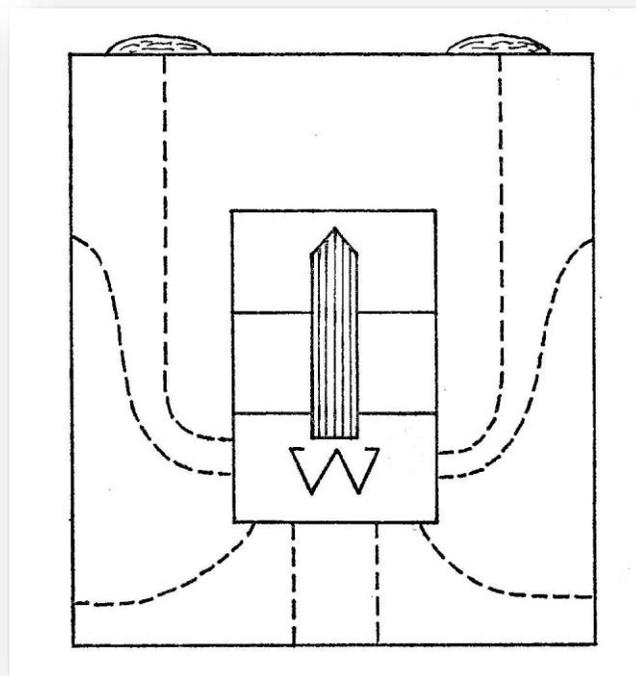


THE GENETICS OF GENETICS IN MIBOX

Since this is not a conversation with present Lonergan students, I cannot sense or say that perhaps some of you are beginning to get the point and indeed the humor of my pointing: that I am trying to get you to the point without the high leaping of the final paragraph of section 3.1 of *Insight 17*, the high leaping that is densely expressed in section 3.2 “The Notion of a Universal Viewpoint.” At all events, it seems a good idea—and I did promise this return to the mibox problem—! or solution!—in this tenth essay.¹ So let us put in here, once again, the mibox diagram and wind our musings about it, (about)³ it, round the TV series *House*, round Lonergan’s solitary searching from Summer of 1953 to February, of 1965.



¹ In the end—literally—this essay took on a life of its own, pushing lesser considerations of the genetic constitution of mibox into the following essay.

Let us not get heavily into identifying, self-identifying, the mibox for the moment. Suffice it to note, at whatever level you can, that the mibox is the middle box of the inside box. It is the WHAT box, with wonder driving up through the molecules to it and beyond. It is the what that, in its fullness, asks, “What might be?”

Next I want you to pause over two quite different texts, one from Loneragan and one from James Joyce. Don’t get your knickers in a knot at the mention of Joyce: it is a few words that I failed to come to grips with for decades, and this notion and nudge can help you glimpse how Loneragan was stuck “in and over” a few words for almost a dozen years.

First, the Joyce text: it is a few words patched together from Irish, German and Latin.

“Deshil Alles Eamus”²

Deshil: an Irish word, perhaps easiest to recognize by an Irish speaker from the army phrase, “ar dheis iompaig”: *ar*: to; *dheis*: the right; *iompaigh*: turn. So, a quite normal marching order to turn to the right.

Now for the whole phrase: *Allles* probably needs no comment: German for *all*. And *Eamus*? It is the Latin for “let us go.” So, we can read the three words as saying “Let us all go round right” or “let us all go right round”. But there is a bit of trickery in James Joyce, Seamus MacCeoidh in Irish, that I did not spot for decades. Silly me?!

Secondly, there is the Loneragan text:

They are pure formulations if they proceed from an interpreter that grasps the universal viewpoint and if they are addressed to an audience that similarly grasps the universal viewpoint.³

We pattered about with the problem of “pure formulations” already, but you need not go back to that essay here. Just think of “pure formulations” as the sort of accurate scientific talk that the group of expert medics in House would exchange. If you have watch the program you will recall the group poised round a whiteboard jotting, musing, hinting, etc., over a patient examined and scanned etc. The patient, obviously, is curiously unwell. “What might he or she be?” is a double edged question: “what’s wrong and what is the fixing of it?”

² It is repeated three times at the beginning of the episode in *Ulysses* usually called “Oxen of the Sun.”

³ *Insight*, 602, lines 30–33.

Now, back we go to the Joyce text, and perhaps you had an LOL from my hint of giving James Joyce's name in Irish: James in Irish in Seamus. If you have not had the laugh, then look again at the text: Deshil Alles Eamus. Any change in the neuromolecules, in the mibox? Perhaps you are as slow as me at this puzzling. There it is staring you in the face. "Go round all James!" Have you managed by now to read Da Sign, *Dasein*?

So, we turn to Lonergan again, and think of the group of experts. But think now of the solitary Bernard. There is no group with him, but he certainly is surrounded by various experts in Rome and also there is a grouping of the relevant expertises in himself. What is the problem in theology? Well: linking the experts or the expertises so that the whole business, busyness, is not just a mess, indeed a commonsense mess, that somehow does not hit the streets. The answer is not staring him in the face. The experts and the expertises have just tumbled out in history, a patchwork, but one in which totalitarian ambitions can emerge. "Systematic theologians for a couple of centuries thought they were the only ones who were theologians, then positive theologians thought they were the only ones."⁴

How was he to read Dasigns of the time?

We shall get back to that later. What matters at the moment is getting to grips with the absence of parallel between House and Lonergan, or the House team and the Lonergan team. There was, in fact, no Lonergan team. House had an expertise which was shared, to a large extent, by his colleagues.⁵ Lonergan's expertise was not shared.⁶ Further, his drive to round off adequately⁷ in 1953 the cunning product of his expertise was cut off by his removal from creative thinking and writing to the shores of Italy and the chores of Rome.⁸

⁴ "An Interview with Bernard Lonergan," edited by Philip McShane, *A Second Collection*, edited by William Ryan and Bernard Tyrrell, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1974, 212.

⁵ Recall note 10 of *Interpretation* 9: "The *House* team are not into explicit positioning, but they are all quite tuned to sniffing out defective diagnoses and prognoses."

⁶ It still isn't. Even those reaching for his minding for decades have only startling suspicions of his distant view of history and God. And then there is the next note.

⁷ His central issue was implementation. On the failure of his disciples here, see Patrick Brown, "Assembling Meanings of Implementation," *Divyadaan: A Journal of Education and Philosophy*, 28/2 (2017), 203–232.

⁸ "... practical chores that you have to do if you are teaching a class of 650 people." An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan S.J., edited by Philip McShane, *A Second Collection*, edited by William Ryan and Bernard Tyrrell, Darton (Longman and Todd, 1974), 211.

It is, then, an eighth wonder of the world that he leaped in that February day of 1965 to his version of “go round all James”: “go round all Bernie,” or as he scribbled with vigorous underlining at the bottom of his hasty page: “vital, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, mine and catholic.”⁹ It was a shockingly private leap, and sadly remains very much so. Further, there is there is the paradox that his final meaning was not “go round all Bernie” but “Round all we go”: not “Deshil alle Seamus” but “Deshil Alles Eamus.” James—or Seamus—moved on to mind all in the anastomotic dream-privacy of *Finnegans Wake*.¹⁰ Bernard, certainly, has fulfilled a dream. “Theoretical understanding, then, seeks to solve problems, to erect syntheses, to embrace the universe in a single view.” But his mibox is to go on to flesh out globally the Mibox of God, to molecularize God, to give each of us the seeds of the shocking new and “absolutely supernatural”¹¹ “truth of interpretation”¹²: “that the universe can bring forth its own unity in the concentrated form of a single intelligent view.”¹³

But I have bubbled forward too too far, somewhat like taking off with my first year physics class to weave a post-graduate vision of the all-embracing Higgs field.¹⁴ Let me get back to the more elementary genetics of mibox in the next essay.

⁹ Note that the c is small in *catholic*.

¹⁰ *Ana-* : again; *stomein*: to provide a mouth. “Using the device of anastomosis, Joyce attempted, in the last chapter of his last work, to bridge all the great ontological chasms,” Margot Norris, “The Last Chapter of *Finnegans Wake*: Stephen finds his Mother,” *James Joyce Quarterly* (25) 1987–88, 11.

¹¹ *Insight*, 747.

¹² *Ibid.*, 585. The title of section 3 of chapter 17.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 544.

¹⁴ On the Higgs boson see note 73 (p. 33) of my book, *The Road to Religious Reality* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2012).