

## Futurology 6 The MuzzleHim Brotherhood

Definitely, this is an offensive title. It might get me unwelcome attention from the Muslim Brotherhood, even though they are not my audience. My audience is the group that is identified by the name *Loneranism*,<sup>1</sup> and it is symbolized by me now—a further offensive strategy—by the gathering in Rome that coincides with my publishing of this insult.<sup>2</sup>

Surely this offensiveness will succeed where previous efforts have failed? I have, in recent years, made quite clear my disagreement with the tradition that now prevails in Lonergan studies, of avoiding the challenge of functional collaboration. Indeed, of not noticing, ignoring, avoiding—**whatever**—that the question, “What does Lonergan mean by functional collaboration?” has not been taken seriously by the group. I thus give a definite meaning to the boldfaced word **whatever** by my title: the group seems—indeed quite evidently is—intent on muzzling the scientific Lonergan.

The muzzling, of course, reaches further than the dodging of the challenge of functional collaboration. That broader dodging is somewhat revealed by my musing over prerequisites for dealing with the topics raised in the previous five essays: the problems of [1] traditional handling of what was called *de Novissimis*; [2] making sense of ‘out of body’ discussions; [3] dealing with the relation of spacetime to eternity; [4] picking up on Thomas’s suggestions about our destiny; and [5] making sense of the series of efforts to get a grip on the theology of hope between 1965 and 2013.<sup>3</sup>

The character of the dodging and the defective visioning came out in a more extensive fashion in the *FuSe* essays related to the first four specialties.<sup>4</sup> Defects were brought out, in relation to the forward specialties, in the little book, *Method in Theology 101 AD 9011: The Road to Religious Reality*.<sup>5</sup> The full sweep of Lonergan’s vision of metaphysics in its relation to a global theology was finally articulated popularly by me in *Futurology Express*.<sup>6</sup>

I had best recall where the gap between my own efforts and those of most other Lonergan scholars first emerged clearly: The First International Lonergan Conference in Florida,

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<sup>1</sup> My main point is that functional collaboration in its meaning and its challenge has been ignored. As to the name *Loneranism* I would, of course, be in favor of dropping it—as would Lonergan. For one thing, it has a bad reputation. I have searched out various other possibilities like *Fusionism* (“Fuse into a single explanation,” *Insight*, 610, line 9) or, of course, most recently *Futurology*.

<sup>2</sup> The conference “Revisiting Lonergan’s Anthropology” was held at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome on November 27-30, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> In the previous essay I took only two books to illustrate the challenge, one at each of the two dates mentioned, 1965 and 2013. Making sense of the series between? We shall pause over the heuristics of that task in *Futurology* 8, “The 8-fold Cyclic Way Folds Other Ways.”

<sup>4</sup> There were meant to be about one hundred *FuSe* essays but the collaborative effort failed. But *FuSes* 1-21, with a stray number 31, give a context for the present effort (available at: <http://www.philipmcschane.ca/fuse.html>).

<sup>5</sup> Axial Publishing, 2012. The 21 *Posthumous* essays push forwards from there.

<sup>6</sup> Axial Publishing, 2013. Now available as a downloadable eBook from Axial Publishing: <http://www.axialpublishing.com/>.

Easter 1970.<sup>7</sup> But the existential gap was emerging, unrecognized by me, eighteen years earlier, in 1952, when I was plunged into four years of serious science, mainly physics. I moved, in the autumn of 1956, from a serious struggle symbolized by Joos' big book *Theoretical Physics*,<sup>8</sup> through Lonergan's *Verbum* articles,<sup>9</sup> to a big book called *Insight* that paralleled *Theoretical Physics* in size and indeed in its doctrinal presentation. I grew to recognize the parallel between the books, but as well there was a growing appreciation of the great gap in present physics. That gap hit me early and very existentially in the clash between my supposedly solid venture into general relativity in 1955-1956 and the shock of finding that chapter 5 of *Insight*, on the same topic, was quite beyond me.

Obviously I could bubble forwards into a rant, or I could bring out my version of *Method in Theology* page 250.<sup>10</sup> My pre-scribbled notes are abundant on what I might write here. But eventually it seemed wisest to be brief and blunt. Two points then. There is the gross failure of the Lonergan community to read the first four paragraphs of *Method in Theology*. The result is a prevailing continuity with the learned puttering that goes with being an "academic discipline."<sup>11</sup> Secondly, and a second result, there is sick non-scientific attitude that dodges serious leaps of progress. So, after decades of struggle I managed to identify the place of the treatise on the mystical body that Lonergan was unable to locate in 1953.<sup>12</sup> It is a massive methodological and scientific leap regarding and guarding our pilgrimage to our destiny. It has been greeted with a huge silence. My offense here is a final effort to cause a break in particular and general silences.<sup>13</sup> Cut me down, muzzle Him brotherhood, in explicit writings, if I misrepresent Lonergan's surreal achievement of lifting the Body of Jesus into a towering scientific care of pilgrim subjects, a care that is Clasped and Cherished by the Wildness in our Triune God.

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<sup>7</sup> I edited the papers into a series of six volumes, but only the first two volumes appeared in the early 1970s, from Gill, Macmillan and Notre Dame: *Foundations of Theology and Language, Truth and Meaning*. My own papers for the conference, one on botany and one on musicology, appeared later as the first two chapters of *The Shaping of the Foundations: Being at Home in the Transcendental Method*, University Press of America, 1976 (hereafter *The Shaping of the Foundations*, is also available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/foundations.pdf>).

<sup>8</sup> Georg Joos, *Theoretical Physics*, London, Blackie and Son, second edition, 1951. It is a symbol in that it compendiously swept through the work of a range of undergraduate courses. One can be helped by seeing *Insight* as a similar sweep. A context for this struggle is Pierrot Lambert and Philip McShane, *Bernard Lonergan: His Life and Leading Ideas*, Axial Publishing, 2010, chapter 10, "The Dominant Context of Lonergan's Life." This book was printed for a second time by Axial Publishing in October 2013.

<sup>9</sup> The *Verbum* articles pushed to the shock of the position, a topic that was central to my first conversation with Lonergan in Dublin, Easter 1961.

<sup>10</sup> There are two rambling series of essays on the topic: SOFDAWARE (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/sofdaware.html>) and *Quodlibets* (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/quodlibet.html>). But these are only struggles towards the meaning presented in my *The Road to Religious Reality*.

<sup>11</sup> *Method in Theology*, 3, the final words.

<sup>12</sup> See *Insight*, 763-4.

<sup>13</sup> I recall, finally, the cover of this book and the "cover story" at the beginning of the book, and I refer forward to the comment, in note 74 of the Epilogue, on the writing of *Quodlibet* 8, "The Dialectic of My Town, Ma Vlast" (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/quod-08.pdf>), from which the cover-picture was taken. The picture is of Oisín Kelly's **The Children of Lir**, in The Garden of Remembrance, a quiet enclosure on Parnell Square, commemorating the dreamers and their followers who in 1916 occupied the General Post Office a few hundred yards away, and other convenient and inconvenient Dublin spots, in an Easter Monday stand against an empire. My ten-volumes of *Cantowers* started with that stand in mind, indeed started on Easter Monday – also April Fool's Day – of 2002. This little book leans on those *Cantowers* as it takes issue with three overlapping empires: the little empire of Lonerganism, the larger empire of religious and moral oppressions, the fulsome empire of those who take a stand against understanding.