

*Joistings 16***History and Human Consciousness**

We can assume that we share some common meaning for my title, which is the title of our gathering. Were we, each, to express our meaning for the title in a single page and assemble those pages for each of us, we could perhaps dig out that common meaning: it would be some type of minimal meaning for the title. We could find that, yes, we are all thinking about history as what goes on, not what is written about what goes on.<sup>1</sup> Human consciousness? Whatever our philosophic allegiance, we could agree that we are talking about what makes us different from the chairs we sit on: perhaps. And? And how are they related? That would be the central question, one that might well shake up the meanings of what we relate. The conference might end with a larger shared common meaning.

This description would seem to parallel the description of a normal scientific conference. Think of two such: a conference titled "Physics and Geometry"; a conference titled "Flowers and Development". Whether the conference topic be physics or botany, there would be common meaning, and there might well be a shift towards a larger common meaning by the end of the conference. But I can think of conferences which no such progress is made: indeed, where shifting of meaning is the last thing implicitly sought by the dominant group. No need for heavy work on Kuhn here: think of this business in terms of Bambi meeting Godzilla.<sup>2</sup> Think of your own confrontations

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<sup>1</sup>If the conference were one of historians, the agreement might go in another direction: we assume to come together, for instance, to discuss written history in relation to human consciousness.

<sup>2</sup>I discuss the tradition that relates to Kuhn in *Cantower 16*, but perhaps it is more important to follow up here on the Godzilla-Bambi image - recall the pointers about satire and humour of *Insight* 624-6[647-9] - as I do in these next notes. I would have you think of Bambi objecting, pretty ineffectually, to the Godzilla of the longer cycle of decline. I would wish you especially to muse seriously over the Bambi of the fundamental 1965 insight facing the Godzilla

with Establishments, or even the clash of different personalities. I think of the meetings of Einstein and Bohr<sup>3</sup> Gould<sup>4</sup> and his critics, Waddington meeting the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps I should settle for Waddington as best for our reflection at present. Let us listen to a hypothetical piece of an opening address by the Ghost of Waddington Past.<sup>6</sup>

“The striking achievement of an egg is to produce things - roots, leaves, legs, eyes, backbone, and so on - which were not in it originally. It does more than merely reproduce itself; it produces something new. Even if you have a certain degree of biological knowledge when you start looking at it - knowing perhaps what everyone seems to know nowadays, that the fundamental characteristics of organisms are determined by the genes inherited from their parents, and that these genes are made of

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of Lonerganism already in a rut.

<sup>3</sup>I refer you here to the neat, brief, story-telling of Carver A. Mead, *Collective Electrodynamics. Quantum Foundations of Electromagnetism*, MIT Press, 2000. Bohr gathers a Godzilla clan in Copenhagen (p.2), and Bambi is confused (p.6). Bambi’s seventieth birthday? ”Several member of the clan used the occasion to roast Einstein once again for his dissent” (p.3). But Mead tells the story freshly, and it would seem that Bambi may come out bushy-tailed (p.124).

<sup>4</sup>I am thinking here of Stephen Jay Gould’s massive last book, *The Structure of Evolutionary Theory*, Harvard University Press, pp. 1339. *Cantower 15*, “Elements of Meaning”, is a lengthy reflection on the book’s deficiencies. It certainly seems to be a Godzilla of a book! But is it not Bambi when it is poised before an institution? The issue here is not Gould’s view but the character of a cosmopolis that would creatively recycle institution-breakers.

<sup>5</sup>See notes 6 and 7 below for a contrast of attitude. A context here is *A History of Embryology* edited by T.J.Horder, J.A.Witkowski and C.C.Wylie, Cambridge University Press, 1986. Waddington is clearly Bambi when you move through the big G of present Gene analysis.

<sup>6</sup>The reference here is to *Joistings 17*, “The Future of Medicine and of Other Sicknesses: A Christmas Carol”. It complements the present effort. The general problem that it muses over is the problem of descrooging our fantasy, our fancy. “Scrooge had as little of what is called fancy about him as any man in the City of London, even including - which is a bold word - the corporation, aldermen, and livery.”

nucleic acid (DNA) - even so, merely to say that the lump of jelly you are looking at contains the right DNA to produce a rabbit leaves an enormous amount unaccounted for. Exactly how does the egg produce legs, head, eyes, intestine, and get up and start running about? Once you have seen the challenge that these phenomena offer to our understanding, the only hope of rescuing yourself from the seductions of embryology is to reflect that discretion may be the better part of valor, when you may conclude that development is really too difficult and you had better take up something simpler, such as biochemistry or genetics.”<sup>7</sup>

Waddington was seduced by embryology, but the conference members that he addresses are likely to be out of tune with his perspective. In the past fifty years the study of development has gone in directions dictated by the successes of microbiology, with an increasingly unwholesome meshing in of information-theory language or just the language of a general ethos of a naive mix of reductionism and micro-vitalism: “proper cell-fate specification and pattern formation rely on the cell’s ability to search and interpret graded spatial information.”<sup>8</sup>

But dog- and cat-owners are on Waddington’s side. Indeed - and here we are getting round to our topic - the present ethos of popular interest seems more with Waddington than with the slicers and dicers. The elder dog-walker moves along in the memory of steadier legs and pup frolics.

Further, one can associate such remembering with the larger popular culture of

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<sup>7</sup> C.W.Waddington, *Principles of Development and Differentiation*, Macmillan, 1966, vi-vii.

<sup>8</sup> I quote here from a learned journal article, where one would - wrongly - expect better control of meaning: Jin Jiang, “Degrading C : who is Cul-pable?”, *Genes and Development*, 16(2002), 2315. Note the journal title. Even without the mention of genes, journals on development hold to what I might call the micro-ethos. For instance there is a forty-year old journal published by a Japanese Society of developmental biologists, *Development, Growth and Differentiation*, which lives in that deficient world. Grade 11 and 12 school texts live there too, and texts on development written for undergraduate students present no serious perspective on development.

remembering that reaches beyond the ontogenetic to the phylogeny: we speak thus of historical consciousness. Common sense, then, seems to be taking a stand against slicing reductionism and micro-vitalism: the vet is expected to treat the whole dog without any illusions about the plotting of cancer-cells. And the dog has a pedigree, however blemished.

But are we really getting round to our topic? The veterinarian in our case is also dealing with the veterina, the beast of burden, but the beast of burden that is history. And the fact is that the ethos of our global culture wishes increasingly to vet our story past and future. Moreover, we could go on to indicate how that ethos resonates with movements in science: but that would distract us overmuch into details of our topic. Suffice it to note the shift from - and even of - the Bohr-Einstein debate into the realms of origins, symmetry-breakings in history, non-locality.<sup>9</sup> Both the general ethos and the shifting are nicely caught in popular titles regarding the first and last three minutes of finitude.<sup>10</sup>

Our conference occurs within that culture which “wishes increasingly to vet our story”. We have a sense of history, of roots and anticipations. But note what is meant by *sense*, by *wishes increasingly*. What is meant is a refinement of human consciousness. The meaning is certainly vague and descriptive: but was that not true anyway about “historical consciousness”?

So, it would seem we have a minimal common meaning, not too scanty if we have a sufficiently cultured consciousness. What precisely is this minimal common meaning and what is its story? To that question we shall return in the Epilogue of Part

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<sup>9</sup>But the old problem sits there in elementary Quantum Mechanics with new sophistications: See, for example, Jeffrey Bub, *Interpreting the Quantum World*, Cambridge University Press, 1999.

<sup>10</sup>Steven Weinberg, *The First Three Minutes. A Modern View of the Origin of the Universe*, Basic Books, New York, 1988., is a decent serious read. The last three minutes are given a light-weight treatment in the book cited in note 41 below.

4. Meantime, I invite you to the adventures of Part 2 and Part 3, which are respectively chapters 6 and 34 of the forthcoming book, *Method in Theology and Botany*. What am I after here? I would wish to lift your minimal meaning and interest - it may indeed already be there - to a sharing of the "seductions of embryology," where embryology reaches towards not only the works of Goudge and Waddington, but also to the embryology of finitude that would span, include, the first and last minutes.

I am not looking for miracles of interest, your surge into the strange world of modern physics and modern biology. But I would like you to be seduced, if only in a popularly and uninvolved way, by a question that seduced Lonergan - most especially in the decade before his discovery of functional specialization - which is the question that seduced both Robert Doran and myself, *What is Systematic Theology?*<sup>11</sup> The questions ask both about the interest and the object of the interest, and so it jives with a regular title of Lonergan's searchings in that decade: "History and System". And note that we are back with the vet and the dog, or perhaps better to think of the vet with the sick puppy: especially if we suspect, expect, a surprisingly long future. History, after 13.7 billion years, could be in its puppydom.<sup>12</sup>

But why am I proceeding in this manner? Again, a problem to be faced in Part 4. Here I can note briefly that it is a matter of an undeveloped "total science,"<sup>13</sup> a developed state of which I wish to intimate. What might we call that science? Below, I stick with the title "theology" but "cosmology" might fit the bill better at present.

Recently I have fancied "evolutionary theory" where I give the broadest of meanings to both those words. Then what we reflect on below is a "tentative

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<sup>11</sup>This is the title of Robert Doran's recent book, University of Toronto Press, 2005. I refer to it below as **Doran**

<sup>12</sup>See note 41 below.

<sup>13</sup>The quotation marks carry you to the comment in **Doran** (p. 72) on the text (*Collected Works*, Volume 17) of Lonergan's "Response to Questionnaire on Philosophy", section 3.121.

evolutionary theory”, a TET. What is a systematic TET? I can get you into the whole mess of the next two chapters by saying that it is an evolutionary theory of the evolution of history. It is to involve team work by a team that I call the Ovalteam - this brings in the image of the usual sports track - which consists in eight global groups of collaborators working towards global progress within a common TET. Are they in collaboration with, in dialogue with, other groups working towards, or against, some form of progress? No. That involves a set of tasks that are, as it were, to the side of the Oval. This is a very focused baton-exchanging group of groups, working efficiently in the beauty and unity of a New Science.<sup>14</sup> Before getting further into these matters, however, it seems best for you to take the plunge into these two chapters, the sixth and the last of *Method in Theology and Botany*. Obviously they lack the sense they would have in context, but that too is a question for Part 4. There is a key helpful diagram, called W6, that I thought of introducing in this section, but finally decided to simply add at the end of the paper. But you could find it useful to pause over it at any time. What is systematic theology? There are two answers. There is the genetic system - think of pup

to dog - symbolized by the sequence of  ; there is the cyclic system that symbolizes the Ovalteam’s continuously recycling of previous achievements.

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<sup>14</sup>Lonergan writes eloquently of such a New Science in a book-review in *Gregorianum*, 1955, but the unity and beauty of the science pivots on the inner harmony and unity of the scientist. “What then is needed is a qualitative change in me, a shift in the centre of my existing from the concerns manifested in the *bavardage quotidien* towards the participated yet never in this life completely established eternity that is tasted in aesthetic experience”(Ibid.). Might we descrooge our image of science (see note 6 above), oppose the Godzilla of plausible improvements of the status quo, reach in effective fantasy for “not only a new and higher collaboration of intellects through faith in God but also a ... psychic force” (*Insight* 723[745]) that lets the bambino of Bethlehem loose in the globe’s bloodwashed neuro-bloodflow?

## Part 2: History and Systems-Thinking<sup>15</sup>

### Chapter 6. Converging Systems in History

“Study of the organism begins....”: regularly it is best to begin with the mature organism, and that is what I invite you to do here with regard to the organism of theology. As I mentioned in the Prologue, I am writing this little book in anticipation of Robert Doran’s work, *What is Systematic Theology?*, and he may well have anticipated me in my view here of convergence. But certainly I suspect that it is going to be a substantial work, bringing together and forward what was for Lonergan a central problem of the decade around 1960, the relation of system to history. Here I hold myself, ridiculously, to my usual few pages, so it certainly should be clear that I am only making a few descriptive doctrinal points.

I am writing now about a mature “theological tower” of later centuries, and perhaps the analogy that I developed elsewhere with “The Calculus of Variation” would help you.<sup>16</sup> The mathematical calculus has come a long way since the illustration in the *Aenead* of maximizing the land surrounded by a given length, indeed it has come a long way since Husserl’s work on the subject in 1882. So here I look to a millennium hence when theological systematics will have reached a relatively mature stability. But what do I mean by theological systematics?

So I must pause illuminatingly over the ambiguity of Doran’s question. What is systematic theology? A first answer is that it is the operation of the cyclic antifoundational system that I wrote of in chapter 3. Yet, there is another answer, the

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<sup>15</sup>The text in the next two sections, taken for *Method in Theology and Botany*, is unchanged. The initial quotation, “Study of the organism begins....” (Insight 464[489]) is one I have used regularly for decades to draw attention to the descriptive immaturity of Lonergan studies. One can replace *study* by *self-study*; one can think of the organism that was Jesus or the organic reality of finitude. A further context here is *Cantower 7*: “Systematics and General Systems Theory”.

<sup>16</sup>Chapter 4 of *Lack in the Beingstalk*, Axial Publishing, 2006, deals with the parallel between functional specialization as a calculus of variation and the usual mathematics of that calculus. Husserl’s work on this topic, under Weierstrass, 1882, is considered in this context.

answer that I suspect occupies Doran's attention most. Systematic theology is the ongoing fruit of the seventh functional specialty. I have written sufficiently about this previously and do not wish to repeat myself. Suffice it to state doctrinally that it is a genetically constructed theology of theologies, holding the systems of history together much as the normative history of an organism holds together the life-stories of that organism.<sup>17</sup>

But now we seem to have two candidates for the title, **Systematic Theology**. Furthermore, it would seem that the first candidate fits quite well the early methodological description given in *Method* for the venture called theology: "a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results."<sup>18</sup> This is the normative dynamic of cyclic theological inquiry, and we are envisaging it now as having a relative stability of a thousand years of cycling. Within that venture there is the seventh functional specialty, which I talk of as a genetically structured theology of theologies. You notice the oddity of this view of the second candidate for the title of **Systematic Theology**? Does this second candidate not seem to include the first? Are we not here in something of the fix of Russell's paradox of the class of all classes that are or are not members of themselves?

Let us consider the cyclic dynamic in its concrete operation, as "bolder spirits. They select the conspicuously successful science of their time."<sup>19</sup> There should be no problem in thinking of future physics as functional specialist, nor of agreeing that" the

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0.<sup>40</sup> There are complex issues here of the use of names in both systematics and in history, for holding either dynamic together. Think of Darwin's theory or Maxwell's equations. You might find it worthwhile to muse over this in the context of the diagram of page 109 of *A Brief History of Tongue*. There is a relevant quotation there from unpublished notes of Lonergan: "Theology 1) note a Platonic Idea 2) but the many species ( not individuals except as types as dominating personalities) 3) in a genetically and dialectically differentiated genus".

<sup>18</sup>*Method in Theology*, 4.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 3.

use of the general categories occurs in any functional specialty.”<sup>20</sup> So, for example, it occurs in research physics: the use of such categories occurs in the watchers of data generated by accelerators. But is that sufficient? Obviously not: otherwise one might as well send in a botanist with the same categorial perspective. What the physics specialist needs is not only a categorial perspective but the most up-to-date fruit of the seventh specialty. That is what needs to be operative if significant anomalies are to be detected at this stage in the cycle. Recall now the reflections of the first paragraph of chapter four above. The researcher in any area needs to have, and is to have in the future, a TET, a tentative evolutionary theory of the zone of inquiry.

A point needs to be made here about the Tower Community. It is to be increasingly separated from “plain meaning”, and its membership is to be an elite reaching for the remote meaning of humanity’s progress. The researcher in a later stage of meaning, the early stages of the second time of temporal subjectivity, is not just someone puttering through a graduate degree.<sup>21</sup> Nor is the serious meaning or significance of the research something that can be aired in *Time* or in *Scientific American*: will those odd publications still be around in a thousand years? But we are raising here sticky issues both of popularization and of the over-producing over-populated present world of academe. Let’s leave it at that for the moment.

The researcher, then, is someone who is capable of up-to-date observation, preservation, and cyclic promotion in the relevant zone. “This product of my work may well mis-fit in with our cyclic reach for progress.”<sup>22</sup> But brood over the mind-set of such

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<sup>20</sup>*Method in Theology*, 291.

<sup>21</sup>We are up against the problem of fantasy here. But nominally we can identify stages of meaning as Lonergan does in *Method in Theology*, chapter 3. Then the two times of human subjectivity that he introduced in his Systematic treatment of the Trinity (*Quaestio XXI*) can be identified roughly as the first and third stages of meaning. The ill-defined second stage is what I call the Axial Period, out present confused millennia-long times.

<sup>22</sup>One can think of numerous historical instances: Kepler, Mendel: in the later stage of meaning this perspective of mis-fit is to be luminous and a dominant control of emergent

a statement: it is quite fuller than a focused innocence cloning fish or fission chemicals. In a thousand years a *Praxisweltanschauung* will have nudged aside the mentality of isolated science, indeed of art for art's sake, or of adds merely for the sake of selling.

But the statement intimates more. What is needed, a need obvious THEN, is a perspective on progress. What is generative of the meeting of that need is the emergent ethos of what I have called the Tomega Principle. "Theoretical understanding seeks to solve problems, to erect syntheses, to embrace the universe in a single view."<sup>23</sup> This is the Tower community's calling, the cauling of history's meaning.

And so on, beyond the researcher round and round past policy specialist and policy maker. What, THEN, is TET to be in the future of any discipline? It is to be a luminous operator, analogous to the organism's integrator-operator, a communal Tower possession.

This is altogether too compact. I am putting forth foundational fantasy, generative of methodological doctrines altogether remote from, and brutally unacceptable by, present academic work. Will I even succeed in "making it a topic"?<sup>24</sup> History's nudging will do so. But "the challenge of history is for man progressively to restrict the realm of chance or fate or destiny and progressively to enlarge the realm of conscious grasp and deliberate choice,"<sup>25</sup> and perhaps even to so restrict by discovering and implementing "an adapted and specialized auxiliary ever ready to offset interference with finality."<sup>26</sup> Might you become a member of a small daft community pushing for that ever-ready state, tower? And how might that becoming occur? Well,

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meaning.

<sup>23</sup>*Insight*, 417[442].

<sup>24</sup>*Method in Theology*, 253.

<sup>25</sup>*Insight*, 228[253].

<sup>26</sup>*Insight*, 726[747].

lets us leave that topic to later chapters, beginning with the ramblings of chapter 8.

But at all events is there not here a direction towards a solution of the problem of the two answers to the question, What is systematic theology? The aim of the cyclic structuring of theology is to generate a common TET, shared by the Tower community, the creative minority that is the authentic sublation of Plato's academy. The philosopher is not king: TET is queen, perhaps, yet not as a constitutional monarch but as an irresistible ethos of the poise of withdrawal. Metaphysics as described by Lonergan, lifted into the context of cyclic implementation, becomes the character of characters minding the minding of progress.

What is thus solved is not just a problem of the meaning of systematic theology but "the problem of general history, which is the real catch."<sup>27</sup> "The problem of general history is that it moves throughout on the presystematic level."<sup>28</sup> "What has one to know to be able to write general history?"<sup>29</sup> One has the beginnings of an answer in fantasy in so far as one digests the above suggestions. One has a core operative answer in so far as TET enters the bones of functional specialists. The doctrinal programming of that operative answer requires creative communal collaboration such that e.g. those seven pages of Lonergan on the problem of history become seven hundred, and regional cultures become existentially global. These cultures are always going to be "organically one and consciousness undifferentiated,"<sup>30</sup> or relatively undifferentiated. But one looks to the slow emergence of an organic global consciousness living in a myth-excluding acknowledgment that "historical intelligibility is not without

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<sup>27</sup>Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, 236.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 251.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, 254.

mystery.”<sup>31</sup> That organic consciousness is to be the deliberate fruit of the ex-plain-ing of the tower’s high achievement to the heartlands of plain living.<sup>32</sup>

### Part 3: A System of Systems

#### Chapter 35. Anticipations

“With few exceptions, the foundational reality to which Lonergan appeals has enjoyed only more or less coincidental appropriation on the part of theologians. Making it explicit is what enables us to anticipate an ongoing genetic sequence of systematic theologies, a collaboration over time that, in principle, would never cease. For it provides an ever-developing account of the sources of such a sequence.”<sup>33</sup>

My quotation is from Doran’s chapter 8, of the same title, towards the end of his first one-page section on “An Open but Continuous Future”. That paragraph section is three packed and magnificent sentences and indeed I might say the same about the three paragraphs of the section. Further, as I read and re-read his chapter, it seemed to me that I could well leave it at that for the moment. Doran goes on to pose key problems, problems that are to carry theology forward in these next generations, in these next millennia, indeed Is there a sense in which he is right on when he writes of “a collaboration over time that, in principle, would never cease”? I must ask him what he had in mind,<sup>34</sup> for that is the benefit of an Ovalteam dialogue: might you be able to

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<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 257.

<sup>32</sup>See the conclusion to chapter 3 of *Lack in the Beingstalk*.

<sup>33</sup>**Doran**, 79.

<sup>34</sup>My suspicion is that we are, in fact, in different zones of interest at present, a difference that would effect our present meanings of this phrase. In the past decades I have been struggling increasingly with the character of the eternal collaboration, suspecting that there is to emerge a magnificent theology of hope and an eschatology, something that does with modern physics and cosmology what Thomas never got round to doing again in his *Summa* - what is normally included there is a patchwork of previous young efforts. What of the cyclic dynamic in the state of “Infinite Surprise”? ( The concluding words of the Epilogue of *Wealth of Self*). A curious

pick it out in the Communications Matrix? Recall the discussion of that matrix, which gives the general form of Oval-dialogue as  $C_j, j+1$ , where  $j$  runs from 1 to 8, and  $9 = 0$ .<sup>35</sup> That is the *per se* dynamic of collaboration; the *per accidens* dynamic includes all elements of the matrix, any specialist talking to another. Are you still with me? I shall return to this imaging shortly, for a larger perspective on the matrix is key to handling methodologically most of the problems which Doran raises in section 3, "Anticipations of Content".

But back to section 1 of his chapter. The first sentence of it anticipates, indeed states more fully, the key pointing of the quotation with which I started. "The ground is now available to enable a contemporary systematic theology to anticipate on ongoing genetic sequence of interrelated systematic positions."<sup>36</sup> This, as with the initial quotation above, is a powerfully suggestive statement, but I suspect that Doran and I wrote and read it differently. What is your suspicion, and how would you tackle resolving it, sublating it?

Taking that last question seriously, you will notice, helps you to find your own position, your own systematic position. Should I leave the task like that, dangling before you, perhaps too vaguely?

How will the Ovalteam of 2037 resolve and sublimate the difference between Doran's view and mine? Have you guessed right? Of course: they will be working

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parallel occurs to me as I write, about a conversation I had with Lonergan, in Easter 1961, walking the streets of Dublin: we were on a mundane journey to buy him a pair of shoes! He spoke of Thomas having an integral cosmology. Of him, in that speaking, I can ask, and have asked, what did he have in mind? I suspect that he was not thinking of eschatological cosmology explicitly, but I would say that he had not blanked out that zone of proportionate being in the 28 years of climbing towards *Insight* and its cut-off pointing regarding spirit's escape from energy-fields (*Insight*, 516-19[541-3]). Had he been given the extra year to complete the book, would he have pushed on to questions about post-mortem minding?

<sup>35</sup>See chapter 26 of *Method in Theology and Botany*.

<sup>36</sup>Doran, 78.

through the challenge of page 250 of *Method*. But who are **they**? **They** are to be the dialectic community, struggling in a tincture<sup>37</sup> of the differentiation of that specialty in so far as it has been developed in these next thirty years.

Now perhaps this directive, and my reminding you of the matrix of specialized conversations, helps to pose better the problem of differences in orientation. I am quite explicit about the need for symbolisms and metagrams, but that is a generic element of properly advancing science.<sup>38</sup> The directive, however, is quite precise, even though in my view it is again generic to serious inquiry within the human genus, and perhaps will “never cease”.

This, of course, gives me the opportunity to bow out at the end of this chapter, for my treatment of the directive to page 250 of *Method*, is a substantial book about that page.<sup>39</sup> Still, the metagrams help to locate the task of sorting out positional differences, and in particular the metagram that I have now labeled W6, with which the preceding section concluded. I suggest re-reading that metagram in tandem with a re-reading of chapter 6 of Part One. Your focus should be on a reading of that single sentence that begins Doran’s first section of chapter 8 of his book, already quoted, but let us repeat it now.

“The ground is now available to enable a contemporary systematic theology to anticipate an ongoing genetic sequence of interrelated systematic positions”.

For me, it is a startlingly coherent pointing to the meaning that I have sought and reached in this odd little book on theology and botany. Again, I appeal to Waddington, already quoted twice. Where he writes of “the seductions of embryology” I think of our

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<sup>37</sup>Lonergan uses the word “tincture” in *Method in Theology* (329; see 299, 304, 307-9) in referring to emergent system in the Church’s early councils.

<sup>38</sup>I recall again Lonergan’s comment on the need, in controlling meaning, for symbolization: *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 151.

<sup>39</sup>I refer, in particular, to the two series in the Website: SOFDAWARE and *Quodlibets*. SOFD recalls the title of Lonergan’s brief section “Structure **OF** Dialectic”.

embryonic finitude, a Claspings Spoke, cauling us, Attractor-Wise, to birth, berth.<sup>40</sup> The interrelated positions? Think of the global out-reach within the analogy of the organism's integrator-operator positions. Think, indeed, of the very young organism as an image of our finitude in this period of our history, with perhaps three billion years to go even as we think of three decades.<sup>41</sup>

Are you anyway with me in my foundational fantasy? "The ground is now available", but only like the scattered fragments of organic chemicals wrongly called a code: unless we take *code* to mean something like an enigma, something quite unlike a patent.

What is a contemporary systematic theology? It is, I would claim, what I diagram in W3 and W6. It seems to me that Doran's focus is on the functional specialty systematics, but with a further sub-focus that does not immediately help to hold to the central fact that the functional specialty is intrinsically genetic. The four-point hypothesis is like an integral perspective on a stage in the life of a sapling oak-tree. At any period in botany, especially if we are thinking of a future in which botanists are lovingly integral in embracing the whole flower and the whole forest, there can be a leap regarding a life-slice's structure that illuminates one's grip on the whole, from acorn to gnarly oak. One sees, and is seized by, the acorn differently. How about the seizing of chapters 14-17 of John's Gospel in the luminously-molecular intussusception of the four-point hypothesis?

My focus is on the ground that pragmatically enables, on an intussuscepted operative cyclic dynamic that is a global "normative pattern of recurrent and related

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<sup>40</sup>Naming the Divine Three is a tricky matter of time, culture, orientation, as Thomas illustrates. The names above recall my effort at the bottom of W3, the diagram on p. 124 of *A Brief History of Tongue*, called *The Tower of Able*, which is available in various other places.

<sup>41</sup>"The Earth could remain habitable for two or three billion years hence"(Paul Davies,*The Last Three Minutes. Conjectures about the Ultimate Fate of the Universe*, Phoenix,138).

operations reaching cumulative and progressive results.”<sup>42</sup> That pattern gives efficient unity to the science of progress, “and it is quite legitimate to seek in the efficient cause of the science, that is in the scientist, the reason why the science forms a unified whole.”<sup>43</sup> The normative pattern is, as Part One, suggests, to be in the scientist, luminously. Further, that normative pattern is, in the long run, to be global: a run anticipated in the heuristic conception of efficient sloping, which sloping also guarantees a lift of theology from its bad breadth.<sup>44</sup>

Such an effective operative perspective, “a specialized auxiliary,”<sup>45</sup> would both meet Doran’s three concerns of the beginning of section three of his chapter, and fit in with Lonergan’s and Doran’s views of the twentieth century in theology as paralleled with the twelfth. One might go on to envisage the failure of the centuries that followed the twelfth as something that Lonergan wished us to avoid paralleling in this new millennium.

Doran goes into more detail in this section, on “Anticipations of Content” - the section occupies 2/3rds of the chapter - and considering it further here would open up a whole new area of detailed reflections. However, his topic is primarily dialogue with others such as the Barthians or those who would follow Balthasar, and this is a topic that was raised in the discussion of patterns of collaboration and communications.<sup>46</sup> The upshot of that discussion is the position that such dialogue belongs within the

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<sup>42</sup>*Method in Theology*, 4.

<sup>43</sup>*Topics in Education*, 160: line 16.

<sup>44</sup>The reference is to Lonergan’s remark (*Insight*, 733[755]) about “arriving on the scene a little breathless and a little late”, but it also recalls a private remark of his in Dublin, Easter 1961 describing institutionalized theology after Trent as a matter of “big frogs in little ponds”.

<sup>45</sup>“An adapted and specialized auxiliary ever ready to offset every interference with intellect’s unrestricted finality” (*Insight*, 726[747]).

<sup>46</sup>See chapter 26 of *Method in Theology and Botany*.

provenance of the eighth specialty: to attempt the inclusion of such dialogue elsewhere is dysfunctional. But that compact earlier discussion requires not summary but lengthy book treatment.

So, it seems best to halt my reflections here, holding to general pointings.<sup>47</sup> Let us return, then, to Lonergan's claim of 1954, that he is closing in on the drive of theology. Functional specialization was still a decade away. Place that claim, symbolically expressed by him, in W6, at the spot where I hint diagrammatically at the sequence of systems: the point is close to Doran's pointing, but now you may see the leap to the contextualizing of that "closing in". Might you diagram it, as I suggested, with your own effort at a W7? Or might you not find, as I suspect, that W6 winds round into W3, giving the closed set, W0 - W6, of an open symbolic heuristic for this stage of our embryonic struggle? I would like to think that I have fulfilled the role of the metaphysician of giving "a symbolic indication of the total range of possible experience,"<sup>48</sup> centered on the experience that is to be a luminous global control of emergent probability.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>I return here, in this final non-referential note, to the problem of popularization that was raised before at various times, that is raised by this book. The problem is caught in the problem of various meanings for the word *general*. On this I have touched before, in reflection on the final section, "The Problem of General History," of the final chapter of *Topics in Education*. I would be profitable to hold this little book within this context and the paradox of the book is that it holds, heartholds, that that holding is a thing of the distant future. "Regional culture is the simplest realization of a way of life. What is a way of life?" The Region that I envisage, whose way and **what** I have tried to intimate, is a global non-local region, The Tower of Able, with the characteristics of "Cosmopolis" (*Insight*, 8.6): "not a police force", "bearing witness to the possibility of ideas", "not a busy body", seeking "to protect the future" through luminous self-criticism; finally, "not easy".

<sup>48</sup>*Insight*, 396[421].

<sup>49</sup>See *Insight* 8.3, on "Alternatives of the Longer Cycle". See? The difficulty has been just that, these fifty years since the visibility, the present-ation of those sketched alternatives, that stretched minding. "Mindbleeding never ends. / What's half a century between friends?" (Kennelly, *The Man Made of Rain*, Bloodaxe Books, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1998, 64). The problem is, to make friends, Aristotelian equals, with the man made of rain."He was actually

### Part 4. Epilogue

In the first part I postponed some questions for consideration here: what might be said of our common meaning, and why did I take this approach to the topic? The questions are obviously linked. Originally I proposed to tackle them here first by handling them simply and then, secondly, by providing an analogy from a development in twentieth century physics, thirdly by moving into the topic of a pedagogy of ontogenetic and phylogenetic adult growth on the analogy of personal and historical education in learning physics. But eventually I decided to omit the second and third reflections, to leave both topics and the related analogies to another day, to other *Joistings*.<sup>50</sup> So we stay with the simple approach.

Knowing what my audience's ballpark is, is part of the problem of gauging a minimal common meaning and of presenting my perspective palatably. Most people who get into Lonergan studies do so from philosophy, theology, religious studies, literatures and arts. Interested scientists are few. One result of this is that for most, *Insight* is a very elusive book. Heavens, I had an M.Sc. in a key zone of physics when I tackled *Insight* in 1957, and I still find the book hard going fifty years later. It would be silly of me, then, to presuppose *Insight* as a common context. But I think that I can presuppose some interest in, and indeed some serious commitment to, self-appreciation, in my readers, in conference participants. And some interest and

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raining, all his parts were raining slantwise and firmly in a decisive contained way”( *ibid.*, 7), not then “the extroverted subject...” ( *Insight* 514[537]), “drowned in the familiar sea of Dayenglish” (Kennelly, 8) but present in beingdark present-ation. The rainman or rainwoman is your mightbe, breeding the *nomos* like the girl directed in her playing by Plato at his death. Did you walk your town-streets on that dialectic walk of chapter 28? “The man of rain walks the streets of Dublin / like a giant flower / the unacknowledged generations / have slaved to create. / This flower is a human poem / the trodden streets can read.” (Kennelly, 67).

<sup>50</sup>Joistings is my final series of essays in which I focus on the task of initiating functional collaboration. The present essay is included there as *Joistings 16*. *Joistings 15* and *Joistings 18*, to appear later, will continue my reflections on Doran's *What is Systematic Theology?*. Part 3 of *Method in Theology and Botany*, “Structure and Anticipations” made a start on that with reflections on the two key chapters, chapter 7, “Structures” and chapter 8 “Anticipations”.

commitment regarding global progress. Indeed, the latter is the interest that I would place uppermost here.

Into the minimal context I would like to inject an orientation of admiration and support for Lonergan's final achievement, the invention of functional collaboration. A perusal of the two chapters that I used for the two previous sections can do that, especially if they are viewed as non-threatening. I am not asking for participation, for conversion to functional specialization in that sense. Perhaps I can say that I am asking for operative admiration: you sense that the leap of 1965 was quite something, quite cool, and you are inclined to talk about it, to make it a topic.

Of course, a reading of the complete book, *Method in Theology and Botany*, would ground a richer enthusiasm, and it is to be readily available. But do not the two chapters included here give sufficient intimation of a magnificent achievement, the invention of an over-all system that would bring together a global community of inquiry, whatever the zone of inquiry? But forget about the global community for the moment and think of the community interested in Lonergan's work. That community lacks unity: it is scattered in interests; individualist; it has been called a ghetto; its relating to other schools and other disciplines is ineffective, if not unpleasant. Lonergan's final leap offers his followers a unity of operations that would solve these problems by turning the so-called ghetto in on itself. Might we begin to collaborate functionally? The thesis of the book *Method in Theology and Botany* is that we could do so on minimal assumptions, with minimal meaning. What do I mean by the community turning "in on itself"? I do not mean an end to various forms of dialogue, but I mean locating that dialogue descriptively as a function of the eighth specialty. Then we within the community would be nudged towards beginning to talk to ourselves functionally. How? That word, *how*, raises a mess of questions and difficulties about strategies, about fixities of old and comfortable ways, indeed about personalities. But the starting question for you, here-now, is, Might I take a positive stand on Lonergan's great final suggestion about collaboration?

In his 74<sup>th</sup> year, Lonergan turned away from collaboration and from his functional suggestion to try to rescue his achievement in economics from oblivion. He did not succeed. “At the end of his life we wrote in a spare and lapidary style that makes every word count,”<sup>51</sup> and no doubt that writing has a place in foundations, but it certainly did not shape up as the primer in economics for which he had hoped. At that same age, I turn towards collaboration and towards his suggestion regarding functional collaboration. What I am appealing for, and pointing to, is a shift in our common meaning that is not beyond common sense, that will in centuries to come become a common ethos. I am writing neither foundationally nor am I writing a primer. I am simply trying to be persuasive enough to get the show on the road, or as I prefer, to get the show on the roll.

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<sup>51</sup>Charles Hefling Jn., in his Preface to Lonergan, *Macroeconomic Dynamics: An Essay on Circulation Analysis*, University of Toronto Press, 1999, xix. “Nearly always the revised text is shorter” (*Ibid.*, xv)