

Interior Castle ; Interior Lighthouse

A first easy journey of your eyes and ayes across my title lifts you through an elementary interpretation of it as expressing my interest in relating the famous work of Teresa of Avila¹ to my own decade of pointing towards another type of contemplation.² How, I might ask you to ask you, did your eyes and ayes handle the semicolon that hovers less than halfway through the journey of reading the title? My asking for self-asking brings you, alas, to the lower bracket of your quest in this little article, in this entire series. Before we move round and about that lonely lower bracket, a bracket which distinctively separates and unites Teresa's effort from and with mine, you might very spontaneously have raised the legitimate question, What, then is the upper bracket? My nominal answer is: the eyes and ayes of Jesus. And that answer distinctively joins Teresa's effort and mine.

Why, you may now well ask, self-ask—with me, and indeed with a Larger Presence—did I use the word *alas* in the previous paragraph? My nominal answer: because the simple semicolon symbol is my symbol of the difficulty—indeed perhaps the presently unacceptable difficulty—of the transition across my title, across our communication's chasm, across the axial period's ontic and phyletic gap of self-truncation.

In the previous paragraph my urge was to add footnotes: do you not deserve leads on these gaps? Certainly: but issues of the character of the leading, the led, the leader, the led-to, the leaders, all hover over any possible set of footnotes in a panoply of the axial period's

¹ I will continue to use the old translation that is freely available through Google: that of Reverend John Dalton, *The Interior Castle; or, The Mansions*. London: T. Jones, 1852.

² I simply repeat here footnote 55 (p. 14) of *The Future: Core Precepts in Supramolecular Method and Nanochemistry*. “The Interior Lighthouse is a quite different world from that of Dame Julian of Norwich or Teresa of Avila (see [Aecornomics 16](#), “Locating Teresa of Avila”). It involves the shift to apokataphatic contemplation that I appealed for in the five essays on foundational prayer, [Prehumous 4–8](#) (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.org/prehumous>). Perhaps some wider pointers would help: a footnote from a previous work. Here you are: [HOW 13](#), “The Interior Lighthouse” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.org/how>) 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” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.org/disputing-quests>). 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” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.org/interpretation>). The topic, however, goes back to [Process: Introducing Themselves to Young \(Christian\) Minds](#) (1989, available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.org/website-books>) 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*. 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.

entrapments. Alas, you may never have heard of the axial period nor been invited to notice its entrapments. Alas, you may well be familiar with Karl Jasper's (1883-1969) effort to identify such historical period as that named *axial*, and be thus more subtly entrapped by its true existential horror.

Yet is that horror not somehow providential, a horror present to the eyes and eyes of Jesus? So I tumble you into an apparently simple problem of dates and delays by throwing in my claim that Jaspers was wrong in dating the Axial Period by a bracket round some few centuries a few centuries before Christ: we are, on the contrary, still in the Axial Period that started way earlier than those centuries and that is destined to last—depending on you—for some centuries, or even many millennia to come.³ But what, you certainly should be asking, has this to do with Teresa of Avila's pointers in prose and poetry to prayerful visioning? My simple answer is, might not "The Truth of Interpretation,"⁴ weaved round the Aye, the eye, of my strange axial perspective not lead, be a guidance, a guide-dance, a star-flight, to seeing and seizing those pointers in a new creative way? "Five hundred years after her birth in Avila, Spain, in 1515, Teresa of Avila continues to court controversy."⁵ Might we move forward in these next five hundred years or five millennia towards a coherent redemptive luminosity that sweeps Teresa and controversy into humanity's genetic engineering murmuring shape? I think now of George Eliot's short Introduction to her novel *Middlemarch*, with her imaging of Teresa optimistically moving, in childhood, to a conversion of the Arab world. Might we image a democratic optimism in this childhood of humanity about the conversion of the Axial world?

I am here having a shot at leading you into fantasy. "Without fantasy all philosophical knowledge remains in the grip of the present or the past and severed from the future, which is the only link between philosophy and the real history of mankind."⁶ The fantasy I have in mind, in my minding of decades, is a fantasy about the effective interpretative minding of finitude. Let me help, as we move into this sequence of essays, by an initial rambling

³ "It would be misleading to see a chronological limit to the Axial Age that excluded those two mighty epigone (i.e., Jesus and Muhammad) of Zarathustra and 'Deutero-Isaiah'. Thus the Axial Age expands from a period of about 120 years to one of about seventeen centuries running from c. 1060 B.C., down to A.D. 632, which is the date of the Prophet Muhammad's death." (Arnold Toynbee, *Mankind and Mother Earth*, Oxford University Press, 1976, 178.) My larger perspective begins to emerge in "Middle Kingdom: Middle Man. (T'ien-hsia-i jen)," *Searching For Cultural Foundations*, edited by Philip McShane, University Press of America, 1980, 9-11.

⁴ "**The Truth of Interpretation**" is the strange title of the third part of Lonergan's *Insight*: that part and its strangeness is the focus of my recent book, [Interpretation from A to Z](#) (Amazon, 2020).

⁵ Peter Tyler, *Teresa of Avila, Doctor of the Soul*, Bloomsbury pb, 2013, page 1. I shall cite this book below simply as *Tyler*.

⁶ Herbert Marcuse, *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory*, translated by Jeremy J. Shapiro, Boston, 1968, 155.

contrasting of that fantasy-murmuration with the aim of Peter Tyler.⁷ Tyler's book has three parts, the first two of which deal with the writings of Teresa and their context. The third part of the book, titled "Interpretation" seeks to "broaden the conversation by enabling Teresa to speak with two contemporary discourses that have emerged in the past one hundred years on the horizon of interpretation of humanity's spiritual search."⁸ Might you already sense the shocking existential gap between Tyler and *The Truth of Interpretation*?

The issue I am raising in this little essay is precisely "the horizon of interpretation of humanity's spiritual search," but in its fullest heuristic: its adequacy, its statistical effectiveness, its present ontic and phyletic disorientations, its narrowed debates, especially within "academic disciplines,"⁹ its eschatological OM. Within that search of searchings there is the broader world of the arts and the technologies, that, even if it randomly escapes, for better or worse, the academy's poise, it shares its slick sicknesses. Humanity, in this later stage of its axial entrapment, is globally and glibly headless, truncated—as that headlessness is briefly and bluntly identified by Bernard Lonergan. "The neglected subject does not know himself. The truncated subject not only does not know himself but is unaware of his ignorance and so, in one way or another, concludes that what he does not now does not exist."¹⁰

That not-knowing is dominantly in the upper regions of what I call *the human W-enzyme*, the region where whatting is the dominant enzing. But the lower regions of the W-zone frisk and frolic, ferment and frown, in the flutterings of the domain. They can burst forth in the linguistic twists of poetry, bubbling into the semi-academic twistings of such struggles as Seamus Heaney's *The Redress of Poetry*, when what is desperately needed is the

⁷ I am nudging you here, as I am in the entire series, to a flight of fancy about a strange intersubjectivity that is imaged nicely by the 'familiar' biochemical dynamic communal flow of startlings. Check *murmuration* on Google and weave its eyefulness round the ayefull awefull claim of Lonergan in June, 1954 (in a letter to Fred Crowe): "The Method of Theology is coming into perspective. For the Trinity: Imago Dei in homine and proceed to the limit as in evaluating $[1 + 1/n]^n$ as n approaches infinity. For the rest: ordo universi. From the viewpoint of theology, it is a manifold of unities developing in relation to one another and in relation to God, i.e., metaphysics as I conceive it but plus transcendent knowledge. From the viewpoint of religious experience, it is the same relations as lived in a development from elementary intersubjectivity (cf. Sullivan's basic concept of interpersonal relations) to intersubjectivity in Christ (cf. the endless Pauline [suv- or] sun- compounds) on the sensitive (external Church, sacraments, sacrifice, liturgy) and intellectual levels (faith, hope, charity). Religious experience : Theology : Dogma :: Potency : Form : Act."

⁸ Tyler, 161. The first conversation partner "is that which arises from the twentieth century psychological schools" (*ibid*). "My second conversation partner will come from Buddhist anthropology and will place particular emphasis upon contemporary rediscovery of the practices of mindfulness in Western pastoral situations (*ibid*).

⁹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 3[8].

¹⁰ Bernard Lonergan, "The Subject," *A Second Collection*, London, 1974, 73.

seeding of a fullness of *The Redress of Poise*.¹¹ The bubbling is crippled in the long, longer, cycle of decline that is the axial age. So we find wordsmiths such as C. S. Lewis and T. S. Eliot haggling learnedly and incomprehendingly, in Mythopoeic Pilgrimage, over the human enzyme's expression.¹²

But pause hopefully: does the haggling hint at homecoming? Is the axial period, in the long long run, perhaps not just a wave, a tsunami, a wavering, in the ocean of the notions of being? Might we read Herman Hesse's rhapsody as a lonely cherishing of a mere dozen millennia's mess of waverings and whoosings? "Each member, each group, indeed our whole host and its great pilgrimage, was only a wave in the eternal stream of human beings, of the eternal strivings of the human spirit towards the East, towards Home."¹³

And where is Teresa in this wave and waving and wavering, this haggling and hoping and homing? I began, in my first paragraph, with words about "the lower bracket of your quest", our quest, Teresa's quest. Might I now claim, straining with strange words, that the lower bracket is the enzyme of the enzing of self-knowledge? And in that claim might I be entering into a haggling with Teresa that yet makes us "Unlikely Partners in Mythopoeic Pilgrimage"? I have written at length of the Lighthouse of Self-knowledge.¹⁴ Tyler's book on Teresa begins a page and a half titled "The Mansion of Self Knowledge" with the claim, "We have seen from Teresa's writings how she constantly emphasizes the need for self-knowledge in our spiritual search."¹⁵ He quotes there immediately a letter of Teresa to the Discalced Sisters of Seville on the topic, and adds the following piece from The Interior Castle.

Oh, but if it is in that (the room) of self-knowledge (*U, que si es en el propio conocimiento*). How necessary this room is—see that you understand me—even for those whom the Lord has brought into the very dwelling place where he abides. For never, however exalted the soul may be, is anything else necessary for it, and this it will never be able to neglect, even if it desire to do so.¹⁶

¹¹ *The Redress of Poise* is the title of a website book of mine of more two decades ago that points to a sublation of Heaney's reaches in his 1996 *The Redress of Poetry*.

¹² There is a recent (September, 2018) enlightening musing on the topic in Jared C. Wilson, "C.S. Lewis and T.S. Eliot: Unlikely Partners in Mythopoeic Pilgrimage." <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/jared-c-wilson/c-s-lewis-t-s-eliot-unlikely-partners-mythopoeic-pilgrimage/>. Wilson's musing adds a context, but there are myriads of such contexts where seeming clashes have common hidden grounds. The seeming daft fantasy question I raise here regards the possibility of a context of all such contexts, a geohistory of redemptive engineering of humanity.

¹³ Herman Hess, *The Journey to the East*, London, 1970, 12.

¹⁴ See note 2 above.

¹⁵ Tyler, 162.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* In the Epilogue to his book, (205) Tyler recalls that "Kristeva sees in Teresa's phrase *Búscate en Mí* / 'Seek yourself in Me' – heard in prayer around 1576 – a rebuke to the western tradition of 'Know Thyself' and the Cartesian 'I think therefore I am'." In my recent book, *Interpretation from A to Z*, I bring

Immediately following this quotation, Tyler leads us towards the main topic of the book's third part: "Jung—Friend or Foe."¹⁷ His lead in is worth a pause, a pause perhaps of years. "For Teresa the nature of spiritual progress is a complicated one requiring delicate choreography of knowing and unknowing, saying and showing. Just when we think we have achieved something the opposite effect will occur—what Jung will later call *enantiodromia*."¹⁸

My footnotes and text here lead me to appeal now both to your sense of humor and, at your best, to your sense of mystery. I move to riddle your reading, Supermolecule, with a spookiness of knowing and not knowing, that is an *enantiodromiatic* hiddenness in plain sight. The plainness is the plainness of a view of analogy as involving a triplicity of affirmation, negation, and eminence: a view worth a thousand-page footnote.¹⁹ The hiddenness is that of not knowing that "Knowing the Object", knowing what we are talking about, is, in the pilgrimage we share with Teresa and Lewis and either of the Eliots, and the host of writers of the *Upanishads*, in need an explanatory genetic core of knowing unknowing that places us in luminosity, in enlightenment.²⁰ Let us assume that Fr. Richard de Smet was not entirely off in his etymology of *Upanishad*: "the teaching obtained from sitting (*sat*) devotedly (*ni*) near (*upa*) a teacher."

How near? I must have you pause, at least a short sitting that is an effort to reach a devoted start and startledness. I have you now sitting eyeing, even aying in a spontaneous cloudy sense, an image of yourself:

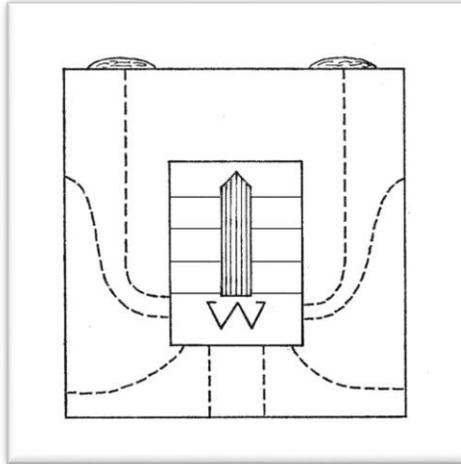
Kristeva on the guide-dance-floor at the end of my essay J, which is on the topic of the semicolon of my title above. I write of the "complexity laid on us mercilessly by Kristeva as she invites us to envisage pragmatically some dark aesthetic, here-ethic, way towards a cloudy identity" (81). The previous page there, 81, beginning with the words *character* and *spookiness*, is centrally relevant to our topic. But note that those two pages end the merciless pointing of that central essay, J, the bridge and block that the referent of the semicolon presents to God-stalking in both its directions.

¹⁷ I quote the title of a later section of *Tyler*, 172-75.

¹⁸ *Tyler*, 162. *Enantiodromia* is a compound of two Greek words: *enantios* ("opposite") and *dramein* ("to run;" *dromas*, "running"). With it Jung picks up on a poise of Heraclitus, a poise which I used twistedly and regularly, with humor and relevance, in my book *Interpretation from A to Z* (Amazon, 2020). My poise is "you never step into the same image or quotation twice".

¹⁹ How plain is the view of analogy I mention in the text? A 1000 page note: is it a joke? "If satire becomes red with indignation, humor blushes with humility" (*Insight*, 640). The plainness emerges as the core light in the enlightenment of *The Interior Lighthouse*.

²⁰ Very plainly, enlightenment is a topic for later stages of our reflections.



It is a poor image: how could I image, in your neuromolecular patterning, your billions of patterned molecules? How could I avoid splitting into visible layers what are in reality sitting devotedly near each non-other, an integral if battered W, the distinguishable enzyme tower of you, a notion, an ocean, of survival? Would my other symbol of you help: $f(p_i ; c_j ; b_k ; z_l ; u_m ; r_n)$? Perhaps now think evolutionarily, marveling at my mysterious semicolons. In less than the first big-banged second, a semicolon leap brought forth a panoply of simple chemicals, new dancing partners of the things of physics. And so through billions of years, the partnerships of flowers and animals until, viola,

the emergence of humanity an evolutionary achievement of sowing what among the cosmic molecules. The sown what infests the clustered molecular patterns behind and above your eyes, between your ears, lifting areas – named by humans like Brocca and Wernicke – towards patterned noise-making that in English is marked by ‘so what?’²¹

The early patterned noise-making is not Star-Trek English but Apish, reaching indeed beyond Apish but well prior to a primitive Helen Keller leap that could noise abroad the cluster of W-enzymes.²² So, eventually, in 1571, the primitive becomes the prioress, noise-making to the sisters of the Convent of Incarnations in Avila, noise-making her version of the *Upanishads*. There is the core of that noise-making in the marks and remarks of English for **what**, marks and remarks whose Teresean cousins scour **what** in the sisterhood. The pattern

²¹ The beginning of chapter one, “Sow What” of my *The Allure of the Compelling Genius of History* (Axial Publishing, 2015).

²² The cluster was part of the what that happened to Helen on April 7th of 1887, after a five week clustering. The leap, in the positive Anthropocene, has to be a self-luminous one, for effective contemplatives. I think of that marvelously eccentric effective contemplative of the sixteenth Century, Catherine of Siena. Her advice to Raymond of Capua was “build a cell inside your mind, from which you can never flee.” Her cell was a dark but fulsome version of my suggested self-image. A guide to the movement from the dark is the self-exercising described on pages 31-37 of my *A Brief History of Tongue* (Axial Publishing, 1998). We shall return to Catherine’s cell-structure foundational problem in the following essay.

called *what* is intimately layered into neuromolecules, a nöoskin of spookiness from the beginning. The nöoskin, in fullest patterning of deliberation, scows the what of *The Interior Castle*.

But what have I sown in your what, embedded as it is in an axial slum?²³ I think of Georg Eliot's remark, "the quickest of us walk about well wadded with stupidity."²⁴ And there is T. S. Eliot's beginning to *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* of exactly a century ago: "Let us go then, you and I, / When the evening is spread out against the sky / Like a patient etherized upon a table." And then I think of how T. S. Eliot reaches back to the *Upanishads*, as I do, for a blessing. "Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata / Shantih shantih shantih,"²⁵ but I focus on the inner boosted blessing of the noise-naming, *sat-ni-upa*, for a patient etherized upon a table. The naming seeks to get you to bring your whatting "closer that close"²⁶ to your molecules. So that the diagram shrinks into a smallness on your pointsome nöoskin of molecular minding. Yet the diagram is spread out across the page just as—yes, just as—the evening is spread out against the enzyme sky.

But there is trickery here, of course, off course.²⁷ I think of C. S. Lewis's criticism, in his *Preface to Paradise Lost*, of those Prufrock lines of Eliot, a view of a warp of sensibility in modernist innovations. "I have heard Mr. Eliot's comparison of evening to a patient on an operating table praised, nay gloated over, not as a striking picture of sensibility in decay, but because it was so 'pleasantly unpleasant.'" I am writing here a Preface to Paradise Lust, identifying the lust with the W-enzyme in each of us supermolecules,²⁸ but now pushing you towards a bridge of existential identification of the inner spread of the W-enzyme that is very definitely pleasantly unpleasant. The pleasantly unpleasant is to sublimate, progressively, both Teresa's room of self-knowledge and Jung's enantiodromia. And it is, concomitantly, to liberate the etherized sky. "Let us go then, you and I," at our different paces. My aid is pleasantly unpleasant, and I am led to conclude for the present, as a present and a presence,

²³ One might begin from Lonergan's musing over the meaning of *slum* in *CWL 10, Topics in Education*, 253, and extend its meaning from his reflections in the "Conclusion" of 232, and further lift it, in our truncated axial slum-dwelling by arriving at a type of Dionysian "ready to tear in all down" (*ibid.*, 40) that is to be a quite new "apprehension of personal relations" (*ibid.*, 41).

²⁴ *Middlemarch*, Norton, N.Y. 1977, p. 135.

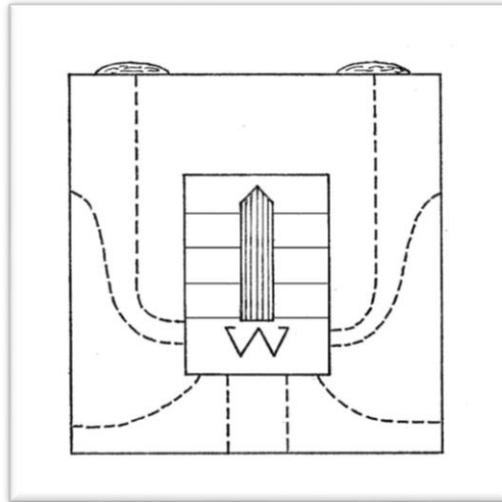
²⁵ *The Wasteland*, ll. 433-34.

²⁶ I am recalling the Bee Gees' song "Closer than Close," but the pointing is to a calling, a cauling, as the song has it, "At the point of ecstasy I write a symphony / Of poetry in motion." "I want you next to me / Call it telepathy."

²⁷ Recall note 7 above, about the murmurations and telepathies of subjectivities. Here, throughout, I am floating off-course, not quite a 'drip technique' of Jackson Pollock, but certainly far from a print-murmur of the aim of humanity's rise to murmuration symbolized by the starlings: a starlinked genetics of a future flight of contemplative engineering.

²⁸ Perhaps the murmur of the prisoners freed into air in Beethoven's *Fidelio* (Prisoners' Chorus, *O Welche Lust*) might lift your sense of what I am at. "Oh what lust, in the open air / to lift the breath easily / Only here, Only here, if Life."

with the conclusion of my preface to *Interpretation from A to Z*, but only after we pass over the repeat of the self-diagram, remembering Heraclitus, appreciating slimly better each time that you never pass the same diagram twice. How could it strike you while the eye-run-on is hot?



And now perhaps the aid I provide can have a response more like you lying on your back awaiting a cataract removal. So here you have it, just passed on the page. Pause please, however reluctantly, and look it in the eye, the I, the possible Aye. How does it strike you?²⁹

Does it strike you that we have weaved our way to naming meaningfully the heart of the matter? That heart of the matter is a striking and a stroking of you, giving you what is hopefully a shockingly fresh reading of the sentence in *Method in Theology* that contains one of my two slogans of the book *Interpretation from A to Z*.³⁰ How, I ask you to ask you, does that sentence open you up to reading my title within a strange J-wrapping “process from consciousness to knowledge”?³¹ The sentence implicitly contains the second of my slogans, “we are not there yet.”³² Climbing out of the Axial Period and on through the positive Anthropocene to the Eschaton “is arduous and time consuming.”³³ We should face and fish

²⁹ I quote here the Preface to *Interpretation from A to Z*: p. iv.

³⁰ The first slogan pauses us over the self-meaning of “scrutinizing the self-scrutinizing self,” Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 167(1972) 158(2019). The prolonged pausing finds in that slogan “the real history of mankind” of Marcuse’s plea at note 2. The second paws-full slogan comes at note 32.

³¹ See the quotation at note 36.

³² Lonergan, *CWL 21, For a New Political Economy*, 20. The slogan leads into a contemplatively-relevant page-long paragraph.

³³ See the quotation at note 3, thinking of the struggles of Toynbee and Jaspers.

the image of that sentence here and catch its freshness in our neural net on the “starboard[ing] side of the boat.”³⁴ Are you “bold enough to ask, ‘who are you?’”³⁵

This process from consciousness to knowledge, if more that general and vague, is arduous and time-consuming; it leads to the impasse of scrutinizing the self-scrutinizing self and into the oddity of the author who writes about himself writing; such authors are exceptional.³⁶

Is Julia Kristeva, perhaps, such an exception? Recall footnote 16 above and continue the Tyler quotation from there, 205, about Kristeva rebuking of set old Socratic traditions and the modern “I think therefore I am.” Kristeva

replaces the Socratic command with the Teresian *Connais-toi en Moi*—‘Know Thyself in Me.’³⁷ Is this perhaps Teresa’s message to us today? She is the ‘symbolic thinker’ who taps into the deep subterranean libidinal sources upon which the roots of Western culture rests. As we listen to her gentle voice we realize that the wounded and disoriented postmodern soul is being called back to the ancient realities of the pre-modern self.³⁸

The call is much deeper, the pre-modern self a heart-knotted axial calling in a corner of “the order of the universe.”³⁹ The gentle voice is knotted. The Gospels are knotted. The Upanishads are knotted. How then are we to begin to read and listen, so that in the positive Anthropocene, “good will wills the order of the universe, and so it wills with that order’s dynamic joy and zeal”?⁴⁰ How are we, Tom Thumb, and Dick and Mary, to find “the teaching”?⁴¹

When all the knots of
The heart are broken,
Mortal becomes immortal:
This is the teaching.

A hundred and one are the channels of the heart.
Of them, one flows out through the head.
Going up by it, one reaches immortality.

³⁴ “Throw the net out to starboard and you’ll find something” (John 21:6, in *The Jerusalem Bible*).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, verse 12.

³⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 167[158].

³⁷ Tyler’s reference here is Julia Kristeva, *Thérèse mon amour*, Fayard, Paris, 2008, 35.

³⁸ Tyler, 205.

³⁹ Lonergan, *CWL 3, Insight*, 722

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ The words occur in the verses quoted below from the end of *Katha Upanishad* (*The Upanishads*, translated and edited by Valerie J. Roebuck, Penguin, 2003, 292.)

Others, on departing, go in all directions.

The person, a thumb in length, in the midst of the self,

Ever resting in the hearts of people,

One should by wisdom draw out of one's own body

Like the cane from a munja-reed.

One should know it as the bright, the immortal.

One should know it as the bright, the immortal.