

THE DISPUTED LOCATION OF DISPUTING QUESTS

It seems best to begin this series with a precis of its context. That context is the second half of the central page 250 of *Method in Theology*, from line 18 to 33, which I have named regularly *Loneragan's 1833 Overture*. It describes a final tactic of the functional specialty Dialectic. It is a discomfiting tactic, not just a Luther-like “Here I Stand” but a blunt and precise “here you stand.” Positions taken and gathered by the dialectic group and re-positioned crisply. Such stand-taking and confrontation can, of course, occur at any stage in the cycle of collaborations, e.g., a historian “at pains not to conceal his tracks but to lay his cards on the table.”¹ The aim of the entire cyclic process of Lonergan’s solution to his problem of the X called Cosmopolis is to lift that effective source of cultural change to luminosity and self-luminosity. Within the Christian church it is to be thus luminous and self-luminous “a process of self-constitution, a *Selbstvollzug*,”² “within worldwide human society.”³ What that **within** means is a complex ongoing reach of critical self-luminosity, a reach which is to be weaved luminously into the 1833 Overture.

The strategy of the 1833 Overture can be extended beyond the Dialectic group’s dialogue in various ways. One can swing it into lively use in another specialty, as illustrated by the history lesson mentioned above. It is thus clearly illustrated by me in the recent book: [*Profit: The Stupid View of President Donald Trump*](#), where the address is in the form of a C₉ operation, a paradigmatic differentiated illustration of the sublation of Plato’s dealing with Dionysius II. **The Tower of Able** is to effectively teach history lessons, reaching per se, through the last specialty: “without the last the first seven are in vain, for they fail to mature.”⁴

There are at present no seven but an ineffective messing along with bits of Lonergan’s suggestions: no doubt great good work by old standards of disciplines as *academic disciplines*, a

¹ *Method in Theology*, 193.

² *Ibid.*, 363.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, 355.

standard rejected by Lonergan in the first two pages of chapter one of *Method in Theology*. I have had little or no success in shaking those old standards in nearly fifty years. My latest appeal, to the Boston Saturday meeting of 2016, went unheard. The meeting strategically avoided inviting people to face up to Lonergan's brilliant challenge of functional collaboration. Instead, the meeting steamed with simple dodging: the dodging of what would get various sciences and scholarly activities out of the pattering called *academic disciplines*. I add that appeal as an Appendix below.

At all events, here I stand, or rather sit, figuring what next to do. People e-mail me with good questions, some elementary, some quite advanced, but regularly in both cases there is a needed climb to a context where my answer would be worthwhile to both of us. Questions have been raised about the meaning of the transcendental on page 53 of *Method*, "Be intelligent." They seem elementary, potentially giving rise to elementary answers: but that is not the case. At the other end of the spectrum there are questions, e.g., about the mystical body and its relation to the meaning of *Comparison*,⁵ about the Eschaton as I envisaged it in

⁵ *Comparison* is a component of Dialectic (See *Method*, 250). It is quite a jump to connect its meaning with the problem raised by Lonergan at the end of *Insight* (763-64) re the missing treatise on the mystical body. My book *The Road to Religious Reality* homes in on the question. See especially, pp. 13, 18-24, 36-38.

[HOW 11](#),⁶ about kataphatic prayer as central both to theology and to reading *Insight*:⁷ what more can I do except repeat the references as I have done in the previous three footnotes? The

⁶ Here it seems useful to simply add some scribbles I sent to a colleague in September 2016 regarding a follow up on the essay, *How 11*, “Into the Neurodynamics of Jesus.”

Various Beginnings, BL text from Rome. (see beginning of *The Everlasting Joy of Being Human*.) 2002 Cantower project+ Rahner’s lecture (*Theol Stud.* 2000, 3-15: lack of eschatology. See *Cantower* 33, note 24.). Your beginning now perhaps, questions of terminal value and enlightenment and happiness within broad cosmic destiny. Paul Davies *Last Three Minutes*. Terminal values: MIT 51. Relate to *Insight* 18, 1.3. Relate to CWL 10 TED, source of MIT 48 spread. Relate to contemplative climb [HOW 13](#), and of course, [HOW 11](#). Back to Cantower project, to Cantowers round 117. On to *Contra Gentiles* IV, 83-88, re Thomas messing with old cosmology; [I leave you to think out (i) 83, no food, O.K.; sex? Think out neurodynamics; (ii) the judgment stuff and the punishment stuff, towards a rescuing of all]: on to 97, however: door-opening, “the entire bodily creation will be changed”, + “no plants or animals”. CG IV, 97 {5}, which leads on to endnote 86, p. 125 of *EJBH*. [Neurodynamics of memories of pets to be handled.] Cosmic negentropy and neurodynamics of the resurrected Jesus, “that he might fill all things” Eph 4¹⁰, quoted in CG IV, 87 re ‘place’: articles that follow need note 13, page 13 of CWL 18). And add energy = material prima. Two useful numbers 10⁸⁰ and 10²⁵, recalling Eddington number of cosmic protons: 1.5 by 10⁷⁹; then number in brain. More re neurodynamics and chemo-needs of ‘isolated’ brain, e.g. oxygen, spinal fluid, etc. [Google: “is it possible to keep a brain alive detached from its body?” but the question needs a much broader context]. Crown of the positive Anthropocenic. “With these eyes” (Job 19:26–7), CG IV 84 {14} but put in the broad context of the previous brackets: full contemplative achievement of “so it comes about” (*Insight*, 537, 11 lines from end): existential dimension of ‘seen’ street molecules e.g. in autos, tied in with *Insight* 722, end lines, sublated into Notional Act of Claspings, etc. [enlarging bottom of W₃ and also meaning of “+” at top]. The destiny of these molecules of mine. Kim Noble pointer: 50+ year old woman/painter with 100+ personalities. Jesus: 100 billion + persons in the Eschaton. Again, memory problem e.g. re Old Jerusalem included in New Jerusalem e.g. the remembering of the donkey of Palm Sunday. The integrally-minded in the non-Noah’s ark (cf. *CWL* 18) of divine minding; but Trinitarian. The core holding contemplative climb up through the 26 places in chapter 19 + on through q.27 *Summa*. Relate to “God not an object,” [MIT, 342] and connect to “originating values and terminal values can coincide” (MIT 51). The whole perspective give a mighty lift to the ‘characterization’ of the historical causality of Christ (see *Allure*, 244, note 36: add note 44 on page 246, an everlasting ‘Hello’), to St. Paul’s and St. Patrick’s perspective on Christ’s presence, to Crowe’s efforts in *History of the Word*, to Sacrament of the Present Moment stuff. Also think of the new twist on ‘this is my body’. Finally back to re-read *Insight* 544, line 13: “the universe can bring forth its own unity in the concentrated form of a single intelligent view”. Think all out in the contemplatext of you being one of the secondary intelligibles of the 14th place, [*Insight*, 683], you being thus practically Thought of lovingly, in the subjectivities of God, as thinking here-now the full Eschaton that includes the positive opposite of God, energy, as meshed with God through Incarnation, Sonflower-blossomed.

I am talking here of the tower reach, functional prayerful cycling, but there seems increasingly [e.g. science + fictions like *Voyager* etc.] a pastoral-outreach culture-context. The whole thing gives a quite new and rich perspective on *Romans* 8’s groaning cosmos. All the molecules etc. since the big bang yearning for, bent on being in, the minding of the Second Person and that Person + 100 billion persons in a final dynamic of Agonbite of InWithTo. (But now the contemplative problem of [HOW](#)

tragedy of the bulk of the Lonergan community is that neither the simple questions nor the advances of those three notes, 5, 6, and 7, are of interest.

Still, I shall continue to answer questions by e-mail and draw from those questions and answers components of this series of essays. But the context is now the present one, of the 1833 Overture in either its C₉ form or in one of its functional forms. The general mood will be that of my blunt address to American politics, turned towards Donald Trump in order to stir up reactions. Is not the recent book's title wondrously offensive? : *Profit: The Stupid View of President Donald Trump?* So, I see no reason not to push on to accusing the Toms, Dicks and Hillarys of the Lonergan community as having stupid views, especially when they are in positions of leadership powerful in leading later generations astray. But perhaps they have something to say or question regarding my context and perspective? Their silence is deafening.

[13](#) weaving into common sense: this seems to me to be the central problem of present culture, in and out of the Tower of Theology: adult growth in Kataphatic contemplation: see the appendices in *Allure*.) Can give a popular better grip on 'where we are all going', a grip on the sensed world, an optimism about the 'salvaging' – Christoffering, (recall Christoffel tensor stuff: Lindsay and Margenau, 362) of physic-chemical. Pet problem and 'garden' context have to be handled: need for virtual reality stuff and neurochemistry of memory.

⁷ [HOW 13](#), "The Interior Lighthouse" focuses on this central problem of present theology.

APPENDIX

REPORT SUBMITTED BY PHILIP McSHANE FOR THE JUNE 25TH BOSTON MEETING

I send this report as a private person, although I am included in the SGEME report: perhaps being senior Lonergan scholar and editor of some of his trickiest works are grounds for an allowance for this exception?

The report concerns a dismal failure needing a serious discussion. We have all failed to take the challenge of Lonergan's canons of hermeneutics seriously: instead we putter along in the mode of "academic disciplines" (*Method*, end of the first page of chapter one), condemned by Lonergan on the next page of *Method*. The leadership leads in the stale outdated way. Doran swoops thus on *CWL* 11 and 12; Lawrence sweeps thus through German thinkers; McShane swaps thus one discipline for another repeatedly without tackling the genetic hermeneutics of any; etc. etc. Is it not time that we paused to be effectively embarrassed by a central doctrine? ("Doctrines that are embarrassing will not be mentioned in polite company." *Method*, 299) The embarrassment is in finding ourselves among those mentioned by Lonergan on *Insight* 604, in the flow of presenting his view of the needed serious science of interpretation. Being diligent and specialized is not enough.

One may expect the diligent authors of highly specialized monographs to be somewhat bewildered and dismayed when they find that instead of singly following the bent of their genius, their aptitudes, and their acquired skills, they are to collaborate in the light of abstruse principles and to have their individual results checked by general requirements that envisage simultaneously the totality of results.

The issue, the central doctrine we have dodged, is the emergence, across the board, of genetic systematics, an emergence packed into the genius paragraph (*Insight*, 609) of the second canon of hermeneutics:

The explanatory differentiation of the protean notion of being involves three elements. First, there is the genetic sequence in which insights gradually are accumulated by man. Secondly, there are the dialectic alternatives in which accumulated insights are formulated, with positions inviting further development and counterpositions shifting their ground to avoid the reversal they demand. Thirdly, with the advance of culture and effective education, there arises the possibility of the differentiation and specialization of modes

of expression, and since this development conditions not only the exact communication of insights but also the discoverer's own grasp of his discovery, since such grasp and its exact communication intimately are connected with the advance of positions and the reversal of counterpositions, the three elements in the explanatory differentiation of the protean notion of being fuse into a single explanation.

I note, in conclusion, first, that the point is made clearly in my two-page essay [HOW 6](#), "The Pullet's Surprise"; secondly, that the issue I raise is not one of functional collaboration, but of a blatant dodging of Lonergan's pointers, in *Insight*, regarding genetic development.