

FuSe 14 A Phil McShane One Hundred and One Damnations

The reference of the title is of course to line 4-5 of *Method in Theology* 250, "it picks out the one hundred and one 'good things' and their opposites; it is history in the style of Burckhardt rather than Ranke." And of course there is the film, *One Hundred and One Dalmations*, and the problem of Cosmopolis,¹ the problem of stupidity, cupidity and evil. The five FuSe 14 essays of myself and my colleagues are in this ball park, detecting dozens of damnations in history with a bent towards their removal.

Some of the damnations are not, literally, damn nations, but small abuses, like the child abuse that is my present concern in my tutorial attempt to rescue a 16-year old girl in grade 11 from the damnable text books in mathematics that she has to use this year. I could easily pick out 1001 damnations in them. Obviously, the problem is not just getting the girl cunningly through the course, but tuning her into the Childout Principle;² nor, obviously, is it just that. As we have glimpsed in these first three of 25 seminars, the functional researcher detects anomalies, but – normatively - has the *acquis*, the *Weltanschauung*, the Standard Model, to enable a nudging forward of the whole cycle towards a change in village texts for grade 11 and 12.³

But let me just home in on one damnation in the mathematics texts that I have to hand. I should mention the two texts, whose unholy pages almost add up to 1001. The main workbook is *Principles of Mathematics 12: Workbook*, by Alan Appleby, Robert Letal, and Greg Ranieri, Absolute Value Publications, Calgary, Alberta, 7th edition, 2006, pp. 601; the back-up book is *Student Workbook. Theory and Problems for Grade 12 Math*, by R.J. Michelson M.Sc. and Paul Michelson B.Sc., 5th edition, 2009, pp. 388. The one damnation I draw attention to occurs on the first page of each text (423 and 199 respectively) dealing with Probability. No point in going into detail about it. We are in that wonderously established junk yard of our entire culture that I discussed in chapter 4, "Reasonable Betting" of *Randomness, Statistics and Emergence* (Gill, Macmillan and Notre Dame, 1970). The latter book has been out for over forty years: why is the nonsense still around, not just in textbooks of schools and universities, but also in common speech, in hospitals and weather stations, etc.

Ho ho that was a bit of a joke: the reason for the effective failure is that we haven't arrived in Cosmopolis yet! My schedule date for that arrival is 9011 A.D.⁴ There was a time when I thought that 2020 was a decent date for some shifting in humanities damnations, but not for that particular

¹*Insight* 7.8.6. See note 4 below. See **Joisting 22** for the identification of Functional Collaboration as solving the problem of Cosmopolis.

²Cantower 41, "Functional Policy", section 4, places this in context as no 3 of 7 transcendental policies.

³I like to note – and this relates to the problem of finding "your little corner" (see notes 10, 21, 22 below) - the life-worth of producing a decent text for any single grade-class.

⁴See, in my website Archives, "Arriving in Cosmopolis".

one, nor for the mathematical damnations that Terry Quinn describes in FuSe 14 E.

Still, there is that forty year old book, *Method in Theology*, for which I do have some thin hope in relation to 2020. No, I do not expect a 2020 vision of it by 2020 A.D., but maybe Pat Brown's FuSe 14B would embarrass some few Lonergan leaders to take a serious look at the second half of page 250 there. Mike Shute in FuSe 14C reminds us of a typescript that emerged from Lonergan's noosy fingers 70 years ago: what hope for 2020 and the correction of the stupid mistake in the early chapters of economic texts?⁵ And then there are the 101 damnations – count them if you wish – with which Henman horrifies us. There I would stick to my original suggested date of 2111 A.D.

What, you may reasonably ask, has all this to do with our efforts at functional history? Well, it certainly brings a touch of humour and satire, but there are larger lessons. About these I wish to ramble a bit here.

In my efforts to get people thinking functionally regarding history – leaning forward as it were in the story-telling – I recommended that autobiography might be a handy entrance. But here I am touching on an entrance so familiar that it is too obvious to make it the topic of functional history. Yet I might well claim that this obviousness was the topic of section 8 of *Insight* chapter 7. At all events, you might think of general bias's insitutional stands against character⁶ as a handy zone for functional story-telling.

Institutions, of course, are not buildings but flexible patterns of ranges of schemes of recurrence.⁷ They are what are complained about pretty regularly in daily conversations. The complaining is with equal regularity ineffective, indeed not meant to be effective: the sort of venting that can spoil a decent dinner. Is some of Lonerganism's discourse like that? My colleagues inFuSe 14 would seem to think so.

But I am not here going to either enlarge on or integrate their reflections. Indeed, what I wish to do is the opposite: I want to shrink and fragment. I want to nudge you all to consider bits and pieces of their reflections, so that you can do your bits and pieces to "disrupt conventional humbug."⁸ Yes, "the significance of satire and humour is, I suggest, out of proportion to their efficacy,"⁹ but sometimes a humorous poise in the right spot can turn corners and heads.

⁵See, on the Website, **Prehumous 1**, "Teaching High-School Economics: A Common-Quest Manifesto". My *Sane Economics and Fusionism* (Axial Publishing, 2011) presents a single grade-twelve class in chapter one, and moves on from there to suggest a century's work of establishing an effective empirical economics.

⁶I regularly suggest placing considerations of character in the context of the beginning of the *Magna Moralia* of Aristotle, and linking such considerations with the occurrence of the word in section 1 of *Method in Theology* chapter 14.

⁷*Method in Theology*, 48, presents the display. "flexible etc" reminds us of the difficulty of reading this in a decent heuristic perspective.

⁸*Insight*, 649.

⁹*Ibid.*

The corner I would have some of you, even many of you, turn, is one that might promise a discovery of "you in your small corner and I in mine."¹⁰ That small corner is the large corner of a future serious care, a care that effectively "challenges even the enclaves of bright chatter,"¹¹ whether it is such chatter on CNN or on your own pretentious campus. It may begin as something like a Hyde Park corner soap box, but it could end at 10 Downing St. "It refuses to calculate without men as they are"¹² and the women that are frustrated because men are as they are. The soap box, such as mine here, can be destined to become a stage, indeed is so destined. If I talk today of silly and brutal institutions with sufficient wit, then I may seed your musing towards subtler institutions and integrations, even through such "integrations suffer the disadvantage of arriving later,"¹³ perhaps in 2111 A.D. or 9011 A.D. The stage I talk about here is not Shakespeare's, where one's strutting fades and "then is heard no more": the stage is a massively significant stage in human meaning. It is that eighth stage of Lonergan's inventive imagination that is destined to be heard for evermore. In this pilgrim state, "without the first seven stages, of course, there is no fruit to be borne. But without the last the first seven are in vain, for they fail to mature."¹⁴ In the post-pilgrim state, the first seven fade into oblivion, and the eighth merges with C₉,¹⁵ within a cloud nine "that sweeps living human bodies, linked in charity,"¹⁶ in a strange neurochemical linkage that makes nail-biting a memory,¹⁷ beyond "the tasks set by a world order,"¹⁸ in a chemical concoction of everlastingly increasing interpersonal intimacy.

My humour has taken a solemn turn towards a twofold request regarding a bent towards heaven and help.

There is the terminal value of personal relations named in that dense and intense lay-out of names that I already referred to when I mentioned institution.¹⁹ If we are to come to grips with functional history, there must be a bent and bending in our daily doings towards envisaging that

¹⁰The pointing in this short essay is towards the personal, and usually very private, effort to find one's little corner in functional history. One corner that deserves present commonsense attention is the silly mistakes of elementary economics (see note 5 above). There is a commonsense need to make a noise, especially to wake up journalists, to the idiocy that grounds financial and government thinking. Helpful here is P.McShane, "The Global Economy and My Little Corner", one of seven essays on the topic in *Divyadaan : Journal of Philosophy and Education* 23 (2010), no. 2. The title of the issue is *Do You Want A Sane Global Economy?*

¹¹*Insight*, 649.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Insight*, 648.

¹⁴*Method in Theology*, 355.

¹⁵C₉'s context is W₃, the Metaword presented in various places. It is the zone of commonsense creativity, outside the Tower. See below, notes 22 and 24.

¹⁶*Insight*, 743.

¹⁷The young Thomas had a shot at figuring out resurrected hair and nails (see *Summa Theologica, Supplementum*, Q.80, a.2). There is need, in these coming centuries, for a massive contemplative empirical effort to mind the "dynamic joy and zeal" (*Insight*, 722, last line) that carries the Big Bang chemicals to the Big Clasp. See further notes 23 and 24 below.

¹⁸*Insight*, 743.

¹⁹See note 7 above.

ultimate sexy circumincessional scene, "destiny."²⁰ Thus there would be the help of the end justifying the means, and the help that I am now talking about, with great good humour, is the help it would be if Lonergan students, in the main, turned their attention effectively to the 101 damnations in their own little corners in some foreshadowing of the eighth stage.

Of course, I am making a point that I made in a more modest fashion when I invented SGEME, The Society for the Globalization of Effective Methods of Evolving.²¹ But now it is altogether clearer to me that the majority of students enthusiastic about Lonergan are being led, literally, to the wrong ball park. Not too many keen tennis players ambition to play at Wimbledon.

I do not wish to get caught up here either in silly eloquence or in concrete suggestions. It is a matter of you quietly finding your unique function²² in a functional collaboration that is eventually to bring forth a HOW-language,²³ a linguistic feedback that is amygdalically heart-rending.²⁴ But it is too computer-bright here, in this busy reading, for such searching and finding, finding one's effective attunement with the frustrated "solitude of loneliness"²⁵ of the bright young math-girl or the tired old writer-man.

"The concrete being of man, then, is being in process. His existing lies in developing. His unrestricted desire to know heads him ever towards a known unknown. His sensitivity matches the operator of his intellectual advance with a capacity and a need to respond to a further reality than meets the eye and to grope his way towards it. Still, this basic, indeterminately directed dynamism has its ground in potency; it is without the settled assurance and efficacy of form; it tends to be shouldered out of the busy day, to make its force felt in the tranquility of darkness, in the solitude of loneliness, in the shattering upheavals of personal or social disaster."²⁶

²⁰*Method in Theology*, 292.

²¹See www.sgeme.org. Members are welcome - contact the secretary Bob Henman (rohenman50@hotmail.com) - without cost or obligation other than the encouragement to "make a noise" (see note 10 above) regarding the 101 damnations that eat the heart of this puppy or pupation that is the beginning of humanity's emergence.

²²Increasingly, people taken by Lonergan's suggestions about their own humanity and destiny will be ordinary people, uninvolved in functional collaboration in its precise operations. What I am suggesting here is that many of present Lonergan followers may find this their calling. But in these transition times I suggest an identification with the task of the eighth specialty. In its maturity, the eighth specialty is to be as complex and remote as any other specialty. On this, there is some help in my "Systematics, Communications, Actual Contexts", Lonergan Workshop volume of 1987, but available now on my website as chapter 7 of *ChrIst in History*.

²³P. McShane, *A Brief History of Tongue*, chapter 2, "How-Language Works?" introduces the topic, but its evolved conception requires an appropriation of oneself as **Home Of Wonder**, **HOW**, that seeds the ongoing contemplative effort talked of in the following footnote.

²⁴There are complex issues here of chemical patternings and self-therapy, but the central drive is a mindful focus on the trinitarian spirituality, grounded in Lonergan's theology of active and passive spirations, that blossoms into an existential transposition of the **Romans 8** searchings regarding the **we** that **I** gracefully become, a becoming that reaches chemical dimensions in its sublation of Thomas gropings regarding trinitarian vestiges and natural resultances. But I am anticipating here our struggle through the second set of seminars, 9-16. Still it is no harm, at this stage, to mention the sublation of Lonergan's struggle with "Finality, Love, Marriage" and the emergence of the sexually-toned mantra {note the Sanskrit, *mantra*: thinker}, "Double You Three, Everlastingly".

²⁵*Insight*, 648.

²⁶*Insight*, 648.