

INTERPRETING LONERGANISM'S NON-INFLUENCE

Despite outreaching in various ways, my efforts to initiate a collaborative effort to push towards some effective comprehension of Lonergan's view of interpretation have failed. In total there was one ineffective expression of interest, one apologetic note about busyness.

So it seems best for me to give up on these present generations of Lonergan Studies and carry on the series in solitary fashion.¹ From before 1936 to after 1976 Lonergan appealed for “a resolute and effective intervention in the historical process”² and he worked his way solitarily to structuring the heuristics of that intervention. His achievement was a lifting of the half-way house of *Insight's* view of interpretation to the status of a tower of global situational redemption. What stands against the effectiveness of that achievement is obviously “the capital of injustice that hangs like a pall over every brilliant thing,”³ but part of that capital is now an established disease called Lonerganism that hangs like a pall over his brilliance. His disciples dodge the challenge of *Insight* and fail, ridiculously, to turn over properly the first page of *Method in Theology*.⁴

¹ There is, of course, a splinter-group which I would not regard as belonging to Lonerganism. They are represented by such efforts as the contributors to *Seeding Global Collaboration*, edited by Patrick Brown and James Duffy (Axial Publishing, 2016) and to *Dinyadaan: A Journal of Education and Philosophy* 28/2 (2017), which is in vivid contrast to the first commemorative volume 28/1, where neither genetic sequencing nor functional collaboration are of interest. My contribution to *Dinyadaan* 29/1 (2018) points to possibilities of shaking up Lonergan studies: “Interior Lighthouse II: *Insight* and Futurology.” On the elementary level of a high-school revolution there is John Benton, Sandy Gillis and Philip McShane, *Introducing Critical Thinking*, (Axial Publishing, 2006).

² Phenomenology and Logic, *CWL* 18, 306.

³ Lonergan, “Essay in Fundamental Sociology” (1936), Michael Shute, *Lonergan's Early Economic Research* (University of Toronto Press, 2010), 43.

⁴ The first page (p. 3) of *Method in Theology* turns from the words “academic disciplines” to the shift from that failed convention—dear to Lonerganism—to a pointing, on the next page, to a radical new effective dynamics of global care.

I see no point in elaborating once again on this disgusting complex of situations. Lonergan scholars are busy in small academic corners—“big frogs in little ponds” as Lonergan said to me in 1961. I have battled against that narrow-mindedness since 1961,⁵ through the Florida Gathering,⁶ on to a solution to Lonergan’s final problem of *Insight*,⁷ a solution that pivots on his brilliant paragraph 60910 of that book.⁸ The solution has called forth neither opposition nor even attention,⁹ no more than the six decades of my objections to the now-solidly-established doing to Lonergan what the medievals did to Thomas.¹⁰

I have no doubt but that later generations will smell the rot, and certainly detect the massive irrelevance. That does not take away from the sadness of seeing the next few generations being weaved into the frogpond decadence.

⁵ My first published effort was “[The Contemporary Thomism of Bernard Lonergan](#),” *Philosophical Studies* 11 (1962), 63–80. It was shortly followed by “[The Hypothesis of Intelligible Emanations in God](#),” *Theological Studies* 23 (1962), 545–568.

⁶ Of the first of my two papers—one on botany, the other on the need for functional collaboration in musicology—Lonergan remarked, “it just opens up area after area.” Well it didn’t: as yet.

⁷ The problem of a treatise on the mystical body: *Insight* 763–4. The solution is at the heart of my *The Road to Religious Reality* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2012). It was the topic of [Interpretation 5](#).

⁸ The paragraph is on the turn of page 609 of *Insight*. It is part of the second canon of Hermeneutics. I shall attempt a quite simple presentation of its core pointing in *Interpretation 9*.

⁹ The absence of either opposition or attention to my view is characteristic of the “academic disciplines” approach. See *Phenomenology and Logic*, section 3 on 201-2. “His school splinters, is subject to periods of decadence and revival, because even his followers can succeed in subjective conversion only up to a point.” (*ibid.*, 203) One does not find such inattention in a science. My fullest expression of my view, in clear opposition to Lonerganism, is in *The Allure of the Compelling Genius of History* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2015). It could be regarded as a revisioning of *Insight*, within Christian Faith, in the light of the discovery of the need for and possibilities of functional collaboration. At its heart is the broad accusation of the entrapment in initial meanings (*Insight*, 567, note 5) of Lonerganism. The flaw is nicely hidden by strategies of academic discoursing in wide-ranging references.

¹⁰ A handy text on the wipe-out of Thomas is Leonard Boyle O.P., *The Setting of the Summa Theologica*, Medieval Institute, 1982. It is the centerpiece of my “Prologue: The Betweenness of Death,” *The Everlasting Joy of Being Human: A Sequel to Futurology Express* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2013), 1–12. In that Prologue I parallel that situation of post-thirteenth theology to the present situation in Lonergan studies. The little book leads to a view of Eschatology that sublates Thomas’s effort of 750 years ago (see note 86 on page 125). The view is heuristically completed, however sketchily, in “*Insight and the Trivialization of History*,” *Dinyadaan: A Journal of Education and Philosophy*, 28/1 (2017), section 20 (p. 125), on “The Eschaton.”

But later generations will find a road back and forward, helped on by current events,¹¹ and perhaps the continuing of these elementary essays of mine will help.

¹¹ I touch relevantly on current American events in [*Profit: The Stupid View of President Donald Trump*](#), (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2016).