping beyond an introductory hint here!

All this comes under my noting the convenience of my first word. It is surely convenient to think of all and everyone, but how? We met Candace Pert in the previous *Cantower*; we will meet V.S.Ramachandran again in *Cantower IX*. We cannot be naive in our reach for all and everyone: “In the first half of the next century, science will confront its greatest challenge in trying to answer the question that has been steeped in mystery and metaphysics for millennia: what is the nature of the self?”²⁰ We are layered realities of electrons and chemicals and botanical rhythms and neural nets and bewildernesses and impossible dreams. Subscripts reach for layered properties: but what of the layering itself? A semicolon sign names that part of the present obscurity.²¹

That first convenient word is broad, tolerant. Perhaps you are a reductionist? Then, depending on your bent, the last, or last two, or all of the semi-colons are just cloaks - cloaks, of course, that give rise to different academic departments so the first word remains convenient. The last two layers are the trickiest: “Philosophers offer another solution to the dilemma when they say that consciousness and qualia are ‘epiphenomena.’”²² So be it: for vitalist or reductionist or Platonist, the word stands as convenient. So, it is a broad heuristic term

²⁰ V.S.Ramachandran M.C., Ph.D., and Sandra Blakeslee, *Phantoms in the Brain. Probing the Mysteries of the Human Mind*, William Morrow and Company, New York, 1998, 227. The book is referred to later simply as Phantom.

²¹We will return to this obscurity when we deal with Systems’ and Chaos theories in section 7.2 of *Cantower VII*.

²²Phantoms, 234-5.

What do I mean when I claim that the first word is humble and outreaching? This is a large and complex topic which will occupy us especially in *Cantower III*, on “Slopes”, and in *Cantower IX*, on “Positions”, but a few pointers would help us along here. Think of the word “memory”. What does it mean to you? There is an acceptable ordinary meaning, and if you were or are in the analytic tradition of philosophy you might add a variety of comments on ordinary usage. But our first word wont let you stop there: nor would Ramachandran, with his lengthy index entry under memory. I am here, of course, just drawing attention to what Lonergan says in *Insight* about knowing forms.²³ But you may notice now how our first word draws attention to the same fact in an operational way. It is worth recalling the elementary pointers from the first chapter of *Insight*: “the symbolism itself takes over a notable part of the solution of problems, for the symbols, complemented by habits that have become automatic, dictate what has to be done.”²⁴ The “division of labour” mentioned in *Insight* is made manifest by the symbolism, and especially does it dictate, when eventually it slopes up to become embarrassingly operative, what has not yet been done, what perhaps has been comfortably dodged. So, the first word gives fresh efficient lift to a single sad point made by Lonergan in two overlapping contexts. In both cases what is at issue is the categorial orientation of the traditional defenders of the human and the historical good. Because of developments in physics, biology, economics, depth psychology, “the defenders were left in the unenviable position of always arriving on the scene a little breathless and a little late.”²⁵ The suggested first word invites a broadened base: “from such a broadened base one can go on to a developed account of the human good.”²⁶ The beginner can

²³*Insight*, 16.3.1.

²⁴*Insight*, 18[42].

²⁵*Insight*, 733[755].

²⁶*Method in Theology*, 287.

accept the invitation humbly, with an acceptance that grows in tones of mystery as the outreach is cultivated. The advanced person is to become a character²⁷ of those tones, sloughing off the heartskin of pretense, the putrefactor of the fact of mystery.²⁸

But this heartheld acceptance and sloughing is a distant possibility, a slow yield of a new control of meaning that is humanly adequate. The letters of the first word are to be slowly remembered, membered, mind-meshed with molecules and luminescent eyes, “changed into our very blood, into glance and gesture, nameless, no longer distinguished from ourselves.”²⁹

Yet, prescinding from these suggested complexities, is not this first word in some sense crystal-clear?³⁰ By this clear crystal founding might we not indeed build a bower, a tower, luminously dark in its mystery: but only, pragmatically, in so far as we circle round its humbling self-tasting chrysalis challenge.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 356.

²⁸The context is *Insight* 17.1.

²⁹*The Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke*, edited and translated by Stephen Mitchell, Vintage International Press, New York, 1989, 91. More fully quoted, with a fuller context, in *A Brief History of Tongue*, 116.

³⁰Some more details regarding the letters and subscripts were given already in an Appendix to *Cantower III*. Fuller details emerge only through application, illustration, etc: just as with the periodic table, which initially - as it is presented to beginners - has mysterious letters and numbers in it. Still, it is a worthwhile exercise to try to envisage e.g. what sort of conjugates i, j, k, etc stand for and whether secondary determinations can be included in the symbolism. The heuristic is magnificently open, but it needs elaboration to include e.g. neuropeptides, animal organs, galaxies.

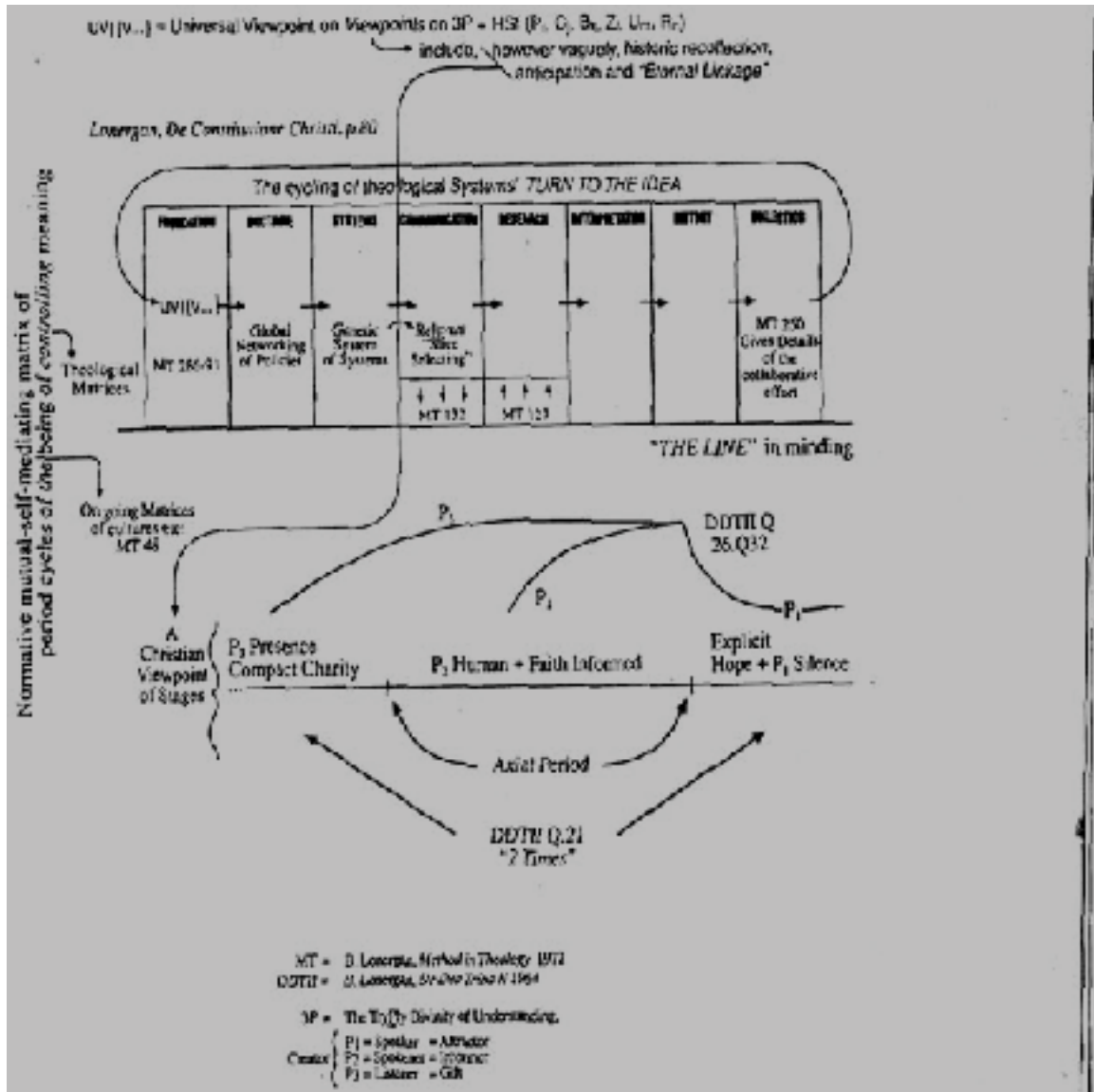
“I thought I saw the fallen leaf
 Returning to its branch
 Only to find it was a butterfly”³¹

1.3 And All Around the Bower

And there are so many ways of imaging this circling round the bower, especially if one moves to thinking of the bower as a variable. One may think, then, with apparently less of our first word, of the bower that is the individual $f(p_i; c_j; b_k; z_l; u_m; q_n)$ destined to give the universe the wondrous unity of a single view, and carry integrally that thinking and imaging forward as the inner molecular call. “What THEN is needed is a qualitative change in me, a shift in the centre of my existence from the concerns manifested in the *bavardage quotidien* towards the participated yet never in this life completely established eternity that is tasted in aesthetic apprehension...”³² And I have written “apparently less” for it is actually more. The integral carrying fosters the internal foundational neurodynamic dynamic perspective, heartheld in a network of u_m yet nerve-tuned and gut-wise in the secondary determinations of other conjugates and other capacities-for-performance. The dynamic perspective pointed to, heart to heart, in the image on the next page, an image which places the self and all selves in a fuller round. It is an image that meshes in Christian special categories, but the Hindu or the Aboriginal or the Jew or the Muslim may modify that image suitably. One must remember, member, the strange inclusiveness of the imaging, almost a reverse Goedelian theorem of over completeness: the reach of the image is to each self in the image - that is the meaning of the summation **S** - and so

³¹“Rakku eda ne / Kaeru to miraba / Kocho Kana”. The *haiku* is quoted from L. van der Post. *A Portrait of Japan*, William Morrow and Co., New York, 1968, 107. It is available in Japanese script on the concluding page of McShane, *Process. Introducing Themselves to Young (Christian) Minders*. I am grateful to Jaime Barrera for a more compact and literal translation: “A Fallen leaf to a branch / look like returning / The butterfly”.

³²B.Lonergan, in a book review, *Gregorianum*, 1955.



includes, twisted and layered in like a Mandlebrot image, each self's imaging.³³ And the twisting and layering are twist and layers of the subject imaging the universe, not merely in imaginative synthesis, but in ever fuller heuristic anticipation of a protopossession and a possession. There is here, THEN, in this solid shape, an invitation to self-sculpting, and what Henry Moore says of sculpting gives another component to our twisted neurolayers: the sculptor "gets the solid shape, as it were, inside his head - he thinks of it, whatever its size, as if he were holding it completely enclosed in the hollow of his hand ... he identifies himself with its centre of gravity, its mass, its weight"³⁴. Yet not in his or her head, but in bones and breasts and balls and ovaries, skin-deep.

But I am overcomplicating: we should still be gently reaching for a beginner's extended image-word. The page image, THEN, is a hodic table like the periodic table produced a century before it.³⁵ Despite its complexity - is it indeed any more complex than the image of the periodic table? - it has the beginning qualities that we attributed to the simpler first word. There is, of course, a question here of outdated notions of images and complexification. There is a question of relaxing before the image as one would relax and expand before a sculpting of Henry Moore or a melody of Henry Mancini. This, however, is not a fashionable parallel, so perhaps it is of value to repeat here the note that I added to that diagram in one of its presentations:

"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*

³³The self's imaging will be more fully treated in section 7.3 of *Cantower VII*. Section 7.2 there will have something to say about Mandlebrot's work.

³⁴Quoted in Herbert Read, *The Art of Sculpting*, Princeton University Press, 1977, 74.

³⁵In *Process. Introducing Themselves to Young (Christian) Minders*, 94-5, I drew attention to the parallel between chemistry before 1870 and theology before 1970. The discovery in chemistry quickly restructured chemical science; the hodic structure is still ignored.

Constitutione Christi, Gregorian Press, 1959, 80. On that page Lonergan reaches the 24th 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 notes of birds we have the melodic and symphonic notes, manuscripts of musical genius, mightily beyond our own sensibility. 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 dividing line: above is 'the turn to the idea', below is the zone of general common meanings. The drive of this little book is towards aiding the self-discovery that would leave you contented in some of the nine general zones of meaning."³⁶

There is mention there of the dividing line, "*THE LINE*" in minding. It is important to pause over that line in the context of the new imaging involved in these *Cantowers*. And here, indeed, I pause, for an hour or so: what sort of pause is require? And in my pausing over *pause* I find that I must change my pace. I ventured back, in memory and text, to struggles of previous decades, recalling especially my stand of twenty years ago against summary, but more particularly I recall the early morning of the autumn of 1986 in Montreal when the diagram we are attending to bubbled out, and I - foolishly, crazily? - presented it that same day, in ten minutes, as the score of my reply to Robert Doran's paper "Psychic Conversion and Lonergan's Hermeneutics".³⁷

³⁶A *Brief History of Tongue*, 123-4.

³⁷The papers and replies to them were published in *Lonergan's Hermeneutics. Its Development and Application* edited by Sean McEvenue and Ben F.Meyer, The Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.,1989.

Now I am presenting to you, in ten minutes perhaps, a change in that image that took me - a prolonged and continually startling *pain* - a book's six-month struggle to reach. The core of the shift is dealt with in Chapter four of that book, *Lack in the Beingstalk*. And part of the image-climb was through the doctorate work of Husserl under that mathematical giant Weierstrass. Husserl carried forward, modestly, work on the Calculus of Variation, a branch of mathematics and applied mathematics that had surged forward in the previous century or so.

Perhaps a quotation would be no harm: we are here reaching, as in the beginning of *Method in Theology*, for an analogy with successful science. "There were roughly six stages in the development. The first extended from the last decade of the seventeenth century to about 1740, and is typified by the work of the Bernoullis. The second opened with Euler's differential equation giving a necessary condition for a minimized curve.³⁸ Lagrange (1762, 1770) passed to the third stage with an analytic method andwith Lagrange the calculus of variation becomes an autonomous division of analysis. The fourth stage, 1786-1837, began with Legendre.... Jacobi (1837) give a critical [direction to his work]. For about forty years - a long time in modern mathematics - after Jacobi's advance, there was no significant progress. But analysis in the meantime was undergoing a basic revision. Weierstrass, 'the father of modern analysis', was transforming the mathematics of continuity.... His lectures of 1879 at the University of Berlin in the calculus of variations mark the beginning of the fifth stage."³⁹ Enter Husserl, who picks up on some of the story of the fourth period and adds his modest contribution to the beginning of

³⁸This mention of a minimum curve gives me the opportunity to illustrate what the Calculus of Variation homes in on. If I give you a piece of string, can you put it into a shape (put its ends together) that will contain more area than any other shape? You may recall the problem from happy or unhappy schooldays, reading the *Aeneid*!

³⁹E.T.Bell, *The Development of Mathematics*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1945, 378-9. Details regarding these lectures, available in German, and regarding Husserl's attendance at these and other lectures in that Berlin period of mathematical ferment, are given in "The Calculus of Variation", chapter 4 of *Lack in the Beingstalk*.

the fifth stage.

What is important for my imaging is the notion of stages, leading with “the passionateness of being”⁴⁰ to a series of planes, plains. These are planes of meaning shared in each stage by those interested: they co-plane, but also suffer vertical finality. The planes of meaning are more and more remote from the plane or plain of common sense, even though the meanings reached may gradually transform that plane techno-aesthetically.⁴¹ And here you have the seed of the new image introduced in that fourth chapter and in the first *Cantowers*. The image is of a tower rising up clearly⁴² above the plain of common sense, and the image brings out starkly the problem of common meaning’s vertical finality. One gets to the image, scissor-and-paste wise, by cutting my flat image along “*THE LINE*” and gluing dialectic to foundations. In *Cantower IIX*, “Slopes”, we will muse over the strategies of raising the tower, but here the simple point is the image of the **GAP**.⁴³ Further, I would have you note that the image involves a double GAP: there is what I may call the eschatological gap, the gap between the plane of common sense and the plane of ultimacy, an infinite gap; there is the infinitely lesser gap between the achievement of the tower and the achievements of any common sense. This is not a welcome image for general bias; it is not a welcome image for commonsense eclecticism or mythic consciousness. It is not a welcome image in contemporary theology, compact in its exclusion of bridges far too far for it.

⁴⁰Loneragan, “Mission and Spirit”, *A Third Collection*, 29.

⁴¹In *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations* there are two chapters (8 and 9) with titles that include the words “technico-aesthetic” and “aesthetico-technic”, thus suggesting the integrality of human objectifications.

⁴²Clearly? Much musing is needed about the meaning of ‘clearly’. We make a beginning in the next section.

⁴³My use of the word **gap** should recall, or point you to, the reflections on existential gap in Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic*, ed. P. McShane, University of Toronto Press, 2001.

So perhaps it might be as well to recall and continue the quotation from E.T. Bell, thus adding a supporting image of possibilities for theology. “The lectures of 1879 at the University of Berlin on the calculus of variation mark the beginning of the fifth stage. With almost Gaussian indifference to fame, Weierstrass contented himself with lecturing on his revision of the theory; and although his work was not printed in his lifetime, it profoundly influenced the entire future development through the research and teaching of his students”. What of the new stage that is our present topic, with Lonergan as “Weierstrass, ‘the father of modern analysis’”? In 1979, Lonergan in fact was lecturing on his revisions of economic theory, a component in his foundational venture unpublished in his lifetime. I have already expressed the view that his quieter interest in those days was shadowing and shading that elementary teaching with his modern analysis, and perhaps, sadly, it will take the cycling of that analysis to swing his paradigm for economics into lecture hall and street.

My interest now is in us, you and I and perhaps only a few others, making a start on that cycling and re-cycling, picking up on some of Lonergan’s simple instructions on how to go about and around what are, in fact, enormously subtle new differentiations of consciousness. These *Cantowers* are rambling searching for realistic flawed beginnings: they are popular writings, below the line, beyond the tower, hitting on the odd significant metadoctrine. You might take them to be simply my eccentric reading of that first short section of chapter 14 of *Method in Theology*: THEN you can recognize the GAP problem as the problem of the transition to the second section: going from increasingly towering “Meaning and Ontology” of a creative minority to the “Common Meaning and Ontology” of the majority that nonetheless should have the glory of a dream, Fifteen years ago I wrote of that first section’s and its title, “could it not be read profitably under an alternate title such as ‘passionate subjectivity in the lucid closed options of

the finality of implementation’?’⁴⁴ That central effort of that paper was to bring out the riches and the difficulty of the heuristics of the last two specialties, the manner in which a full genetic systematics would mediate, still within the tower, the executive reflections that would ground the lift of life in village and continent. Perhaps I might end this brief rambling appeal by simply retyping what followed immediately in that text.

“Is it [that so short section of *Method*] pointing towards what I will conclude to at the end of section III, the mutual self-mediation of the actual contexts of mindful theology and meaningful history? What I write here will help, I hope, towards a communal search for the meaning of the executive reflection that crowns theology’s withdrawal. What I write, then, is not summary but rather tentative pointers, map-readings, suggestive directions for climbing.

As I grow older I believe less and less in summary expression, even when one has reached a worthwhile perspective. Too many people seem willing to attempt for Lonergan what Fichte attempted for Kant⁴⁵, or what De Quincey attempted for Ricardo.⁴⁶ I have little faith in such attempts, particularly if they have no content driving rhythmically from below upwards towards morning dreams and images. In their clarity they belong largely to undifferentiated consciousness in the later stages of meaning. They had no place in compact consciousness. They will, one hopes, dwindle as we come to the end of the horrors of modernity, the age of garrulousness, during the next millennium.

⁴⁴P.McShane, “Systematics, Communications, Actual Contexts”, *Lonergan Workshop* (7), edited by Fred Lawrence, Scholars Press, 1987, 146-7.

⁴⁵Fichte’s “Sun-clear Statement to the Public at Large. An Attempt to force the reader to an understanding” was published, in the English translation of A.E.Kroger, in *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, vol. II, 1868.

⁴⁶“Dialogue of Three Templars on Political Economy, Chiefly in Relation to the Principles of Mr.Ricardo,” *The Works of Thomas de Quincey*, eds. Adam and Charles Black, Edinburgh, 1862, vol. 4, 176-257. More than two decades later he produced a more substantial work, “Logic of Political Economy”, vol. 13, 234-452.

The fundamental issue is hierarchically-harmonious adult growth, particularly in that displacement towards heuristic system which is the foundational enterprise

We live between the passionate passivity of the empirical residue and the dynamic passion⁴⁷ of infinite Persons. What is primary in history, even without sin, is silent darkness. Even late in life, or in history,⁴⁸ there cannot be more than illusory twilight, and the foundational search is an endless asking for greater depth in the same questions. It is a struggle against the terror of biography which parallels what Eliade names the terror of history.⁴⁹

I have written biographically here, and while the writing may seem mainly descriptive it expresses a fundamental foundational stand. When I was forty five years old I wrote in agreement with Husserl, without foundational misery, “How I would like to live on the heights. For this is all my thinking craves for. But shall I ever work my way upwards, if only for a little, so that I can gain something of a free distant view? I am now forty five years old, and I am still a miserable beginner.”⁵⁰ I would hope, in the future, to remain in agreement with Bachelard: ‘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.’⁵¹

⁴⁷On the relation of Trinitarian passion to suffering and evil, see Lonergan, *Understanding and Being*, eds. E. and M. Morelli, University of Toronto Press, 374-77.

⁴⁸One must sublimate, through Lonergan’s view on emergent probability, inverse insight and mystery, what Voegelin has to say of history: “history is discovered as the process in which reality becomes luminous for the movement beyond its own structure; the structure of history is eschatological”. (*Order and History*, Vol IV: *The Ecumenic Age*, Baton-Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1974, 304).

⁴⁹Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1955, 139-62.

⁵⁰From a letter of Edmund Husserl to Franz Brentano, October 13th, 1904, quoted in H.Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*, The Hague, 1965, vol. 1, 89.

⁵¹Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1969, 61.

Burl Ives, at seventy-four, spoke of his endless struggle against deficiencies in his voice: he was still, at that age, devoting two hours each day to singing scales.⁵² The theologian and the philosopher, indeed the academic who would face the challenge of generalized empirical method in history, must endlessly return to the scales in a contemporary context, to the ABC of the reality of the self, the historic world, the Absolute, all revealed only within the self as solitary quest.”⁵³

That solitary quest is to be fed by the cycling and recycling that is a meeting of history’s searchers, a meeting of Mo Ti and Sappho, Dogen and Thomas, Boltzmann and Pert, Bertalanffy and Mandelbrot. It is a matter not of summarizing *Insight* but seeing it as an elementary doctrinal text. It is a matter of seeing beyond the *haute vulgarization* of *Method in Theology* to its clear crystal founding of a transposition of *Insight*, of metaphysics, of implementation, of cosmopolis. So, there are institutions, roles, tasks of elevating *Insight*, all rooted *per se*⁵⁴ in the lonely watcher of the inner and outer galactic spiralling. And, like Burl Ives, that root requires elder-buried retrieval in a Proustian singing of scales.

I might well end this section here and pass all to swiftly - leaping specialties - to a musing over Then times. But it seems worthwhile, and less open to misunderstanding in the context of my comments on summary above or my final page of *Lack in the Beingstalk*, to wind to an end in the singing of poems and scales that is invited at the end of the second section of the article “Elevating *Insight*: Spacetime as Paradigm Problem”.⁵⁵ I quote there a poem of Dogen, and talk of

⁵²In an interview with Stereo Morning, CBC, November 1983; repeated July 1984.

⁵³P.McShane, “Systematics, Communications, Actual Contexts”, *Loneragan Workshop*, vol.7, ed. F.Lawrence, Scholars Press, 1987, 147-8.

⁵⁴*Per accidens* anyone anywhere - even apart from revelation - can elevate the cosmos and thus *Insight* or any part of the global tradition of reaching.

⁵⁵*Method: Journal of Loneragan Studies* 19(2001), 203-229..

“seeking with one’s organic loneliness, according to the *nomos* of one’s talent and time, ‘the notion of being’, *shobogenzo*.”⁵⁶

Envisage with me, THEN, the elevation of *Insight* that would lift the book to being luminously identified as a bright searching for “Fourth Level Functional Specialization”, for the mystery-laden controlled distinctions, relations, expressions hinted at so summarily in chapters 16 and 17, for the third order of consciousness that would be to method what zoology is to animals. THEN the notion of being would be identified with a precision that would sublimate faculty psychology, bringing in a new purity to a desire for being that is prior to self and the self as willing. The “notion of will”, THEN, as “spiritual appetite”⁵⁷ would have a new context of answers and questions within molecular loneliness and the notion of *my* will would find its place within that non-comprehensive context, giving a fresh and fruitful subtlety to our glimpse of circumincessional value. THEN the Calculus of Variation would take a turn for the better in a fuller empirical “subtle roundabout process” that would be identified as “a deepening of our analysis”. Julien Peghaire made claims sixty years ago for a tradition of analysis that we may come to see as “something better than was the reality”. “If it is true that every action seeks the good and avoids the bad, we now find once more, not by some subtle roundabout process but by a deepening of our analysis, that the same element of harmful and useful which, as St. Thomas constantly repeats, is what the cogitative seeks in the *species insensatae*.” But the deepening is precisely the subtle roundabout process that would merge the bibliographies of Peghaire and Ramachandran on a higher plane of empirical analysis. The “*cerebral localizations* proposed by

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 222.

⁵⁷*Insight*, 18.1.2, title and first sentence. There are deep axial problems regarding the meaning of the word “spiritual” noted in *Lack in the Beingstalk*, (begin at note 94 of p. 102).

Avicenna, Alfarabi and Averroes” would take sides⁵⁸ with neurodynamic analysis against an eclectic nominalism of feelings and values.⁵⁹

At that hour when all things have repose,
 O lonely watcher of the skies,
 Do you hear the night wind and the sighs
 Of harps playing unto Love to unclothe
 The pale gates of sunrise?⁶⁰

1.4 I’ll Pile Flowers from the Mountain

“And we sit here....
 there in the arena...”⁶¹

“And for one beautiful day there was peace”⁶²

Where are we going, in our tribe, in this tale? I have leaped forward to Pound’s last Canto, and the final line of the final page of his effort perhaps gives a humble slogan:

⁵⁸The context is the ‘side-selection’ of page 250 of *Method in Theology* to which we return in *Cantower IIX*, section 5.

⁵⁹In *Cantower IX* I return to this difficult topic in section 9.6, and the two slightly different expressions of this fundamental problem may help you on the road. But what is needed is the large missing context of a developed metaphysics: volumes expressing it, for example, leaping out of chapter 16 of *Insight*.

⁶⁰James Joyce, *Chamber Music*, III.

⁶¹Canto IV, concluding lines. 16.

⁶²Note for Canto CXVII et seq.: the fifth line. 801.

“To be men not destroyers”⁶³

So what are we to make of the closing rhythms as he climbs to the last of his eight hundred pages while we envisage a love-bower shared, encircling and encircled, circuminced:

“M’ amour, m’ amour
 what do I love and
 where are you?
 That I lost my center
 fighting the world.
 The dreams clash
 and are shattered -
 and that I tried to make a paradiso
 terrestre.”⁶⁴

Is there some sense in which we sublimate the search, by not losing but gaining the centre, my centre? “It is only in the eye of the storm that one can name the whirlwind” was the centre slogan of the book *The Shaping of the Foundations* written a quarter of a century ago, and it still remains the conviction with which I end *Lack in the Beingstalk*. Is there a sense in which we may sublimate also the searchings and yearnings of Eric Voegelin for a beginning and a middle and an end? “History is discovered as a process in which reality becomes luminous for the movement beyond its own structure; the structure of history is eschatological.”⁶⁵ I would hope so: and indeed the final *Cantowers* will home in on the eschatological wonders in a way reminiscent of the road of Aquinas in the fourth book of his *Contra Gentiles* as he rose up to that final chapter

⁶³*Ibid.*, 802.

⁶⁴*Ibid.* Recall Lonergan’s optimistic comment of the 1930ies.

⁶⁵I repeat the passage already quoted in another context yet in this same context, note 48 above.

XCVII on the state of the universe in the everlastingly surprising THEN.

But what of a prior luminosity, hinted at by both Lonergan and Voegelin, a *Tomega* pointing that might bring Teilhard de Chardin down to earth? Might there be a gain of centre fighting the world - the dark world of John the Evangelist - a dream of morning, a blooming of, not a thousand, but of a thousand billion flowers,⁶⁶ an intimation of immortal diamond in the rough? Is there not something to be said for the envisaging of such a paradiso terrestre of whirling and spirited molecules, coloured wholes star-gazing, the pale gates of Sunrise?

It is a matter of envisaging within the dynamics of concrete fantasy - the heart of the functional specialties of direct voice - the fulfilling of Hegel's insight about humanity, noted by Lonergan. "As the labour of introspection proceeds, one stumbles upon Hegel's insight that the full objectification of the human spirit is the history of the human race. It is in the sum of the products of common sense and common nonsense, of the sciences and the philosophies, of moralities and religions, of social orders and cultural achievements, that there is mediated, set before us in a mirror in which we can behold, the originating principle of human aspiration and human attainment and failure. Still, if that vast panorama is to be explored methodically, there is a prior need of method".⁶⁷

Have I given some glimpse of the distance that we must travel, of our present distress, of

⁶⁶My broad reference here is to Voegelin's struggle with the problem of the Chinese Ecumene in Volume Four of his *Order and History*. My more immediate reference is to a slogan of The Great Leap Forward period of the last century. See Joan Robinson, "China: The Communes", *Collected Economic Papers*, Vol. 3, Oxford 1965, 192-206, reprinted in *China in Revolution*, edited by V. Simone, Fawcett, New York, 1968, 340-53.

⁶⁷I am quoting from p. 14 of a Lonergan archival file labelled A6797. It contains a typescript numbered pp. 8-23. Very plausibly it is a continuation of a nine-page unfinished typescript of a first chapter of *Method* to be found in file V.7. Preceding that 9 pages, in a few pages, is a full pen-sketch of a chapter. (That file is reproduced in Darlene O'Leary, *Lonergan's Practical View of History*, Axial Press, Halifax, 2002).

the need for humble beginnings? A century ago, there were physicists who thought they were near the end, facing the boredom of adding decimal places. At the beginning of this century there are philosophers who are saying that we are near the end, in another sense indeed, but they seem to be closing in, closing themselves in, on the same boredom. In reality we are at the beginning of what might seriously be called method, methodology, metaphysics, whatever. This little essay is just a reach for a beginning in you. Will you go, Lassie, go?

And it seems as well to conclude abruptly now THEN as I concluded one of my various efforts to draw attention to this call which I now see much more vibrantly as the heart of theoretic consciousness, the core loneliness in us all, grounding the possibility of Aristotle's finest way being also a common way of common meaning and ontology.

“Part of the glory of history is man's envisagement of its schedules of probabilities and possibilities. If the sapling of history is cut down from within, still it can have, within, a vision of the temporal noosphere that, paradoxically, redeems God.. The envisagement is the core of future academic growth: its opposite is an elderhood that is the fraud of being in reality ‘not old folk but young people of eighteen, very much faded.’⁶⁸ Our molecules, ‘our arms and legs filled with sleeping memories,’⁶⁹ passionately demand that we fly after the butterfly.

‘There the butterfly flew
 Away over the bright water,
 And the boy flew after it,
 Hovering brightly and easily,
 Flew happily through the blue
 Space. The sun shone on his

⁶⁸Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Times Past*, Random House, New York, Vol. 2, 1042.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, Vol. 2, 874. In the original text (see note xx below) there is a lengthy comment that adds contexts and references.

Wings. He flew after the yellow
And over the lake and over the
High mountain, where God
Stood on a cloud and sang⁷⁰ “⁷¹

⁷⁰Herman Hesse, *Wandering*, translated by James Wright, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1972, 89.

⁷¹This ends the Preface to *Searching for Cultural Foundations*, ed. P.McShane, University Press of America, 1984. The title of that Preface was “Distant Probabilities of Persons Presently Going Home Together in Transcendental Method”.