

INTERPRETING THE "TWENTY SEVENTH LEA" FOR DUMMIES

"Twenty Seventh Lea" was mentioned in the title of *Interpretation* 16: "The Interior Lighthouse IV: Twenty-Seventh Lea."¹ The reference is to Thomas's 27th question in the *Summa Theologiae*,² where he gives the lead to understanding the Trinity. If you like twists of tongue, he gives "The Lead to the Lea" in my title.³ What is meant by *lea* is initially its dictionary meanings, the principal meaning being perhaps familiar to you: a meadow, a grassy field, a pasture. It may be useful to you to pause over another, less familiar, meaning. It is a measure

¹ [HOW 13](#), "The Interior Lighthouse" introduced the topic, *Interior Lighthouse*, under that title. [Disputing Quests 12](#), "The Interior Lighthouse II" continued the reflection, as did [Disputing Quests 13](#), "The Interior Lighthouse Zero." Those essays were followed by [Interpretation 4](#), "The Interior Lighthouse III," [Interpretation 16](#), "The Interior Lighthouse IV: Twenty Seventh Lea," and [Interpretation 17](#), "The Interior Lighthouse V: Interpreting God." The topic, however, goes back to [Process: Introducing Themselves to Young \(Christian\) Minds](#) (1989: a website book) and the broad challenge is made explicit in the five essays, [Prehumous 4–8](#), on "Foundational Prayer." It is the heart of the matter in my recent book, *The Allure of the Compelling Genius of History* (Axial Publishing, 2015). The drive of that series was towards an appreciation of the need for a contemplative ingestion of *Insight* if we are to arrive at a sub-population competent "Tower-wise" "to be a resolute and effective intervention in the historical process" (*Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18, 306). What of rest of the contemplative population? This short essay is a nudge towards your answer: but the full answer, sniffed at the end of this essay, is a complex heuristic requiring "distinguishing the successive stages of this, the greatest of all works" (*The Triune God: Systematics*, CWL 12, 491). Finally, in this first footnote, I would wish you to consider the notes as to be returned to later: they are meant to cut out of the text complexities that are indeed of interest to all of us dummies.

² *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 27, a.1. Thomas asks about processing in the divine. My early writing on the subject may be of use here: "[The Hypothesis of Intelligible Emanations in God](#)," *Theological Studies* 23 (1962), 545–568. The article is available on my website as well as the only other article accepted for the journal, in 1963, "[On the Causality of the Sacraments](#)," *Theological Studies* 24 (1963), 423–436. Later consistent rejections by the journal were accompanied by various reasons but one reason should appeal to dummies: LOL. It was that my article was above the heads of the readers. I found that verdict strange: in other zones, if the article is not above the heads of the readers, it is not accepted for publication.

³ Thomas lead, of course, rolls on through the *Summa*, and on to light on the Word's leading. My own lead blossoms in that direction into the book, *The Allure of the Compelling Genius of History*, Axial Publishing, 2015. It is referred to below simply as *Allure*.

of yarn (usually 80 yards for wool, 120 yards for silk and cotton, 300 yards for linen).⁴ My footnote 4 may help you be concrete about finding a personal measure, but here I ask you to again twist round linguistically—if it is not an irritating distraction—and think of you reaching in your own way, woolen or silken, for your measure of the yarn that is the Christian story.⁵ Lonergan has his own way, in *Method in Theology*,⁶ of inviting you to take that measure. After two heavy pages he makes a key point: you “may be unable to associate any precise meaning with the words I use.”⁷ Or, in my view and experience of reading the book badly over years,⁸

⁴ How does one pause adequately to take the measure of one’s peace and piece in the yarn? This is a question that is multitudinously complex: one aspect I refer to in the previous essay. You may find your place outside the “tower intervention” yet shake us into the future significantly by nudging those of influence in the world of economics. See a further aspect of the problem of place, piece, and peace in the next note.

⁵ You might turn your commonsense attention to the world of New Testament reading and find a place of discontentment and displacement in presentations of the yarn by preachers and teachers. I have used the writings of N. T. Wright, both scholarly and popular, as illustrating a particularly gallant effort that is misdirected: perhaps you can move towards asking, and effectively asking pastors and pundits, about the misdirection. See, for a start there, *Disputing Quests 4*, “Scripture Study: Turn Wright I”; *Disputing Quests 5*: “Scripture Study: Turn Wright II”; *Disputing Quests 8*: “Scripture Studies: Turn Wright III”; *Disputing Quests 9*: “Interpretation Wright Turn, Right Turn”; *Disputing Quests 10*: Paul’s Epistles and Functional Systematics.” That final essay mentioned begins with a strange assertion that is worthy of dumb contemplation: “Paul? In the Garden of Jesus, not a new or second Adam: an InWithTo new creation that yet was there, Bigbang Class-ping. Now in Your garden, Guarding, Double Big-Banged, I tune thornily—and tend and guard and bind and greet.” The worthy worthwhile contemplation would lift the readings of *CWL 11* and *12*, mentioned in the next note, into a seeding of the interiority of the positive Anthropocene age, subject-as-subject bind-greeting Subjects-as-Subjects (See, *Phenomenology and Logic*, *CWL 18*, 314–15). For a full dummy version of that piece, that peace, of being, see *Allure*, 233–34: God-found, not as an object but as Subjects.

⁶ *Method in Theology*, 288–93. As in Thomas, so in Lonergan his leads spread through his entire works. Perhaps enough said here by mention of the block of works running from *CWL 7* to *CWL 12*. There are magnificent dummy leads in *The Triune God: Doctrines*, *CWL 11*, 639–85, “Excursus. The Psychological Analogy of the Trinity” and *The Triune God: Systematics*, *CWL 12*, 501–521, questions dealing with Trinitarian indwelling in you. Recall the end of the previous note. Notice that the block of works includes *Topics in Education*, *CWL 10*. Might you not bring to bear on that volume the heuristic of the poise of this essay, especially in its cyclic rolling and roiling? (See note 9).

⁷ *Method in Theology*, 290, lines 11–12.

⁸ I have written abundantly of our common—mine for decades—misreading of *Method in Theology*, and Lonergan’s struggle in trying to begin the book, expressed to me in the summer of 1966. Startlingly, the turn he took in the fourth paragraph of the first chapter was towards writing a book—not just a first chapter—for dummies: “To work out the basis for such a third way is the

you may associate a meaning with the words which isn't very helpful towards really finding your measure.⁹

The problem we all—not just Christians¹⁰—have is to find as gift¹¹ the reach for a friendly friend-bound understanding of our yarn which is *the* yarn, a growing horizon that is strangely a glimpse of the field, the pasture. “The field is *the* universe, but my horizon defines *my* universe.”¹² It is the universe “of the Spirit that is given to us, of the Son who redeemed us, of the Father who sent the Son . . . and of our future destiny.”¹³

The friendship-bound understanding has been my topic for a life-time, and the challenge has been to get people to shake off bogus poises regarding the real¹⁴ science that is the objective yarn-care at the heart of that understanding. Can that science be cherished by dummies, if by *dummies* I mean those closed off from the adventure of science? In the culture of the positive

purpose of the present chapter” (*Method*, 4). Such pages as 260 and 351 aim to set the dummy straight, if the dummy misses the clear pointing of 286–7: “one can go on” (287, line 19) to re-write for non-dummies the first half of the book. Who might that “one” be, in this coming millennium?

⁹ The Greek for *measure* is *nomos*. The full genuine helpfulness is summed up in my curious title, “A Rolling Stone Gathers *Nomos*”. [The title relates to cyclic functional collaboration in economics (chapter 5 of *Economics for Everyone*), and in linguistics (chapter 3 of *A Brief History of Tongue*)]. The road to genuineness is to be a towering, spiraling community reality, solving “the problem of general history, which is the real catch.” *Topics in Education*, CWL 10, 236.

¹⁰ I am referring here to the tasks of a future struggle towards a convergence, without mergence, of world religiosity.

¹¹ See the index of *Method in Theology*, under *Gift*. I so constructed the index as to place this entry as number one in length. You might muse over the manner in which it and the number one entry—*Concomitance*—of the index to *For a New Political Economy* (CWL 21), weave together in “the greatest of works” (*The Triune God: Systematics*, CWL 12, 491). There is the fundamental sense in which we are found by the gift, the Gift, the Person I prefer to call *Grace*. The finding continues in the implicit mood of the collaborative prayer, “Grace, Grace, Grace: Attune us to the Allure of the Scent of a Nomen” (*Allure*, 200–201; 223). I should mention here, as I have done before, that luminosity regarding analogy’s affirmation, negation and eminence gives a solid practical realism to our odd friendship with the Three. For dummies, however, there can be a pragmatic naïve grip such as is captured in that old hymn-line, “what a friend we have in Jesus.”

¹² *Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18, 199.

¹³ *Method in Theology*, 291. On human destiny and our dummy grip on it, see note 15.

¹⁴ There is a sense in which this is not a serious topic for present common sense: the issue of the real is indeed beyond present scientists and most Lonergan students (what, I may ask, do most people ‘make of’ my notion of *mibox*, introduced in recent essays. See [Prehumous 2](#), “Metagrams and Metaphysics,” and the symbolism related to W₀, which comes after W₇, in the text at note 12. In later millennia, *kinder* and kinder education will ground a fuller communal sensibility of mind’s place in the flow of history and eternity. See Philip McShane, *The Everlasting Joy of Being Human*, Axial Publishing, 2013, chapter 2, “Out-of-Body Experiences.” On eternity and the dummy psyche, see the next note.

Anthropocene the answer to that question will not only be yes, but it will be an answer embedded in an ethos where subjectivity is radiantly, globally, molecularly, self-possessed.¹⁵ But what of these destructive dying centuries of the negative Anthropocene age that lie ahead, lying to us about the Lea and the rivers of the world that flow in it? The answer in present darkness is that the proper question of proper science weaves dodderingly¹⁶ into our daily conversations. On the rivers of the world and our dummy effort to find our own riverbank, see [Quodlibet 8](#), “The Dialectic of My Town, *Ma Vlast*,” which invites dummies to take a week walking about a bout about their own village, poised in loneliness.

I recall vividly—even after more than 50 years—an inspired moment when a pointing about that, in the context of preaching on the Trinity, shaped into four questions that any dummy can ask.

The basic question to raise is, *when did I last*¹⁷ *have a real conversation?* That basic question must be asked in an authentic memory-search, and its answer is aided by

¹⁵ This is a massive complex topic. It relates especially to the concrete psychic effectiveness of a full heuristic of the Eschaton in daily life. On the full heuristic I have only provided skimpy notes: See section 20 of my “*Insight and the Trivialization of History*,” *Divyadaan: A Journal of Education and Philosophy*, 28/1 (2017) 105–132. Suggestively I can say briefly that there is to emerge a new psychic tonality in spirituality and its flow into our common living through the intussusception of the fact that the molecules of the total finitude are destined, marked by and in the Word, to be the domain of the psychodynamics of Jesus and his hundred billion+ human companions, the sole everlasting domain of finitude’s “dynamic joy and zeal” (the last words of *Insight* 722). In that domain sexuality will be clustered in infinite psychic delight. For a lead to that perspective on sexuality see the Appendix, “Rescuing Sexuality,” to my Epilogue of *Seeding Global Collaboration*, edited by Patrick Brown and James Duffy (Axial Publishing, 2016), 241–45. There is needed a growing pastoral theology of how the focus of “an infinite craving on a finite object,” (*Collection*, “Finality, Love, Marriage,” *CWL* 4, 49) weaves into a Craving that blossoms into a Christing.

¹⁶ On the rivers of the world and our dummy doddering efforts to find our own riverbank, see [Quodlibet 8](#), “The Dialectic of My Town, *Ma Vlast*,” which invites dummies to take a week walking about a bout about their own village, poised in loneliness. That the Dodder is a river in my native Dublin is, perhaps, of consequence only to me. My nearest river growing up, visible from my bedroom window, was the Tolka, near which—in Clontarf—the lore has it, King Brian Boru died on Good Friday, April 23rd, 1014, while his army defeated definitively Sitric Silverbeard’s Norsemen. It is of consequence for you to find your own roots and rivers. For those climbing beyond the plains of dummyland, or even on a fertile edge of dummyhood, the finding is to be uncomfortably shared, formally or informally, through those final lines 18–33 of *Method* 250 that I have named *Loneragan’s 1833 Overture*.

¹⁷ [I add here the note from the text cited in the next note:] “The word *last* here might seem superfluous. Its use is relate both to the strategy of attention to a concrete particular (See, *Insight*, 274, line 10ff), and to the rhythm of the question. “This rhythm of language is a mysterious trait that

its threefold specification: *When was I last understanding, understood? When did I last speak? When did I last listen?* The process is an effort to locate personal data—and one may honestly find that one has little or no data.”¹⁸

I have here loaded the footnotes so as to avoid length and complexity in the text.¹⁹ The effort could well²⁰ have climbed into such a complexity as gave rise to my changing the titles of the three sections of *Insight*, chapter 17, to “The Wey”, “The Trowth”, “The Life.”²¹ But it seems best to end abruptly here, and to do so with a statement of a searcher in the Orient, a contemporary of Thomas Aquinas, who teetered on the edge of this root of the positive Anthropocene age. Dogen Zenji’s Trowth and Wey are to be turned in and towards the humble effective whatting of the everyday mind in these next millennia.

All our activity is rooted in the eternal nature of ‘everyday mind.’ Most of the time we forget this but Buddhas are always aware of this fact. If we have *hossein*—the resolve to attain supreme enlightenment—surely we will enter the Way of Buddha. That desire for enlightenment must be self-generated; it cannot come from others. Enlightenment is the natural activity of ‘everyday mind.’ This is the way of learning through the mind.²²

probably bespeaks biological unities of thought and feeling which are entirely unexplored as yet.” Susanne Langer, *Feeling and Form*, Scribner, New York, 1953.

¹⁸ Philip McShane, *Music That Is Soundless: A Fine Tuning for the Lonely Bud A*, Axial Publishing, Vancouver, 2005 (first edition, 1968), 7–8.

¹⁹ You can fantasize about the extension of the text needed to get you, privately or conversationally, into intussuscepting luminously, or even liminously, the “series of zones from the ego or *moi intime* to the outer rind of the *persona*” (*Insight*, 495), not to speak of the molecular blocking that “keeps some matters entirely to oneself, and refuses even to face others.” *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Allure* chapter 19—paralleling *Insight* chapter 19—has the title “The Well of Loneliness,” and invites a dummy beginning to the reach for the meaning of the old hymn-line of Horatio Spafford, “It is well, it is well with my soul.”

²¹ *Allure*, 199: the beginning of chapter 17, titled “Remembering the Future.” The chapter parallels *Insight* chapter 17, where Lonergan climbed crazily towards re-remembering the future of interpretation.

²² Dogen Zenji, *Shobogenzo*, translated by Kosen Nishiyama and John Stevens, Tokyo: Kawata Press, Volume I, 1975, 13.