

SEEDING THE FUTURE

The original title for this essay, thought out a month ago, was “Seeding the Functional Systematics of the Future.” The essay was then intended to be a lift-off and away from the disputes that were the substance of the prior six essays. Indeed, away from previous essays, even the essay that was my contribution to the WCMI workshop in April 2017, “Paul’s Epistles and Functional Systematics.”¹ It was to be a positive poise in foundational stating.² Perhaps I might symbolize that positive positioning by recalling a wild moment in my lecture of that conference. I was speaking about turning over to page 722 of *Insight* from the final word, *love*, of the previous page. I asked—but it was a foundational invitation:

Might you rise to singing that turnover word as Joan Sutherland rose to song in the mad scene of *Lucia de Lammermoor*,³ or as Pavarotti ended Torandot’s *Nessun dorma*, lifting self and audience to the mood of *vincera*?⁴

¹ Included in the series as [Disputing Quests 10](#).

² Indeed, up to the leap towards concluding abruptly, the obvious leap below, the present effort was to weave forward out of eight pages of notes made as I journeyed home. The abruptness now takes the form of the brief pointings of *Disputing Quests* 18 and 19 that are followed by a shift to a pedagogical effort to get the community of Lonergan students to turn properly from the last words on page 3 of *Method in Theology* to the shock of tripping into the Standard Model of human care that is the “third way ... difficult and laborious” of page 4. *Disputing Quests* 20, “A Fresh Pedagogical Beginning on the Meaning of Interpretation,” the last essay in this series, invites elementary collaboration. A new series, titled *Interpretation*, begins in September.

³ What is known as the mad scene is in the Third Act of Donizetti’s Opera—based on a novel by Walter Scott. The heroine, so to speak, is falling apart: it is an aria that stretches the talent of the singer. I discussed it at length previously in Philip McShane, “On Functional Research: Introduction,” *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis* 9 (2016): 9–19: the entire volume contains my ten essays on functional research, the first of the [FuSe](#) series on my website. See also *Futurology Express* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2013), 114, where I compare Lonergan’s writing of *Insight* to Donizetti writing that Opera, and indeed the third section of chapter 17 to that mad aria.

⁴ Was this just a poetic flight of fancy? The deep issue is competence in scientific reading. In my article “*Insight* and the Interior Lighthouse 2020–2050” (*Dinyadaan* 28/2, [2017]), I paralleled page 722 of *Insight* with the same page 722 in Georg Joos, *Theoretic Physics*, a compendious graduate text, as is *Insight*. If one is reading the end of Joos page 721 properly then one is scientifically high and climbing, in an operatic song of a duet of two Fourier series. Their product “yields a sum of” (last word, 721): and so one turns the page to find the challenge of conceiving “terms” (722, first word)

Quite a mad song, a crazy lift, a trip-up.⁵ Still: “is this to be taken literally, or is it figure? It would be fair and fine, indeed, to think it no figure.”⁶ Might you rise, then, THEN,⁷ in the when of the positive Anthropocene, a towering “character”⁸ radiating lifts of “Common Meaning and Ontology”?⁹ But that later rise of another you requires that you now rise in fantasy regarding and guarding humanity’s goal.

I spoke off the cuff, of course, in that meeting, rather than read the paper. Of the paper I only read my first ‘bogus’ quotation and the appended note, realizing better as I read ‘geohistorical heuristic’ in the note that the enterprise was quite whacky.

No harm in repeating the quote and note here.

Paul? In the Garden of Jesus, not a new or second Adam: an InWithTo new creation that yet was there, Bigbang Class-ping. Now in Your garden, Guarding, Double Big-Banged, I tune thornily—and tend and guard and bind and greet.

I place here immediately the footnote that followed, that I read with an increasing sense of remoteness of meaning—after all, the paper was round and about, (about)³ the geohistorical genetics—our glimpse of the object of Paul’s trip.

A little fiction here hear: Lonergan puzzling about Paul, and echoing Rilke. I am thinking of the broad context fermented forward by the brilliant Albert Schweitzer, with his *Quest for the Historical Jesus* of 1906 and his Paul-quest of later years. I have his *Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (London: A&C Black, 1931) open before me, at the final chapter, “The Permanent Elements in Paul’s

that are proper values of electrons in a weak periodic field. The parallel quite escapes 99% of the readers of *Insight* in the past 60 years. But at least they and you should get some vibe of the really remote context of the opus when thinking of effective readers of opera on the level of Sutherland and Pavarotti.

⁵ Notes 4 and 10 point to a major challenge for Lonergan students in this next century: to invite later centuries to take seriously the invitation of Lonergan “to be on the level of one’s times ... one’s age” (*Method in Theology*, 350–1).

⁶ The concluding words (page 44) of Lonergan’s “Essay on Fundamental Sociology,” available in Michael Shute, *Lonergan’s Early Economic Research*, University of Toronto Press, 2010.

⁷ I am referring here to my [Cantower V](#), “Metaphysics THEN,” of August 2002, a relevant context here of the challenge to “build my Love a Bower,” a Tower.

⁸ Perhaps too often have I connected the word “character” in *Method in Theology*, 356, line 12, with the challenge of the *Magna Moralia*’s first paragraph. Neither politics nor theology can carry forward humanity with so-called sound common sense.

⁹ *Method in Theology*, 356–58. Note the searching significance of the eight occurrences of “situation” on page 358.

Mysticism,” and you might muse of the geohistorical heuristic that could connect Paul, him, and Lonergan as you read a few quotations. The chapter starts: “Paul vindicated for all time the rights of thought in Christianity” (376); “Paul is the patron-saint of thought in Christianity. And all those who think to serve the faith in Jesus by destroying the freedom of thought would do well to keep out of his way.” (377)

I wandered on then, like the *Eccola* aria of Donizetti, a hello-goodbye song. At the end of my twenty minutes I recalled a conversation with Lonergan in which we talked of Dante greeting Beatrice. Concluding that conversation Lonergan said, waving his hand and up-flowing his words, “That’s what life’s about: saying hello.”

What I really was doing in that twenty minutes, we can suppose now, was appealing to the audience to say hello to the two books, *Insight* and *Method*. My position, eight days later, is more refined than it was then, but it is still in the genetic climb of the claim that these two books have simply not been read as journeying through theory¹⁰ into interiority, into a common mibox adequate to history’s groaning, craving.¹¹ Mainly they have been read with an initial meaning¹² that can have bogus enrichment through the correlational weavings of “academic disciplines.”¹³ And there you have mention of that other page-turning, turning from negative to positive Anthropocene, that I talked about that Saturday, April 22nd, “Earth Day,” High Noon.¹⁴

¹⁰ See note 4 above. On Lonergan’s life in the world of theory see Pierrot Lambert and Philip McShane, *Bernard Lonergan: His Life and Leading Ideas* (Axial Publishing, 2010), chapter 10: “The Dominant Context of Lonergan’s Life.”

¹¹ I refer here to two contexts. There is the context of “Finality, Love, Marriage,” *Collection, CWL* 4, 17–52, that heads towards the problematic conclusion of that essay, beginning with the character of “an infinite craving for a finite object” (49, line 17) and carrying forwards through Augustine’s muddles. There is the context of an explanatory intersubjectively luminous grasp of the notional acts in the Trinity expressed in the central prayer: “Double You Three in me, in all, Clasp Cherishing Cauling Craving Christing,” which also weaves in an interiority of the absolutely supernatural realities described by Lonergan in *CWL* 12, *The Triune God: Systematics*, 470–3.

¹² Initial meaning emerges gradually in *The Allure of the Compelling Genius of History* as a central characteristic of intellectualism in the negative Anthropocene Age. The lead from Lonergan comes from *Insight* 567, note 5. An “accurate statement of initial meaning” will eventually expose the world of “academic disciplines” as heavily pretentious.

¹³ *Method in Theology*, 3: final words. See the previous notes concluding comment.

¹⁴ I am referring here to *High Noon*, a 1952 American Western film produced by Stanley Kramer from a screenplay by Carl Foreman, directed by Fred Zinnemann, and starring Gary Cooper. Cooper drops his badge in the dust at the end.

Perhaps I should drop my badge now?

Indeed, what a bright idea! After all, I have previously continued at sweaty length my plea regarding the two readings in a single effort that merges the two books' trips, trip-ups: *The Allure of the Compelling Genius of History*.