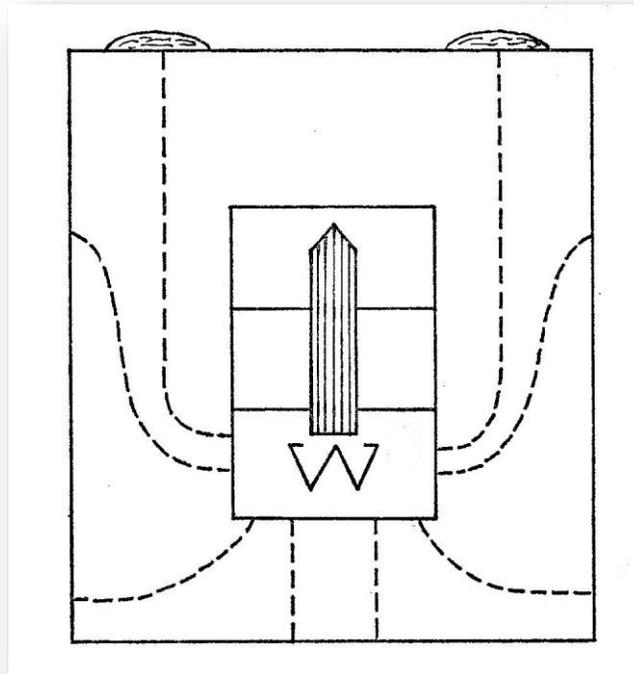


DETAILED DISPUTES: DORAN



My effort here is to find a way forward out of the general messy goings on in Lonergan-ism. This essay is thus an effort in what I call C₉: think of it as a street-reach of the eighth functional specialty. That is illustrated by my repetition of the diagram above, which is a diagram from and introductory text used by me successfully over a period of 20 years. The full power of it is hidden from the beginners, but that power is there as a control of meaning. Such layered power is quite normal in sciences, but best not get into that: incidentally this allows me to use a saving strategy in my essay here. Don't get tangled up, in an initial reading, with the footnotes.

So, for instance, few of my first year students really got the shocking point of the diagram. Do you get it? Do you get the connection to Plato's Cave of my middle box, what I, with neat suggestiveness call—my my!—*mibox*? I wish not to talk with further precision about my

mibox, and that poise introduces the ambiguity of popular science.¹ The ambiguity is very simply brought out here by my noting that—yes, you knew it already—I am at the beginning of the *1833 Overture*, so in the thin air of elders struggling together in dialectic bluntness. Yes the struggle can be read, and indeed ventured into, in an elementary fashion.² In the essay “*Insight* and the Trivialization of History,”³ I was pushing forward, in myself and in you I hope, elements and symbolisms that pertain to my developed world view. It would be foolish of me to compact that struggle further here, yet it would be equally foolish for me to try for a lengthy pedagogical venture into any one of the twenty-one zones touched on there. So let me try for an ambiguous helpful brevity.

Mibox contains my heuristic view: so, what is expressed in the first objectification of *Method* 250: the demand of lines 20–24. But it so happens that **mibox** very easily reaches into the second objectification—lines 24–28—answering the question “Where are we going” in as fundamental a way as possible.⁴ What is important here is for you to take note of the fact that **mibox** conceives of its bracketed place in the larger box within the full-eyed box. So I have a powerful open heuristic conception of potency:form:act.⁵ It reaches into the control of the meaning of all the isomorphism, muddled or not, that Doran talks of in a mistaken fashion in his essay.

He is compactly mistaken when he writes of Wilkin’s mistake, dodging dialogue by passing the buck to Danny Monsour.⁶

One of Wilkins’s basic mistakes is to limit isomorphism to the type of metaphysical instances highlighted in chapters 14 and 15 of *Insight*, and so to

¹ There are large cultural problems here regarding the role of *haute vulgarization* (See *CWL* 6: 121, 155): It seems evident to me that that role will become increasingly positive as we move into the positive Anthropocene Age.

² Chapters 8, 9, and 10 of my *Futurology Express* (Axial Publishing, 2013) give a decent elementary invitation to the task of dialectic.

³ The essay is on the same volume as the Doran essay to which I refer in this sequence of essays: *Dinyadaan* 28/1 (2017). Doran’s Essay is titled “Generalized Isomorphism: The Key to Transposition.” Note 17 below points to the future adequate key.

⁴ My essay mentioned at the previous footnotes gives indications of this reach.

⁵ The openness reaches to an eschatological heuristic. That heuristic, regarding the finality of finitude towards a neurodynamics of Jesus, is to be of serious pastoral significance.

⁶ We’ll come to that in the *Disputing Quests* 17 and 18. The relevant essay is H. Daniel Monsour, “Some Reflections on Professor Wilkin’s Paper, ‘Method and Metaphysics in Theology: Doran and Lonergan,’” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, n.s. 6, no. 1 (2015), 17- 62.

limit the transposition between contemporary interiority and medieval theory to the correspondence of cognitional theory with medieval metaphysics. A second basic mistake is to presume that the transposition is effective only in one direction, from interiority to metaphysics. His third basic mistake is to claim that that first two basic mistakes were what Lonergan intended.⁷

Here I have a problem of brevity. I could well quote on here from Doran, 18 lines that indeed I could make my own. But perhaps you can get yourself a copy of the article, indeed of that volume of *Dinyadaan* indeed of the next volume as well, so as to glimpse the massive difference between the collaborative struggle of the five in the second volume as compared to the isolated efforts in the first. But anyway, let me snatch two bits from those 18 lines. The last line reads “The theology that I have in mind will take a long time to construct. We are very much in the beginning phases.” Yes, I can steal those two sentences from Doran and take my stand—that is the third objectification of lines 28–33—against Doran’s stand, identifying it as a muddle of destructive and distracting counterpositions.

So, one I go to quote and comment on, creatively and helpfully, an earlier sentence: “Here I wish to argue that perhaps we can move beyond these basically fruitless disputes to more positive creative work by finding in a generalized isomorphism the basis or key to the transposition from medieval theory to contemporary interiority.”

First, I do not wish to argue in any usual sense: I wish us to confront some form of Assembly in the way suggested by Lonergan at the bottom of *Method* 249. Then Doran’s “perhaps” fits into a statistics associated with recurrence schemes, and so with the dialectic movement of history. Secondly, Doran’s type of arguing seeds fruitless disputes and breeds bogus creative work. Thirdly, that fruitlessness is manifested in his “finding in a generalized isomorphism the basis or key to the transposition from medieval theory to contemporary interiority.” So: I end up, like Doran, with three mistakes in “the opposition.” And there is a parallel with his leaning on Monsour in my leaning on the discussion of Monsour’s work in the next essay to handle my first two points. So, we pause here over this business of generalized isomorphism.

⁷ I quote from the 2nd page of the article by Doran referred to I note 2. See further, Doran’s comment in note 28 on Wilkins behaving “tendentiously.” Hereafter *Generalized Isomorphism*.

“What is Generalized Isomorphism?”⁸

Doran give “three further dimensions”⁹ beyond “the notion of isomorphism introduced in chapters 14 and 15 of *Insight*”:¹⁰ isomorphisms related to [1] value-scaling, [2] God’s immanent life, and [3] psychic conversion.

Let me recall **mibox** view, which coincides with that of Wilkins. Mibox contains the conception of the conception, affirmation and implementation of a luminous grip on **mibox** as it is located between the two other boxes, and as it meshes with the activities of the two other boxes.¹¹ That is the open luminous heuristic grip that is expressed for me, miboxed, in Lonergan’s familiar naming:

‘Potency’ denotes the component of proportionate being to be known in fully explanatory knowledge by an intellectually patterned experience of the empirical residue.

‘Form’ denotes the component of proportionate being to be known, not by understanding the names of things, nor by understanding their relations to us, but by understanding them fully in their relations to one another.

‘Act’ denotes the component of proportionate being to be known by uttering the virtually unconditioned yes of reasonable judgment.¹²

The piece is quoted at note 7 of *Disputing Quests* 14, and it carries forward the context from that essay. At least check back now on the notes bracketing that note 7: notes 6 and 8. See better now, perhaps, how mibox stands for you. Import into that mibox now Lonergan’s effort at describing “Isomorphism.”¹³ I can say without any doubt that we read those pages differently: I have been dealing with the isomorphisms of science, math and logic for over 60 years. Doran’s three samples of isomorphisms are intussuscepted quite easily into **mibox** as under the control of my meaning of *potency, form, act*. They are intussuscepted critically and

⁸ Doran’s heading of the second section of his article is *Generalized Isomorphism*.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 18

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ This is an enormously complex empirical question, relating of course to the dynamics of feelings, but also to the twofold “borrowed content of judgment” (*Insight*, 300–301).

¹² *Insight*, 457.

¹³ *Phenomenology and Logic*, the title of section 2.5 on page 31. Lonergan’s ramble runs from 31–34; add to that, in the context there, the notes on pp. 146–7 for that presentation. On potency, form, act, see *CWL* 18, 111, 133, 160, 334, 344, 353.

geohistorically.¹⁴ That, most likely, means for you the need to intussuscept into your mibox the “existential gap” between it and **mibox**. So, you and Doran need to face that large gap to intussuscept the large gap.

But first, be clear—in a vague way—that Doran’s isomorphisms, good or bad, are dominated and controlled by the fundamental isomorphism pfa, and that domination is clear—in a non-vague way—in **mibox**. In Doran’s mibox it is all a cloudy muddle of misinterpretations and descriptions.

Are we all gathered round the table leaning into the third objectification? I do not think so. What am I to do? I recall for you Doran’s sentence that I make my own more firmly now. “The theology that I have in mind will take a long time to construct. We are very much in the beginning phases.” Can I get you and Doran out of the mis-directions? How do we make a beginning? I recall again my quotation from Pat Byrne’s new book:

Vertin rightly notes that Lonergan’s writings on this topic are terse and open to many different interpretations. The correct determination cannot rest, therefore, upon Lonergan’s writings themselves. Ultimately, the question of the correct role of feelings in reaching correct judgments of value has to be settled by an appeal to self-appropriation of one’s own experiences of the phenomena themselves. Both Vertin and I have done our best to discern how feelings enter into judgments of value. It remains to the readers’ own efforts at self-appropriation to determine which, if either, of us, comes closer to a correct understanding of these phenomena.¹⁵

Byrne’s suggestion is way off. If you are not seriously in this ballpark, you are not in a position to pick out mistaken conclusions or directions. So, I point to the need for the elders to do better: that better is taking Lonergan’s delineation of “Dialectic: The Structure”¹⁶ seriously and scientifically.

So we have a paradox. How do we make a beginning? Sadly, the elders don’t seem to want to get into the discomfort of the *1833 Overture*. So, I must try to coax beginners out of

¹⁴ By now perhaps you have some notion of how the geohistorical perspective sublates the genetic perspective? But, yes, the genetic perspective of hermeneutics 2nd canon that I symbolize as *60910*: referring to the key paragraph that spans *Insight*’s two pages 609 and 610.

¹⁵ Patrick Byrne, *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, University of Toronto Press, 2016, 200.

¹⁶ *Method in Theology*, 249.

continuing the “academic disciplines” muddling. That is, of course, a huge challenge, a challenge indeed of taking *Insight* far more seriously than the past few generations. But here it is a challenge to see past Doran’s muddles, and that is not going to be easy in the present ethos of tailoring Lonergan to common sense.

Unfortunately, this is a problem that haunted Lonergan in 1966 as he pondered the writing of *Method in Theology*, talking to me that summer about his frustrations. I recall asking him about the heuristics of the climbing structure of his first shot at chapter three. He slid past the question by talking about a strategy of convenience. Generally, he was hunting for ways of easing theologians into his tasks. This is most evident in his effort to introduce a more serious bent in “Interpretation.” What he said to me about his problem in getting into chapter one applies much more in that chapter 7 on interpretation. “I can’t get all of *Insight* into chapter one.” What was he to do about the climb up to section 3 of chapter 17 of *Insight*?¹⁷ What, then, was he to write in a brief pointing to a heuristics of feelings and values?¹⁸ Well, “we may distinguish vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious values in an ascending order”¹⁹ in a readable way that won’t stress the theologians. What would be distressing is the full correlating of this ascending order with $W_1, f(p_i ; c_j ; b_k ; z_l ; u_m ; r_n)$ not to speak of the fuller contextualizing of W_3 .²⁰ The distress, however, emerges later, and Lonergan hits a high note of perhaps a typing grin as he launches into one of the funniest sentences of *Method*: “From such a broadened basis one can go on to a developed account of the human good, values, beliefs, to the carriers, elements, functions, realms, and stages of meaning, to the question of

¹⁷ This is the central crisis of present work in Lonergan: we shall return to it in *Disputing Quests* 18. Think, perhaps, of the shift in context of Doran’s problem of rescuing scholastic meaning. In the new context it locates that earlier meaning in a precise context: that which I symbolize as 60910.

¹⁸ Again, a critic issue of facing forwards with the full genetic perspective I symbolize as 60910: it requires the full empirical drive of the two sets of canons of *Insight*.

¹⁹ *Method in Theology*, 31.

²⁰ The series is given in my essay [Prebubous 2](#), “Metagrams and Metaphysics,” all part, of course, of **mibox**. I would note the importance of the symbol “;” which points to the massively difficult climb towards aggregiform thinking, something lurking in Lonergan’s invitation. “The coincidental manifolds of lower conjugate acts, say, A_{ij} , can be imagined symbolically. Moreover, as the coincidental manifolds are the conjugate potency for the higher conjugate forms, so the symbolic images provide the materials for insight into the laws relating the higher forms.” *Insight*, 465.

God, of religious experience, its expression, its dialectic development.”²¹ But obviously the control of this muddy isomorphism is **midbox**’s luminosity regarding midbox’s boxed-in-ness in the two larger boxes. I do not think that Doran’s midbox is isomorphic to **midbox**, my feeble grip on the genius achievement of Lonergan’s midbox. So much for [1]. What of [2]? Here I really find Doran’s adventuring in a sad business.

As Lonergan went from *Ipsium Intelligere* to *Agapē* as the dynamic state of being in love, so I am suggesting a shift from the dynamic state of being in love ... to a principle of love understood precisely as lovableness recollected in something like Augustine’s *memoria*.²²

I had no doubt, when I wrote “The Hypothesis of Intelligible Emanations in God” in 1961,²³ but that I was writing about *Agapē*. Furthermore, Augustine’s *memoria* was swept up in a fullness that is “without any defect or lack or imperfection.”²⁴ I had no doubt about Lonergan’s full view, massively controlled in his writing of *Insight*, slipping out occasionally, but, in his thirteenth place hymn bursting out: pause please over page 722 and soak up the joy of love into your midbox!²⁵ Then, finally there is [3], “**Psychic Conversion.**” I recall talking to Lonergan about it in the 1970s remarking “Isn’t it all in *Insight*?” to which he replied “Yes, but it’s nice to see it spelt out.” But Doran has never spelled it out in any serious explanatory fashion.²⁶

²¹ *Method in Theology*, 287.

²² At the end of Doran’s section 4, “The Immanent Constitution of Life in God”: he is quoting here from his *The Trinity in History*, vol.1: *Missions and Processions* (University of Toronto Press, 2012, 36.

²³ The article was published in *Theological Studies* 1962.

²⁴ *Insight*, 681.

²⁵ In my article “*Insight* and the Interior Lighthouse: 2020-2050,” *Divyadaan* 28/2 (2017) I parallel this page 722 with the same page 722 in Joos’ *Theoretical Physics* to sow fresh seriousness into the reading of the *Insight* page

²⁶ A final note offers thin hints. In his essay, “Report on Work in Progress,” *Searching for Cultural Foundations*, edited by Philip McShane, University Press of America, 1982, 55, he remarks: “*Psychic Conversion* means rigorous, explanatory appropriation of one’s sensitive psychic experience and of its existential meaning just as intellectual conversion means rigorous explanatory appropriation of one’s intellectual and rational activity.” He has failed to add that rigor. He does not take either canon of explanation seriously. Perhaps a detail can help. In his brief ramble round the canons of hermeneutics he quotes fully, on pp. 589–90 of *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, what I call 60910, the genetic heart of the renewal of theology. His only comment there is that it “holds as well ... for the differentiations of the psychic operator.” Indeed, it does: but there is no sign of such explanatory work there, or anywhere else, in that long volume. At note 40 of my Introduction to the book

I have been blunt and brief here, and I shall write of the character of such bluntness in the next essay, and of the manner in which details of dispute are to be controlled in the new theology. Mansour's 45-page essay, the topic of that essay, is a riot of such detail. There has to be another way of caring for history, for the mibox of being.

[Lonergan's Standard Model of Effective Global Inquiry](#), I noted that my book was concerned with the flaws in four books, two by Roger Penrose, two by Doran. (The second of Doran's volumes meant there was *What is Systematic Theology*, a book I also criticized in the third part of my book [Method in Theology. Revisions and Implementations](#).) Rambling into such criticisms here would be a nutty venture. Perhaps it is best to be as brief as Doran was in rejecting Wilkins (see above at and in note 7); indeed to end with his comment on Wilkins applied by me to him, leaving you to find his first two basic mistakes. "His third basic mistake is to claim that that first two basic mistakes were what Lonergan intended." And, in conclusion, I pick up on his view of Wilkins: I find Doran tendentious. On Doran's recent volume 1 of *The Trinity in History* see, in my relevant [Questions and Answers](#) series of 56 Essays, no. 27, "Approaching Doran's Trinitarian Theology," and no. 30, "The Trinity in History." My view is not at all positive. His misinterpretation there, as a ninth specialty, of what I call the *1833 Overture*, does not inspire confidence.