

THE CARGO PANTS

When I first got the inspiration to invite you to a new *Assembly* with this title, I moved on to Google, “Cargo Pants for Women with Pockets.” Yes, you can get them at so-called bargain prices or go for Valentino at \$1000. You can thus conveniently carry on life in some subgroup of the settled masses.

I recall Saul Bellow’s view of the masses. I do so, strategically, by repeating below¹ footnote 7 of my paper “[Arriving in Cosmopolis](#)” with its wild talk of a new global panting—hart and heart panting²—in the tenth millennium.³

A pause over the long note 1, below, and a chase into the referenced article or, way better but perhaps a dreadfully ‘unreal’ prospect, a long trek into the book to which I point

¹ “There is an obvious reference here to Ortega’s *The Revolt of the Masses*. But I would note that Ortega’s notion of the masses was quite complex. Chapters 6 and 8 of the book are directly on the topic, but also chapter 12 on “The Barbarism of Specialization.” Saul Bellow, in his Foreword to the book’s translation, neatly sums up Ortega and also the problem of the changes in the meaning of *mass man* since Ortega’s time. “Ortega when he speaks of the mass man does not refer to the proletariat: he does not mean us to think of any social class whatever. To him the mass man is an altogether new human type. Lawyers in the courtroom, judges on the bench, surgeons bending over anaesthetized patients, international bankers, men of science, millionaires ... differ in no important respect from TV repair men, clerks in Army-Navy stores, municipal fire-inspectors, or bartenders. It is Ortega’s view that we in the West live under a dictatorship of the common place.” (*The Revolt of the Masses*, translated by Anthony Kerrigan, edited by Kenneth Moore, with a Foreword by Saul Bellow, University of Notre Dame Press, 1985, p. ix). Much of Lonergan scholarship is done by mass men inviting Lonergan into such a commonplace, not at all the talk envisaged in note 5 above [of the paper quoted: see below]. The problem of that talk is raised in profound doctrinal fashion in the first section of *Insight* chapter 17.” It seems best to repeat here the note 5 referred to, but the other notes had best be cargoed by panting into that previous lecture. Here, at any rate, is note 5 of that text: “Popular talk is, to a large extent, in the eye of the beholder. I treat of the challenge of such talk in the conclusion of chapter 3 of *Lack in the Beingstalk*, Axial Publishing, 2007. How does a community of serious understanding mediate a rhythmic lift of daytime talk? My paper can be read foundationally of course, but I refrain from technical complexities. From the Halifax lectures on, most of Lonergan’s public lectures were popular talk in this sense, vulnerable to *haute vulgarization*, something he condemned strongly (see, e.g., *CWL* 6, 121, 155). *Method in Theology* is vulnerable popular talk; *Insight* is vulnerable doctrinal talk.”

² The first line and indeed the mood of *Psalm 42*.

³ The paper “[Arriving in Cosmopolis](#),” delivered in Puebla, Mexico, 2011, talks seriously about 9011 A.D. as a maturing time of Global Care. The paper is available in English and Spanish at: <http://www.philipmcschane.org/website-articles>.

there—even the title, *Lack in the Beingstalk* is a decent nudge—would lift our game and our aim.

Take my *Assembly* at whatever level suits you in these few days. The *Assembly* has the characteristics of good functional research, “this is worth recycling,”⁴ weaved up—depending on your suit and pointing to our global future—through slaves and serfs and servants throughout East and West and South. But now, even taken minimally, it is the characteristics and the character of my discomfiting dialectic “further objectification of horizon ... indicating the view that would result from developing ...”⁵

At a minimum I am asking for an advertence—seeding eventually effective intervention—to the psychology and sociology and economics, etc. of trading in ‘Cargo pants for women with pockets,’ women with hidden pockets of loneliness. The topic could call forth eloquent rambles: it could echo Molly Bloom’s comments on the glory of a shift to women-power, or track off to view the sicknesses of third world labor conventions. Muse where you will towards effectiveness in human betterment, for that is a haunting pointing hovering over the needs we touch on right through these Vignettes. But my mind is on the particular issue that haunted the dark humor of Lonergan’s remark about the laity being the cargo in the hold of the bark of Peter.⁶ So, yes, there is the pun-hope for the future, that the cargo pants.

This morning I had a correspondence with one of the cargo that indeed pants. One of their topics was scripture. Is there something dead or irrelevant in scripture as presented by the clergy to the cargo, the people in the Church-hold, now mostly pew and far between? A little on that in *Vignette 21*, “The Scriptures’ Story.”

⁴ The zone of Functional Research can be thought of as having this general slogan. That zone was the topic of the first ten essays in the series [FuSe](http://www.philipmcshane.org/fuse) available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.org/fuse>.

⁵ *Method in Theology*, 250, lines 24–27.

⁶ The story of this is given in note 14 of [Vignette 13](#), “Genetic Process.” I might as well repeat that note here, for your further ingesting of this horror. The horror is meshed sweetly into that larger horror of the global political and media poise regarding the deprived among us. Here, then, the previous note: “The ‘ahoy’ comment of Lonergan brings to mind a taxi-chat I had with him in Dublin, 1961, about the state of the Church. His humorous but brutal remark was: ‘it’s the bark of Peter: the pope is the captain, the clergy are the crew, and the laity are in the hold,’ We may think this out more concretely later, e.g., in relation to teaching and preaching. But the ‘hold’ is worth a pause: the manner in which the ordinary people are held and settled in social networks of abuse and decay, not encouraged by clergy or intellectuals to think beyond some slim religiosity and morality within that ‘life unlivable’ (*Topics in Education*, CWL 10, 232).”

But again my mind wanders, thinking of my two grandsons, Noah moving beyond two days old, Matthew moving beyond two years old. Both pant differently, but both are literally facing “all sorts of mortmain.”⁷

Let your mind wander, at some Lighthouse Level. The issue is that of rescuing panting at all levels of humanity, in these next millennia. The issue is your “further objectification.” Are you panting to join, in some realistic manner, the cycling and recycling that would effect the shifting of the survival of panting in this next century from Maslow’s “less than 1% of adults grow” to a 2% that step out of the masses to begin “a resolute and effective intervention in this historical process”?⁸

Might you, for instance, step out of line-up even now, without heavy reflection, in the matter of the solid establishment of economic idiocy and malice that replaced, and continues to more vigorously replace, panting by peddling? Are you the cargo of some church, or perhaps a member of the crew?

⁷ The final line of Ezra Pound’s poem, “Commission.” The poem is quoted substantially in my *Music That is Soundless. A Fine Tuning for the Lonely Bud A*, (3rd Edition, Axial Publishing, 2005), p. 29.

⁸ *Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18, 306.