

That the Word Be Made Fresh

This, my final series—yes, in my 88th year I do not buy green bananas!—has a double focus. The foci are to merge incarnationally¹ in some subjects that are the heart of the seeding of the global transition to the positive Anthropocene. You might wish to think of it statistically with a statistics that is to move Maslow’s pessimism (less than one per cent of adults grow”) along the line to a Bell curve in this millennium. Further, you may think of it cyclingly, or **Recyclingly**—the added **R** to my corny title—and the two suggested thinkings fit you to read better the amazing poise of Lonergan at 29.

But what is progress? It is a matter of intellect. Intellect is understanding of sensible data. It is the guiding form, statistically effective, of human action transforming the sensible data of life. Finally, it is the fresh intellectual synthesis understanding the new situation created by the old intellectual form and providing a statistically effective form for the next cycle of human action that will bring forth in reality the incompleteness of the later act of intellect by setting it new problems.²

You may well have read that before: then I would hope that my suggestions gave this fresh reading a freshening boost, a lift, perhaps even turned it into a *happening*: like those sudden bursts of singing in a Mall, or some amateur startling you, as well as the audience and the panel, in an X-factor show. My suggestions bring us to the heart of this new series’ effort: briefly to turn such suggestions, and my suggestions, into autosuggestions. You may be familiar with that zone of performance as it goes back to Émile Coué, or to Alan Kaprow: but no need to go Googling. What we are chasing here are tracks and trails to the shift that Lonergan wrote about in a book review.³

What then is needed is a qualitative change in me, a shift in the center 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 apprehension, in the inner utterance of truth, in the partial success of a moral struggle.

¹ I have written abundantly about the meaning of “character” (*Method in Theology*, 356, line 12), weaving its meaning into a layered sublation of the discussion of the Aristotelian *Magna Moralia*. Here you may simply pause over the suggestion of the title of the series: that I am putting heart (*cor*) into economics. But try to heartily suspect that it is a massively open heuristic, e.g., a lift of the meaning of *Jeremiah* 31: 31-34 into the suspicion of a later stage of humanity in which the axial Ants are to become Gracehoppers. See the “[Ants](#)” essays on [Openers of the Positive Anthropocene](#). In that distant future, heart will be radiantly present in the world of words and of all human exchanges.

² *Essay in Fundamental Sociology*, available in Michael Shute, *Lonergan’s Early Economic Research. Texts and Commentaries*, University of Toronto Press, 2010, 20.

³ *Shorter Papers*, CWL 20, 209: in a review of Jules Chais-Ruy, *Les Dimensions de l’être et du temps*.

The quotation points us into a distant goal that yet is there in us and bubbles forth in odd moments. Another quotation from Lonergan may help, and note that this occurs indeed in an odd moment of musing about satire and humor, the odd moment, me hopes, giving you odd momentum of “the moment in the rose garden, the moment in the arbour, the moment in the draughty church.”⁴

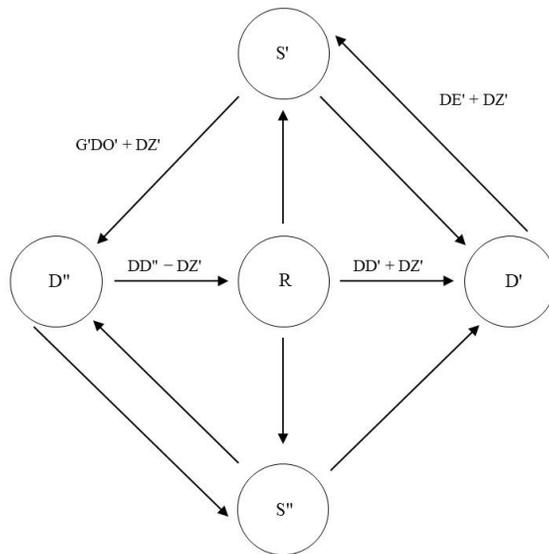
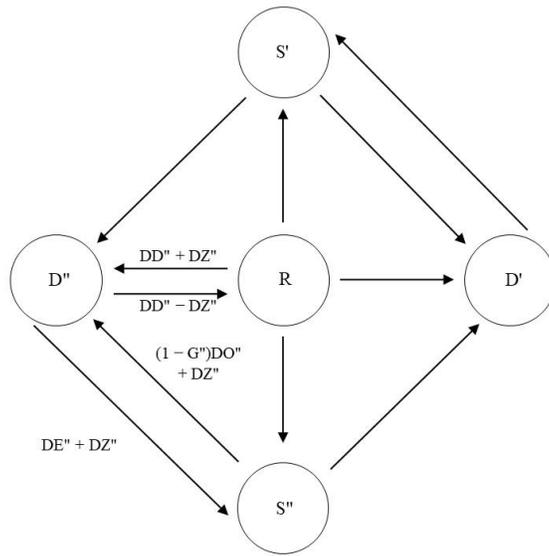
The concrete being of man, then, is being in process. His existing lies in developing. His unrestricted desire to know heads him towards a known unknown. His sensitivity matches the operator of his intellectual advance with a capacity and a need to respond to a further reality than meets the eye and to grope his way towards it. Still, this basic, indeterminately directed dynamism has its ground in potency; it is without the settled assurance and efficacy of form; it tends to be shouldered out of the busy day, to make its force felt in the tranquility of darkness, in the solitude of loneliness, in the shattering upheavals of personal and social disaster.⁵

I do not wish to prolong this first essay. I could pause over suggestions and auto-suggestions about the title, but such suggesting had best be a shared business that emerges from exchanges: might I say from Trading Spaces?⁶ So I end by placing before you on the next page two diagrams regarding trading, weaved out of Lonergan’s early work on economics, and raising a few questions about them after you have viewed them.

⁴ T. S. Eliot, *Burnt Norton, The Four Quartets*.

⁵ *Insight*, 648.

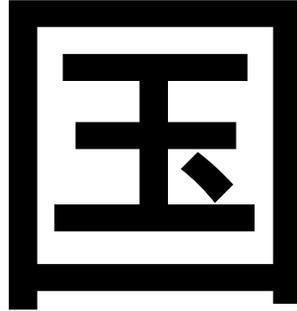
⁶ For some this is a reminder of a television program that ran through 2000–8. It is thus described: “Two sets of neighbors, 48 hours, \$1,000. Neighbors swap houses, and with the help of a designer and carpenter, transform a room in two days. The best, and worst, part about it is that the homeowner has zero say in what gets done.” I come as a neighbor to disturb your verbal space, pointing towards a strange aesthetics of the future that echo, in a luminous nomos of echoes, the reach of Lonergan and Wordsworth, “the earth and every common sight take on the glory and the freshness of a dream” (*Insight*, 556).



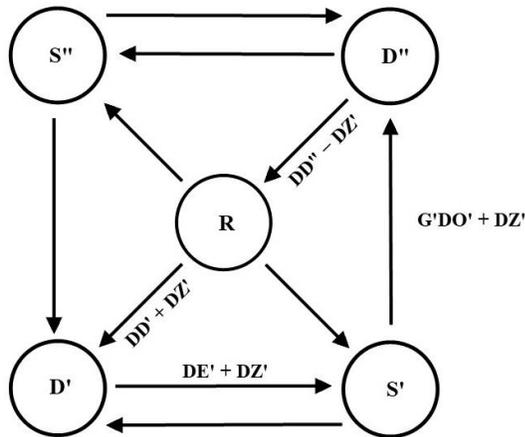
Do the diagrams bring to your mind a baseball pitch? This, certainly, was a piece of Lonergan's minding, and we can muse over whether it was part of his communications strategy. But it is you here and now that is of interest to yourself. I hope. Are you up to pausing and musing? A versatile coach, or player, or even watcher, has a massive psychic back-up to the seeing: check your own back-up, its degree of spontaneity, its bent towards anamnesis and prolepsis. Now think of the two diagrams as just two big words. Think of them as parallel to the

words in Chinese for “international trade”. That Chinese for “international trade” is : 国际贸易 .
 There are four signs in Chinese: two for “international” 国际 and two for trade: 贸易.⁷

Look at the first square and think of it as representing the full English expression:



Then you can think of it as a diagram representing international trade, paralleling one of my own shiftings of Lonergan’s baseball diagram that points to trade in consumer goods:



⁷ In more detail, international trade 国际贸易 can be thus split: 国 Country (guo); 际 Inter (ji); 贸 Trade (mao); 易 Easy (yi).

Does the Chinese parallel better the meaning of 'international trade'?
Pause over these ten words: eleven if you think of the end-word "?"
Perhaps think of them as another square diagram:

Does the Chinese paral

lel better the meaning

of 'international trade'?

Where is this image pointing?

Where is this entire four-page image pointing? Is it a letter of a new alphabet?

And then there is the problem of a competent coach to read effectively to the players the last diagram, as well as the full diagram that is my four pages.

We shall, as it *happens*, as the edge of a *happening*, leave it at that for the moment.

Our problem is to come at language with a mad freshness, as King Sejong did in 1444, stepping beyond Chinese symbols in a manner that took centuries to root into Korea. Essays 2 and 3 give the context of our climb, a suggested long climb to a mature positive Anthropocene Age.