

## THE NONE'S STORY

Words about God should never bore because God is the opposite of boring. And what we say about the Gorgeous One should make Him appear a knockout. Whoever made this universe is a Wild Guy. I think only our ecstasies offer any real clue about Him.<sup>1</sup>

### Prologue

We have been climbing for three months, beginning on the anniversary of the feast of the condemnation of Thomas, March 7<sup>th</sup> 1274.<sup>2</sup> So we come to the end of this bridge core of the story and a new beginning?

Well, we do not.

“The answer is easily reached.”<sup>3</sup> Well, it is not: and so it is a none’s story, a bogus “Unlocking the secrets of an Ancient Mathematical Problem.”<sup>4</sup> But still, but stilly, for some few present folk there is a replication of the nun’s story that we recalled regularly.<sup>5</sup> Those few do not have the support of a surrounding culture: we must needs reach mistily for something I dare to call *Futurology*, a global poise of mass and mien that slowly drops the

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Ladinsky, *Love Poems from God. Twelve Sacred Voices from the East and West*, Penguin Compass, 2002, “The Genesis of These Poems,” xii. The book is a good partial context of my deeded dead words: inviting you to tune into people as odd as Catherine of Siena and Hafiz. But the naming of God is your deeding to yourself. My effort is expressed in the Epilogue to *Seeding Global Collaboration*, edited by Patrick Brown and James Duffy, Axial Publishing, 2016, “Embracing Luminously and Toweringly the Symphony of Cauling.” There one finds a naming of God as Na Dia {an odd Gaelic mix of the plural the (na) with the singular God (Dia)}. But Nadia is also the curvy (see below note 18) Russian lady, Надя, hope, and the Arabesque, نديّة, of tenderness, companionship.

<sup>2</sup> In the Prologue of *The Everlasting Joy of Being Human* (Axial Publishing, 2013), a sequel to *Futurology Express* (Axial Publishing, 2013), I compared the fate of Thomas to that of Lonergan. For Lonergan it is not condemnation, methinks, but damning with faint heart.

<sup>3</sup> The beginning of the last paragraph of *Insight’s* dense bridge-chapter 5, “a natural bridge over which we may advance from our examination of science to an examination of common sense.” (The chapter’s first paragraph).

<sup>4</sup> The Subtitle of Amir D. Aczel’s Fermat’s Last Theorem, a popular account of its solution by Andrew Wiles, “Modular Elliptic Curves and Fermat’s Last Theorem, *Annals of Mathematics*, **142**, 1995, 443–551.

<sup>5</sup> I mentioned it first in [Vignette 5](#).

muddles of chit-chat about method and settles for a decent follow-up to the first paragraph of Lonergan's *Method in Theology*.<sup>6</sup>

In what sense, then, am I leading you into some parallel in Lonergan with Fermat's Last Theorem? Have I done an Amir Aczel for you?<sup>7</sup>

The question is yours, and the strategy of our Vignette series remains the same. I have here a three-word *Assembly*: "The None's Story".

The *Assembly* is not unfamiliar. I have focused on paragraphs and statements before. Think personally of the previous Vignette's final paragraph.<sup>8</sup> Think personally of that paragraph that I call *60910*.<sup>9</sup> I could focus on ten words of Chapter 17 of *Insight*, instead of my selected three: "what is lacking is knowledge of all that is lacking." But the nun's story helps us better to sniff the lack. That word, *lack*, has the same Indoeuropean base as leak: \**leg*, to drip, trickle. I recall now a point I made regularly in my introductory philosophy class, that you have a decent grip on the meaning of a word when you can talk steadily and non-repetitively about it for ten hours: but even that is not true. Might you wonder why?; and why that relates to the clash between "academic disciplines"<sup>10</sup> and the pursuit of serious meaning lurking in the demands of *60910*? Or is this another "none story" for you?

The issue being raised by such questions is the issue of the meaning of *Assembly*. We are assembled round a human expression of the story of "the successive stages of this, the

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<sup>6</sup> My reading of the three first paragraphs of *Method in Theology* probably comes as a shock. The lead to the procedure of collaboration is found in the commonsense practicality identified in the first paragraph. The second paragraph attends to the creative deviations of the long Axial Period. The challenge is to leave that part of the negative Anthropocene Age and seed the positive genesis of a global humanity.

<sup>7</sup> Perhaps I have. Aczel moves slowly in elementary considerations and finally is altogether too compact on the drive for the solution. My issue, however, is positive *haute vulgarization*; Aczel seems to be meeting the needs of negative *haute vulgarization*. That distinction however seems to be comprehensible only to one who has ventured seriously into science. See *CWL* 6, 121, 155.

<sup>8</sup> Worth repeating here, and pointing you towards my dense challenging Address in the Prescription that concludes [Vignette 21](#). Might you say Yes to the Address? "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?"

<sup>9</sup> *Insight*, 609–10. A page-turning paragraph. Does it not point to the possible turning over of a new leaf, ontically as well as phyletically?

<sup>10</sup> The end of the second paragraph of *Method in Theology*, repeated by me so often in the hope that its devastating meaning would bubble up effectively in your psyche.

greatest of all works,”<sup>11</sup> which is not a collection of meanings and mates in a Noah’s ark,<sup>12</sup> but—to recall Joyce—“a hole story.”<sup>13</sup> Heavens: is my *Assembly* a none’s reed trickling past in the winding “riverrun past Eve and Adam”?<sup>14</sup> So, I weave you, literally, into the presence of the words *myth* and *mystery* whose meanings haunt the beginning of chapter 17 of *Insight*, and lean us into the challenge of incarnately distinguishing those meanings so that we may become adequate political characters grounding a maturing of humanity.

## Corpus Articuli

Last week I returned to an article of Aquinas that I had not read for precisely thirty years.<sup>15</sup> At that stage I was in the middle of studies in philosophy, with four years of mathematical science in me, and I was puzzling about growth of intellect. Somehow, our activities in philosophy were strangely naive compared to the exercises necessary in mathematical physics. The problem has been with me since. A nasty solution by analogy came into my head as I passed the taxi-rank on St. Giles just now (I only caught the connection as I began writing: luck? molecules? cones of association?): is much of theology and philosophy somewhat like the familiarity of taxi drivers with their traditional city, a familiarity not requiring an understanding of the hydrodynamics, the chemistry, the architecture, the economy, the matrix of the city’s meanings?<sup>16</sup>

I returned to that article of Aquinas this morning, minding the same problem of growth of intellect. Thomas’s article is not an easy read, starting with little puzzles like understanding “curvier” and rising to God’s jobbery in the growth of charity. Sixty years in the jobbery and on the job and I am still puzzled. Does growth of intellect, of minding, puzzle you? This little mid-piece meaning-Corpse of *Vignette 20* aims at being a help: but only if it nudges you towards a Lighthouse climb into, InWithTo, the puzzle, an ontic puzzle and a phyletic puzzle

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<sup>11</sup> *The Triune God: Systematics*, CWL 12, 491.

<sup>12</sup> See *Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18, 349, 351. How does one conceive of oneself in God? The issue is a high reaching of the Interior Lighthouse. See note 1 of [Vignette 24](#).

<sup>13</sup> Is not *Finnegans Wake* a Hole Story, poisoning us before all that is lacking? I am recalling the work of John Bishop: *Joyce’s Book of the Dark: Finnegans Wake*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1986 and its presence at the end of the final chapter of [Process: Introducing Themselves to Young \(Christian\) Minders](#) (1989–90). This book is available at: <http://www.philipmcsane.org/website-books>.

<sup>14</sup> The beginning of James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*.

<sup>15</sup> It is article 11 of *Quaestio Disputata de Virtutibus*. There is the ‘body’ of the article fronted by 18 objections and followed by the 18 replies.

<sup>16</sup> I am quoting from the book of 1989, written in Oxford, *Process: Introducing Themselves to Young (Christian) Minders*, at page 24. See note 13 above.

that merge into one puzzle, one puzzling, the one puzzling in one finitude.<sup>17</sup> This mid-piece is a body recalling a body: *corpus articuli de corpore Thomae*, yet, now, my body calling to your body, both bodies being (middle low German) tubs for brewing, *boddike*.

Curiously, when I came to here, what is now a new paragraph, I received an e-mail commenting on how prolific I am. What was meant? As far as I can detect, the meaning referred to the abundance and variety of words in my received correspondence. It was not in the ethos of, ‘wow, this is one huge life-challenging climb!’ Yet that was my topic, and indeed, that has been my topic for seventy years. One huge challenging ontic and phyletic climb, chissled out in one way by Beethoven, in another by Georg Sand, in another by Proust. The one challenge is “distinguishing the successive stages of this, the greatest of works,” and our genetic grip on its genetics.

So let us bodies home in on the body of the article. We are in a chrysalis mode of axial bodying along, brutally containing the hidden wings. So please please carry my metaphor into the body’s nerves and swerves to sniff the global swerves that are settled in those nerves’ containments. Carry my metaphor into a going forward, bodying forth “a resolute and effective intervention in this historical process.”<sup>18</sup>

Go like a blight upon the dullness of the world;  
Go with your edge against this,  
Strengthen the subtle cords,  
Bring confidence upon the algae and the tentacles of the soul.<sup>19</sup>

But I write with more post-Cantower precision than Pound does in his Cantos. I think of, and have begun to

Speak against unconscious oppression,  
Speak against the tyranny of the unimaginative,  
Speak against bonds.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> I leave this odd convoluted sentence as I wrote it, adding a twisted question that I have been recently pitching at those serious about the ontic and phyletic climb: Where is finitude?

<sup>18</sup> My oft-quoted central challenge presented by Lonergan in his lecture on “Horizon, History, Philosophy,” *Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18, 306.

<sup>19</sup> From “Commission” by Ezra Pound. First quoted by me—more fully—precisely fifty years ago, in *Music That Is Soundless* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Axial Publishing, 2005, 29). What is its meaning for me now, after swimming searchingly in the sick axial slime for those decades?

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

And the precision is hidden, a bursting minimalist seed of action-care awaiting care, in the equation  $\{M(W_3)^{\theta\Phi T}\}^4$  that leaps beyond Einstein and Schroedinger to a new high-level principle of least action that is to outshine Feynman’s reachings for quantum mechanics at the opposite end of the spectrum of explanation; a new Calculus of Variation where Husserl might have gone had he minded his mind.<sup>21</sup> Where you might contribute without going the full butterfly-flight of minding your mind.

But some are called to fly. Might you be one? Might you encourage another? Such encouragement is within the equation, a core genesis of hope, where genesis has the meaning of seed-hope becoming sunflower-faced hope. It answers the “has to”<sup>22</sup> of Lonergan with the blooming of a Molly Bloom’s final words in *Ulysses* “yes I said yes I will Yes.” The Equation has been substantially seen before, with the seemingly complex side introduced in [Vignette 10](#). But now there is an Einstein push of gravity, a gravity that could indeed be meshed with Thomas’s gravity of God at the end of the article I wrote of above. Would I then complexify the “G” side of my equation as “G<sub>jk</sub>”? But let us stay simple and put the corpus of the equation on the next line with a non-complex **G**:

$$\mathbf{G} = \{M(W_3)^{\theta\Phi T}\}^4 \text{ }^{23}$$

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<sup>21</sup> There is a sense in which “Least Action in Quantum Mechanics” is a Feynman Last Theorem waiting to blossom (*Feynman’s Thesis: A New Approach to Quantum Theory*), edited by Laurie M. Brown, World Scientific, 2005. See also his neat account of the principle of least action in his first volume of his *Lectures in Physics*. Husserl’s problematic transition from his work under Weirstrass in this area was the topic of chapter three “The Calculus of Variation” of my *Lack in the Beingstalk* (Axial Publishing, 2006). I mention such efforts as door-openings, doors ajar, features of later integral dialectics. A context is Lonergan’s reach for the meaning of energy: see pp. 178–188 of Pierrot Lambert and Philip McShane, *Bernard Lonergan. His Life and Leading Ideas*, Axial Publishing, 2010. Are we not edging towards a precision of “The Hole Story” of finitude? Recall note 13 above.

<sup>22</sup> *It*, of course, is you joining the answering. This sentence is a compacting of my entire challenge. The reference here is to that key piece in *Insight* (p. 747) quoted at note 27: “The antecedent willingness of hope has to advance from a generic reinforcement” to something like  $\{M(W_3)^{\theta\Phi T}\}^4$

<sup>23</sup> This is an odd presentation of finite dynamics as strangely equated to, well, God: a continuation of the puzzle of note 17 above and the text there. The puzzle lurks in the seemingly innocent claims of the “fourteenth place” on *Insight* 683, especially if one climbs to weave it round one’s search for a personal fundamental kataphatic meaning of “God is not an object” (*Method in Theology*, 342, line 2).

Now, THEN,<sup>24</sup> we may read freshly, with operative fantasy-folly, good will repentantly willing “the order of the universe, and so it wills it with that order’s dynamic joy and zeal,”<sup>25</sup> the demanding claim about hope that echoes Lonergan’s early claim about Isaiah’s daftness.<sup>26</sup>

The antecedent willingness of hope  
has to advance  
from a generic reinforcement of the pure desire  
to an adapted and specialized auxiliary  
ever ready  
to offset  
every  
interference.<sup>27</sup>

We may indeed read freshly by the end of this century or this millennium. But at present we are not at all ready. “Theology possesses a twofold relevance”: well, Bernard old friend, it does not, and you knew that when you chatted in 1961 of “big frogs in little ponds.”<sup>28</sup> But “yes I said yes I will Yes,”<sup>29</sup> for “in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of the mountain, and it shall be exalted over all the hills: and all nations shall flow unto it.”<sup>30</sup>

But what are these last days? They are the last days of the negative Anthropocene Age, when there shall be a global apokataphatic ontic and phyletic preparation of those who sense the Beloved calling and cauling.<sup>31</sup> The preparation is not to be some vague outlook or inlook but a sub-group’s luminous functional tub-brewing—like fruit flickering to freshness in the

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<sup>24</sup> Included in the title of my [Cantower 5](#) of 2002, “Metaphysics THEN”, a forward-looking *Cantower* regarding building my Love a Bower: see [Vignette 23](#), “Among the Lilies.”

<sup>25</sup> *Insight*, 722: the final line.

<sup>26</sup> The conclusion to Lonergan’s “Essay in Fundamental Sociology,” certainly worth repeating once more: “Is this to be taken literally or is it figure? It would be fair and fie, indeed, to think it no figure.”

<sup>27</sup> *Insight*, 747.

<sup>28</sup> A remark Lonergan made about the state of Catholic theology during our first week of meetings, Easter 1961.

<sup>29</sup> The conclusion to Joyce’s *Ulysses*.

<sup>30</sup> *Isaiah* 2:2–4, as quoted in the conclusion of Lonergan’s “Essay in Fundamental Sociology”.

<sup>31</sup> My *The Allure of the Compelling Genius of History* points towards that kataphatic shift, with four Appendices spread through the book (24, 47, 125, 135) on the need the shift. The haunting prayer is “Double You Three in me, in all, Claspings, Cherishing, Cauling, Craving, Christing.” The five “Cs” relate to Lonergan’s suggestions on the top of page 473 of *The Triune God: Systematics*, CWL 12, meshed with the lift to subject-as-subject that was a focus of *Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18 (See the index there, *subject: as subject*).

presence of ethylene; “Eee Thy Lean on us Beloved”<sup>32</sup>—that “emergent probability is the successive realization of the possibilities of concrete situations in accord with their probabilities.”<sup>33</sup>

The preparation has to be snailishly mediated by plant-patience—the patience of a 9000-year old *Tree of Man*<sup>34</sup>—with the layers of mediations needed to shift any and all situations from crippled possibilities to etchings of mysterious progress. What are these mediations that are to turn the axial corner of a global “messy situation headed for disaster”?<sup>35</sup> The mediations are a nine-layer lighthouse topology of situation rooms that would breed in bedrooms and classrooms and UN rooms and bankrooms and butcher, baker, candlestick-maker rooms a quite new turn of all events.

Is my proposal utopian? It merely asks for creativity, for an interdisciplinary theory that at first will be denounced as absurd, then will be admitted to be true but obvious and insignificant, and perhaps finally be regarded as so important that its adversaries will claim that they themselves discovered it.<sup>36</sup>

But the claims and the admissions of the adversaries are, in our times and perhaps for millennia to come, caught in the folly of “bolder spirits”<sup>37</sup> who have foisted on humanity “its objectification in the dialectic succession of situations.”<sup>38</sup>

Not only in our adversaries but even in our allies,

there will be a humanism in revolt against the proffered supernatural solution. It will ignore the problem of evil; it will contest the facts of a solution; it will condemn mystery as myth; it will demand reason and exclude faith; it will repudiate hope and labor passionately to build the city of man with the hands of man; it will be ready to love God in song and dance, in human feasting and human good will, but only so.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Lurking behind my quaint expression is the poise of the previous note. See also in the book *The Allure of the Compelling Genius of History*, comments on the causalities of Jesus: note 56, p. 170. Relevant to the enrichment of our grip and being gripped by final causality are the eschatological reflections presented in [Vignette 17](#).

<sup>33</sup> *Insight*, 195.

<sup>34</sup> I have in mind both the oldest tree in the world in Sweden and the symbolic meanings layered into Patrick White’s novel, *The Tree of Man*.

<sup>35</sup> *Method in Theology*, 358.

<sup>36</sup> The conclusion of Lonergan’s essay, “Healing and Creating in History,” available in *CWL* 15 and *CWL* 16.

<sup>37</sup> The beginning of the second paragraph of *Method in Theology*. I suspect that the majority of readers missed the pejorative meaning of *bold*.

<sup>38</sup> *Insight*, 749.

<sup>39</sup> *Insight*, 749–50.

So we must conceive, in common religiosity, an effective counter-objectification in such a way as to ground a luminous Bell-curve effectiveness in an isomorphic heuristic that counters the idiocy in each and every cubature and cubbyhole of its sweet-smelling vomit. There is to emerge, in these next seven millennia—or earlier depending on you—a religious counter-culture with its potent commonquest manifesto. So I arrive at the title of my final *Diyadaan* article on the genesis of this commonquest manifesto: “Converging Religions to Being InTo Love with Jesus EtC”,<sup>40</sup> and leave you in the clear suspense of finding that the Corpus Articuli was only a dead map to a path to a mountain climb.

When you have a mountain to move, and only a spade and wheelbarrow to work with, you can either sit on your hands or you can put spade to earth and move the first sod. Some day, if others have the same idea, the mountain will be moved—and restructured. Some day, too, I hope theology will be restructured according to a method that operates on the level of our times; this book is meant to be a spadeful of earth in the moving of the mountain.<sup>41</sup>

But I have lifted Crowe’s push and hope into another realm by appealing to a massive shift in the attitude of thinking that “some day, if others have the same idea, the mountain will be moved.” That massive shift is contained in the comic title and pointing of *Vignette 19*, “The Cargo Pants.” There must occur a revolt of the masses.<sup>42</sup> Might you join in seeding it?

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<sup>40</sup> The title of the final article of a series to appear in *Diyadaan* in 2018–20.

<sup>41</sup> Frederick Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word. A Study of History*, Paulist Press, 1978, 149.

<sup>42</sup> See the relevant long note 1 of [Vignette 19](#). Indeed, why not repeat it here:

“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

## Epilogue

I have brewed. I rest my cask, my tub. You now have run your eyes and nays over the Corpus Articuli. Does your Faith in Jesus or any other OM not poise you, in spite of captain and crew, in some shady YES to my question for Amendment A to any constitution, including yours? “Do you view humanity as possibly maturing—in some serious way—or just messing along between good and evil, whatever you think they are?” Might you cognize this corpse of words as a seed to the positive Anthropocene? Tell yourself. Tell me. Go tell it to the mountains to be moved.

Would any seed take root if it had not believed  
His promise, when God said,

“Dears, I will rain. I will help you. I will turn into  
warmth and effulgence,

I will be the Mother I am  
And let you draw from  
My body

And rise, and  
rise.”<sup>43</sup>

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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.”

<sup>43</sup> See note 1: page 143 of the book by Ladinsky cited in note 1 above. The poem, “If It Had Not Believed,” is in the section devoted to Thomas Aquinas.