

METHOD, BOLD SPIRITS, AND "SOME THIRD WAY"

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Introduction

The present essay is a commentary on the first two pages of *Method in Theology*, with a particular focus on how to begin to appreciate the audacity of proposing that "some third way must be found ... if the less successful subject [theology] is not to remain a mediocrity or slip into decadence or desuetude."¹ There are three parts and final reflections. In the first part I discuss the context and motives for interpreting these two pages. Next I discuss being startled by the claim "Some third way, then, must be found." In the third part I comment on the difficulty of implementing 'some third way.'

I. Context

Reflection on the first two pages of *Method in Theology* was prompted by preparations for the Second Latin American Lonergan Workshop at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City, June 13–14, 2013. The theme of the workshop was "The Human Good," chapter 2 of *Method in Theology*, and participants came from various parts of Mexico, Bogota, Toronto, Ottawa, Tennessee, and San Antonio.²

Initially we, the organizers of the workshop, had considered grouping the presentations of papers according to the divisions of that chapter,³ but that proved unmanageable, and so we settled for a hybrid

¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 4.

² This essay began as a paper, "Espiritus audaces y el proceso acumulativo del progreso" ("Bold Spirits and the Cumulative Process of Progress"), presented at the Second Latin American Lonergan Workshop, June 14, 2013, and available in Spanish: <http://www.lonerganlat.org/publicaciones-en-linea/>

³ The second chapter is divided into seven parts: Skills, Feelings, The Notion of Value, Judgments of Value, Beliefs, The Structure of the Human Good, and Progress and Decline.

program that included introductory sessions on *Insight* and *Method in Theology*, followed by panels on ‘The Human Good,’ ‘Judgments of Value,’ and ‘Ethics’ on the first day; ‘Functional Collaboration,’ ‘Educational Reform,’ and ‘Probability and Development’ on the second day.

In Mexico City the gathering was to include undergraduates, graduates, and professors working in areas such as education, philosophy, and theology, a few kindergarten teachers, a handful of high school teachers, some of them in the area of math-physics, and at least one professional mathematician who teaches undergraduates. Some three months prior to the two-day workshop we began thinking about what might, could, or should happen in our two days together. There was discussion that we could try something different, something untried either in the First Latin American Lonergan Workshop (Puebla, June 16–17, 2011) or in gatherings such as the annual Boston College Workshop and the West Coast Methods Institute.

On a most basic level, I supposed that the aim of the workshop was to promote understanding and that some, but not all of those who would gather in Mexico City, would have at least one eye on the legacy of Lonergan and his invitation to “pluck phrases” from “dim worlds” and somehow, some way, “set them in the pulsing flow of life.”⁴ Perhaps, with great enough effort, a few of us would be led, cajoled to discover a “need of discovering what an Augustine took years and modern science centuries to discover.”⁵ At the same time I assumed that progress and decline were not just a skimpy four pages at the end of a chapter of a book titled *Method in Theology* to be commented on by a group of scholars in the Cosmopolis Group from Bogota,⁶ but also an operable

⁴ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran, vol. 3, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 13 (hereafter, *CWL* 3). Setting workshop presentations in the flow of life intimates the challenge of method: how in the world would our two-day gathering in the Iberoamericana in Santa Fe (Mexico City) reach and minimally impact the “pulsing flow” of the secondary schools and high schools of those teachers in attendance? “How does verse 2 of *Isaiah* chapter 11 conveniently hit the streets of New or old York, of Berlin or Beijing?” Philip McShane, *Seeding Global Collaboration* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, forthcoming), Epilogue.

⁵ *CWL* 3, 17.

⁶ Three papers from scholars in the Cosmopolis Group are available on the Latin America Lonergan website: Germán Neira, S.J., “El Bien Humano en el Drama de la Historia” (The Human Good in the Drama of History); Olga Consuelo Vélez Caro, “El Bien Humano en los Contextos Social y Cultural” (The Human Good and Social and Cultural Contexts); and Jorge A. Zurek L. “El Dinamismo Vital en la Construcción del Bien Humano” (The Vital Dynamism in the Construction of the Human Good).

<http://www.lonerganlat.org/publicaciones-en-linea/>

concern of those gathered. There would be no sense in spending money on airfare, bus fare, hotel fare, and meals if we were just to scratch one another's backs for two days.

This 'no sense' might seem obvious, but typically our motives for attending workshops, conferences, and other gatherings, not to mention motives for publishing articles and books, are mixed, and could include: an addition to a curriculum vitae to help with a job search, tenure review, or recognition by SNI,⁷ an expense-paid opportunity to do some sightseeing, an escape from an unfriendly climate, or some finite good, including receiving an honor or award,⁸ or even "sharing a drink they call loneliness" which is "better than drinking alone."⁹

Since the theme of the Mexico City workshop was "The Human Good," I assumed that we would do our best to interpret that chapter, a matter not just of understanding the words—for example the six words "what is good, always is concrete" or the spread of eighteen words in the diagram on page 48—but of understanding "the author himself, his nation, language, time, culture, way of life, cast of mind" in a way that would be teachable to those who were to gather in the Iberoamericana in Mexico City. My expectations were likely too high.¹⁰

⁷ The SNI, Sistema Nacional de Investigadores (National System of Researchers), is a government agency that was created in 1984 to promote both the quantity and quality of research in Mexico.

⁸ It is no easy task to read Thomas Aquinas' ordered list of eight candidates for happiness: wealth, honors, fame or glory, power, bodily good, pleasure, good of the soul, or any created good (*Prima Secundae*, question 2, arts. 1–8: "Things in which man's happiness consists"). How do you or I integrally encourage forth "the appropriate perceptiveness and feelings," "enlarge present perceptiveness," and "transmute present desires and fears" (*CWL* 3, 496–497) when "present" is 0.00014522219% of cosmic joy and zeal? See Michael Shute, "Functional Collaboration as the Implementation of Lonergan's Method Part 2: How Might We Implement Functional Collaboration? Min this volume, footnotes 6, 7.

⁹ Billy Joel, "Piano Man," *Piano Man* (New York: Columbia Records, 1973).

¹⁰ Too high? The height is hidden in the word "teachable," whose meaning is well hidden in *CWL* 3, chapter 17. "[A]udiences are an ever shifting manifold" (*CWL* 3, 586), and there exists a need for ordering a potential totality of viewpoints (*CWL* 3, 588ff.) and levels and sequences of expression since "men [and women] live ... in some alternation and fusion of the aesthetic, the dramatic, and the practical patterns." *CWL* 3, 598. The teacher's task is largely to "reconstitute the sights and sounds, the feelings and sentiments" that make "ascent to the universal viewpoint possible" and prepare "us for an understanding, an appreciation, an execution, of scientific interpretation; but in itself it is not science." *CWL* 3, 604. The challenge of addressing mixed audiences is one of placing the meaning of a text within the "protean notion of being" so as to escape "the relativity of a manifold of interpretation to a

II. A Startling Text

Quidquid recipitur ad modum recipientis recipitur. What startles each one of us is in the eyes of the beholder.¹¹ Years ago, while teaching “The Structure of the Human Good” in an undergraduate ethics class, I had been startled by the set of terms in the third line of the diagram on page 48 of *Method in Theology*, in particular the possible meanings of “terminal value”¹² and “personal relations,”¹³ and whether the terms in the third line might constitute a “primary relativity,”¹⁴ indeed whether the diagram is an example of an implicit definition.¹⁵ It seemed that in

manifold of audiences.” *CWL* 3, 609. The possibility of the differentiation and specialization of modes of expression that emerges with “the advance of culture and of effective education” (*CWL* 3, 610) intimates the need for “some third way” and its eightfold division. See Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, chapter 5.

¹¹ This might be true in a unique way of the task ‘research,’ whose aim is to find an anomaly, something that does not apparently jive with where things stand at some present time and might be worth recycling. “You can have teamwork insofar, first of all, as the fact of reciprocal dependence is understood and appreciated. Not only is that understanding required; one has to be familiar with what is called the *acquis*, what has been settled, what no one has any doubt of in the present time. You’re doing a big thing when you can upset that, but you have to know where things stand at the present time, what has already been achieved, to be able to see what is new in its novelty as a consequence.” Bernard Lonergan, “Method, Functional Specialties, and an Introduction to Horizons and Categories,” in *Early Works on Theological Method 1*, ed. Robert Doran and Robert Croken, vol. 22, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 441–472, at 462.

¹² “Our capacities and needs reach out *beyond* present habits and institutions, reach out indeed to that mysterious *terminal value* that is somehow an ‘embracing of the universe.’ ... *Terminal value*? It is what you sense in the middle of a great concert, when there wells up a surge of your capacities and needs.” John Benton, Alessandra Drage, Philip McShane, *Introducing Critical Thinking* (Halifax: Axial Publishing, 2005), 122–123 (emphasis in original). In my experience of teaching undergraduates, I have found this short chapter easier to teach than pages 47–52 of *Method in Theology*.

¹³ “We relate personally when our wonder is lifting us beyond the present, when it makes the present mysterious and freshens it with hidden needs and great capacities.” *Introducing Critical Thinking*, 123.

¹⁴ See *CWL* 3, 515–517.

¹⁵ In Bernard Lonergan’s 1971 Dublin Lectures on *Method in Theology*, the metagram is identical to that given in *Method in Theology*, page 48, and Lonergan explicitly says that he’s using a variant of the technique of implicit definition. See archival item 13070DTE070, at 1. There are versions and variations of the scheme of the human good that could be the topic of another paper. See, e.g., *Topics in Education*, ed. Robert Doran and Frederick Crowe,

the seven words comprising this third line Lonergan had given the primacy of friendship discussed in books VIII and IX of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* a unique and important twist.

What startled me in my 2013 spring preparations for the Second Latin American Lonergan Workshop was finding myself reading the first two pages of the first chapter of *Method in Theology*, and reacting disbelievingly: "This is far-out and far-fetched. He cannot be serious about finding 'some third way.'"

While preparing comments on the "sketch" of social progress and of social decline and the suggestion that a "sustained observance of transcendental precepts" could yield cumulative progress, I was drawn to read the beginning of the story. The ethics of reading—cultivating a spirit of approximating the meaning of a unity "that is unfolded through parts, sections, chapters, paragraphs, sentences, words"¹⁶—had landed me on the first two pages of the book. The first mention of "cumulative and progressive results" is on page 4 of chapter one: "A method is a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results." This sentence follows the introductory paragraphs regarding the "three channels" in which consideration of method is likely to occur, and it was these three paragraphs that I found and still find startling. In these three paragraphs Lonergan describes three manners to think about "method."

1. Method as Art

vol. 10, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 33–43 (August, 1959); see also Lonergan's Lecture notes for "System and History" course (fall 1959), 48300DTE060, at 2 and 50100DTE050 (English Translation of 50100D0L050, "System and History" course notes), at 4; *Early Works on Theological Method I*, CWL 22, 35 (Regis Lecture, July 10, 1962) in many ways anticipates the later page 48, but with some interesting variations; CWL 24, 29 ("De methodo theologiae," March 22, 1963); the Georgetown Method Institute, July 15, 1964, found on CWL 22, 397, develops the "De methodo theologiae" metagram a bit; in CWL 22, 495 (Boston College Lecture, July 9, 1968) the metagram is now identical to the *Method in Theology* version, except that "skills" is plural in 1968; 593BCDTE070, at 1 (July 15, 1970, Boston College Method Institute) the metagram is identical to that published in *Method in Theology*; in *Philosophical and Theological Papers*, CWL 17, 334, a lecture on the human good in Halifax (September 10, 1976), the metagram is identical to page 48 except it adds column numbers and row letters. The citations to archival material reflect the numbers assigned to documents on the Lonergan Archive website, <http://www.bernardlonergan.com>. I thank Patrick Brown for this bit of archival research.

¹⁶ *Method in Theology*, 159.

The first channel of thought is the notion of method as an art, “learnt not from books or lectures but in the laboratory or in the seminar. What counts is the example of the master, the effort to do likewise, his comments on one’s performance.”¹⁷

Here we might profitably recall the discussion of method in Book One of Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, which begins: “Every art and every inquiry, as similarly, every action and every intention is thought to aim at some good.”¹⁸ The Greek *technē* is translated “skill,” “art,” or “craft.” It is that know-how or knack which allows a person to produce a certain kind of product, whether it is the kind of knowledge a shoemaker has to make shoes, the art of a physician to produce health, or the skill of a harpist to produce music. Aristotle contrasts *technē* with *epistēmē*—the latter does not imply production but rather knowledge for its own sake of that which exists or comes into being by necessity.

In Book One Aristotle conceives of politics as the master science and the ends of subordinate sciences are subordinated to the ends of the higher sciences, since the subordinate are pursued for the sake of the higher. He notes the limitations of question-begging and non-exact ethical politics: the norm in matters of human conduct is the wise man, but we should not expect the degree of precision that is attainable in mathematics. It would be just as foolish to accept arguments of probability from a mathematician as to demand strict demonstrations from a rhetorician.¹⁹ For Aristotle, what is known scientifically is demonstrable, and the objects of science are necessary and eternal, whereas art and practical wisdom are concerned with things contingent, things that could be other than they are in fact.

2. Method as Successful Science

In the second paragraph, after a brief consideration of method as art, Lonergan writes of those “bolder spirits” who “select the conspicuously successful science of their time”²⁰ and consider the precepts and procedures of successful science. He quotes W.D. Ross’s remark that for Aristotle, sciences dealing with contingency, such as political science, “have the name of science only by courtesy.” He also notes that today what many mean by “science” is natural science, and that human

¹⁷ *Method in Theology*, 3.

¹⁸ *Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics*, translated with commentaries and glossary by Hippocrates G. Apostle (Grinnell, IA: The Peripatetic Press, 1984), 1, 1094a, lines 1–2.

¹⁹ See 1094b, lines 25–28. Aristotle attributes wisdom in the arts to those with masterly skills: “Phidias the sculptor is wise and Polycletus the statue-maker is wise, and by ‘wisdom’ here we mean nothing but the virtue of an art.” *Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics*, 106, 1141a, line 10.

²⁰ *Method in Theology*, 3.

sciences occupy a lower rung on the ladder of sciences. For example, we would be hard-pressed to find individuals teaching or researching in the social sciences who refer to them as “non-basic,” “intermediate,” or “advanced” sciences.

In his 1965 address at Marquette University, published in 1967 as “Dimensions of Meaning,” Lonergan indicated what he calls a “breakdown of classical culture” whose “clearest and neatest illustration lies in the field of science.”²¹ He adds that the modern ideal of science does not oppose science and opinion, nor does it oppose theory and practice.²² The modern ideal is question-begging orthopraxis, including noetic praxis,²³ and the invitation of *Insight* is to appropriate noetic praxis—a pattern of conscious operations—in math and physics, and slowly develop a worldview that Lonergan calls “emergent probability.” The invitation is repeated in the second footnote of the first chapter of *Method in Theology* as well as in the chapter on “Dialectic.”²⁴

The last two words in the paragraph dealing with the second of three channels are “academic disciplines.” Lonergan contrasts lists of sciences and lists of academic disciplines, and notes that theologians “often have to be content if their subject is included” in the second list.

3. Method as ...?

²¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan*, ed. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran, vol. 4, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 238, 240.

²² The non-opposition of science and opinion might very well be a doctrine in need of effective communication and implementation. Consider the good number of those who believe in the authority of science—“It’s been scientifically proven”—and those who contrast theory and practice—“It’s just a theory.” A few months ago I attended a workshop for English teachers with years of experience, some of whom have a graduate degree but do not have what are now required credentials to teach English. The woman who described the ten-month intensive program spontaneously contrasted the “theoretical” Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) with the more “practical” In-service Certificate in English Language Teaching (ICELT), obviously with the intention of selling the latter to those gathered. The audience spontaneously nodded. Other indications that the doctrine of non-opposition has not “affected the basic fabric of classical *academic* culture” (*CWL* 3, 239 adding *academic*) is our spontaneous use of words such as “abstract” and “concrete,” “practical” and “theoretical,” “real life,” “mathematical certainty,” etc. etc.

²³ “Praxis acknowledges the end of the age of innocence. It starts from the assumption that authenticity cannot be taken for granted.” Bernard Lonergan, “The Ongoing Genesis of Methods,” *A Third Collection*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 160. See also Bernard Lonergan, “Dialectic of Authority,” *A Third Collection* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 5–12.

²⁴ “One has not only to read *Insight* but also to discover oneself in oneself.” *Method in Theology*, 260.

In the describing the second channel, those who conceive of method along the lines of successful science, Lonergan describes them as “bolder spirits,” i.e., bolder than those who conceive of method more along the lines of artistic know-how. What was quite startling was his description of the third channel, where he appears bolder than the bolder spirits. Instead of being satisfied to see theology included in a list of academic disciplines, Lonergan proposed a third way that: (i) appeals to physics to formulate a notion of method; (ii) incorporates empirically verifiable procedures of the human mind; (iii) discerns a set of transversal operations, which he calls “transcendental method”; and (iv) indicates the relevance of the set of operations to special methods in particular fields.²⁵ The related and recurrent operations of the third way would yield “cumulative and progressive results.” But how?

A partial and very sketchy answer to the question is found in *Insight*, in the discussion of Cosmopolis as: (i) a solution to general bias that results from fragmented specialization²⁶ and results in the “retreat of culture into an ivory tower”; (ii) the implementation of timely and fruitful ideas that would otherwise remain inoperative; and (iii) a withdrawal from practical endeavors to change in the schedules of probabilities of advances in technology, economics, and education.

In his search for the meaning of Cosmopolis, Lonergan scientifically named the unknown: “Like every other object of human intelligence, it is in the first instance an X , what is to be known when one understands.”²⁷ The X Cosmopolis would be the implementation of a Y —“emergent probability,”²⁸ that is made possible by the study of something like the oscillation in number of heads or tails (temporal juxtaposition) or the distribution of people in a cocktail party (spatial juxtaposition) that searches for a type of intelligibility that did not exist for either Aristotle or Kant: probability.²⁹ The unknown X , if ever identified, would be the

²⁵ *Method in Theology*, 4.

²⁶ Disciplinary divisions and specializations, including area(s) of specialization (AOS) and area(s) of competence (AOC), which are the bread and butter of the academic job market in philosophy in the United States, do little or nothing to promote the canon of complete explanation in *CWL* 3, 107–109.

²⁷ *CWL* 3, 263.

²⁸ The study of algebra and the appropriation of the assimilative power (Piaget) to replace words like “Cosmopolis” and phrases like “emergent probability” with symbols X and Y are part of the “human touch” that Lonergan endorses in *CWL* 10, *Topics in Education*. See “The New Learning: Mathematics,” *CWL* 10, chapter 5, and “Piaget and the Idea of a General Education,” *CWL* 10, chapter 8.

²⁹ For Aristotle there is no scientific study of the non-systematic, and thus any study of randomness would be non-scientific. If by chance a rock were to fall on and kill a philosopher or king, there is no reason to anticipate a correlation between the tragic event and a similar event that occurs three

solution to a fairly complex problem involving short and long cycles of decline leading to the Babel of our day. But the book *Insight* does not identify a solution: “Cosmopolis is not Babel, yet how can we break from Babel? This is the problem. So far from solving it in this chapter, we do not hope to reach a full solution in this volume.”³⁰

The key to becoming an executor of emergent probability is identified in *Method in Theology* as a division of labor that is along the lines neither of fields nor of subjects, and that “curbs one-sided totalitarian ambitions” by identifying “what precisely they are doing, how their operations are related to immediate ends, and how such immediate ends are related to the total end of the subject of ... inquiry.”³¹ The solution would include learning, albeit quite slowly, how to distinguish different roles and tasks.

III. Implementation: Learn to swim by swimming

In a sense, Lonergan’s lifelong struggle was to get theology off the list of academic disciplines and onto the list of sciences.³² Again, but how? The

months later. There is no science of “men killed by falling rocks.” In Kant’s post-Galilean horizon, classical laws, for example free-fall, are immediately linked to imaginable particles. Galileo could not admit the abstract nature of classical laws, so he had no reason to look for non-systematically related secondary determinations. The “not too happy” assumptions of Galileo become clear “in Kant, where the real and objective bodies of Galilean thought prove to constitute no more than a phenomenal world.” *CWL* 3, 153. Lonergan distinguishes visible bodies, like dogs and trees that are “already-out-there-now,” from invisible dog-things and tree-things. “As the electron, so also the tree, insofar as it is considered a thing itself, stands within a pattern of intelligible relations and offers no foothold for imagination.” *CWL* 3, 275.

³⁰ *CWL* 3, 267.

³¹ *Method in Theology*, 137

³² In January of 1935 he wrote in a letter that the Catholic philosopher “always tends to express his thought in the form of a demonstration by arguing that opposed views involve a contradiction. The method is sheer make-believe but to attack a method is a grand scale operation calling for a few volumes.” Letter to Henry Keane, January 22, 1935, reprinted in Pierrot Lambert and Philip McShane, *Bernard Lonergan: His Life and Leading Ideas* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2010), 144–154, at 153. Lonergan remarked about his four years (1926–1930) in London, where he would first study philosophy: “I was very much attracted by one of the degrees in the London syllabus: Methodology. I felt there was absolutely no method to the philosophy I had been taught; it wasn’t going anywhere.” He would have taken methodology, but his provincial, Fr. John Filion, replied: “No, do classics.” Later Lonergan was grateful for the advice: “The only time I had an idea of what I’d like to study, I wanted to do methodology. Now I’m glad they wouldn’t let me.” *Caring about Meaning: Patterns in the Life of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Pierre Lambert,

very fine, humble, and effective roles and tasks anticipated by Lonergan do not yet exist; there are no events, incidents, or outcomes. How might efficient collaboration begin when the empirical data does not yet exist? In almost all areas, with the exception of logic and mathematics, good definitions require empirical data.³³

The difficulty in beginning such a massive paradigm shift without empirical data might be the reason such little attention has been paid to functional collaboration as the solution to the *X* Cosmopolis.³⁴ We are creatures of habit, and institutionalized habits are not easy to shake. How might workshops and other gatherings function differently, a bit more caringly?

First, I believe that we need analogies, stories, and images in order to appreciate and in some way hold on to that which we do not understand. A Mexican family goes every year on vacation to Acapulco, but the vacations have become problematic because they do not meet the changing needs of the children or the adults. What might they do?³⁵

A second possibility is to review essays, articles, even books with the questions “What functional specialty might this suggest?” or “What part or parts merit recycling?” in mind.³⁶ These questions will not only make “method” a topic, but could also reveal a gap between current practices and the distinctions that are needed to begin to implement a known unknown. Blind believers could join blind believers to reverse the “one-sidedness ... from the middle ages to the present day”³⁷ that results from undifferentiatedly considering one specialty the whole, or from not considering the needed division of labor at all.

Charlotte Tansey, and Cathleen Going (Montreal, Thomas More Institute, 1982), 10, 137.

³³ See *CWL* 3, 329–333, 353–362.

³⁴ The latest *Lonergan Studies Newsletter* (35/3, September 2014) arrived this morning via email. “Collaboration” appears twice: (i) Adam G. Hincks, “Justified Reason: The Collaboration of Knowledge, Belief, and Faith,” *America: The National Catholic Review*, Sept. 22, 2014, 15–18; (ii) “Functional Collaboration in the Academy: Advancing Bernard Lonergan’s Central Achievement,” the 6th International Lonergan Conference, University of British Columbia, July 21–25, 2014. Besides the fringe gathering in Vancouver, there appears to be little interest in embracing functional collaboration.

³⁵ “Vacaciones Familiares en Acapulco” (Family Vacations in Acapulco) is a fable that I wrote for and regularly share with undergraduate students. An English version can be found in James Duffy, “Ethics as Functional Collaboration,” *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis* 7 (2012), 134–136. See also Philip McShane, “The Turn Around,” *Futurology Express* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2014), chapter one.

³⁶ The same could be done with the *Collected Works of Lonergan*. For example, was *Insight* nascent research, foundations, and/or doctrines?

³⁷ *Method in Theology*, 137.

Another possibility would be for undergraduates, graduate students, and professors alike to take our best, humble shot at narratively positioning ourselves in a footnoteless and largely autobiographic monologue about progress and decline or, perhaps more realistically, about differentiating basic and surplus economic flows.

A possibility for those of us in the trenches of teaching or pastoral ministry would be to share frustrations, doubts, hopes, and fears, and how these experiences intimate sets and sequences of differentiated consciousness. What are small, doable steps to move from “filler” to something filling and satisfying?³⁸ Participants in these encounter groups³⁹ could share stories of successes and failures. Encounter groups of those directing masters or doctoral theses could focus on what we might do to help graduate students and ourselves to get in tune with timely differentiations of roles and tasks. Along these same lines is the possibility of self-interpreting a teaching practice, a text, or a publication with a friendly and self-loving eye on reversal.⁴⁰

The existential challenge underlying these possibilities is that it requires a real assent to the first two pages of *Method in Theology*, or a bold dissent, say: “In the last fifty years, theology has progressed alongside developments in blood typing, banking, and transfusion. I have found evidence of such progress in *Modern Theology*, *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, *Literature and Theology*, *New*

³⁸ In my experience teaching philosophy, both in the United States and in Mexico, I have seen and spoken with students who wonder if I have something like “a clear and distinct idea about what precisely I am doing.” *Method in Theology*, 137. Well, I don’t! The Spanish phrase for the undifferentiated mess, not just in philosophy but pretty much across the humanities curriculum, is “de relleno,” which means “filler” or “stuffing.” See also “Spontaneous Questions and Belief” in James Duffy, “Ethics as Functional Collaboration,” *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis* 7 (2012), 127–128.

³⁹ Fred Crowe writes of encounter groups, challenging and being challenged to self-scrutiny, and the un-imagine-ability of inviting colleagues to participate in a discussion where the spirit of the meeting would be self-revelation, in Frederick Crowe, *The Lonergan Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA: Cowley, 1980), 92–93. In this same work he wonders if a “great silence” would occur if many were infected by Lonergan’s breakthrough (page 39) to a division of tasks and roles that includes “an Augustinian confession of what we have been, of the past that has made us what we are” (page 91). There very well might be a reason to maintain silence. I opt for helping each other dance to a different tune, holding hands the way pre-school kids do when they cross the street, or when they sing and play at recess.

⁴⁰ “I am interpreting my talking of 1977, and puttering around with my sorry story of presentations of thirty years after that. I am musing about reversing my presentational position.” Philip McShane, *FuSe* 18, “Ways to Get Into Functional Collaboration.” <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/fuse-18.pdf>

Blackfriars, Heythrop Journal, Political Theology, and Theological Studies, and I am not at all afraid to defend my position.”

Final Comments

Why is the longer cycle of decline so long? My position—here I stand, professing—is that it is very difficult to answer this question because our living, thinking, speaking, and fantasizing have been and continue to be warped by the same longer cycle. How will emergent probability find its way into the high school text books and high school teachers in Mexico City or Bogota in the next one-hundred years?⁴¹ It will require patient scribbling of diagrams as part and parcel of writing humane grade school and high school text books which are to include exercises that will prepare men and women to begin to work their way through the first four chapters of *Insight*, or some such book.⁴²

It is not easy to fathom how aesthetically pleasing physics, chemistry, and economics texts⁴³ are to replace ugly, unempirical, truncated, and truncating high school textbooks in Mexico City and elsewhere in the next one hundred or one thousand years. Nor is it easy to imagine how, in the third stage of meaning, sufficiently cultured, displaced dance instructors will luminously introduce their students to themselves while teaching the salsa, tango, or bachata in the real dance salon, which then, then, will be nowhere, nowhere for everyone, everyone: differentiated consciousness has been achieved and speaking effectively to undifferentiated consciousness is greater.

How much bolder than bolder is the suggestion that “some third way, then, must be found”?⁴⁴

It is more than just interesting to note that Lonergan’s bold spirit had antecedents; it was not unlike him to seek some other way. In 1942 he had written about a new political economic viewpoint that “transforms, reformulates, reinterprets the correlations of earlier science” and boldly “introduces a radically new perspective” that successfully

⁴¹ See James Gerard Duffy, “El azar, la probabilidad emergente y la cosmópolis” (Randomness, Probability and Cosmopolis), *Revista de Filosofía* 135 (Universidad Iberoamericana, 2013), 313–337. The article is available online: http://www.iberopublicaciones.com/filosofia/index.php?id_volumen=6

⁴² If *Insight* included diagrams and sets of problems at the end of each chapter, it would be obvious that it is a graduate book in need of grade school, high school, and undergraduate back-up texts with ranges and sequences of exercises.

⁴³ See Philip McShane, “Aesthetic Loneliness and the Heart of Science,” *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis* 6 (2011), 51–84.

⁴⁴ In *Posthumous* 18, “Beyond ‘Bolder Spirits’ in the ‘Difficult and Laborious,’” Philip McShane suggests reading the three channels or ways as somehow isomorphic to the three stages of meaning, the third being a communal achievement. <http://www.philipmcshane.org/posthumus/>

considers “overlooked facts.”⁴⁵ From his years of work in the 1930s and 1940s,⁴⁶ he would have included economics as an effete “academic discipline,” although many economists would likely take issue with the claim that money, correctly understood, will eventually disappear.⁴⁷

The hypothetical “would” is no less hypothetical some seventy years after Lonergan shared his phantasy. Economists have not noticed *Macrodynamic Analysis*, CWL 15 or *For a New Political Economy*, CWL 21, and certainly do not bother to read a book with “theology” in the title. Why would they? It would be like asking professional theologians to read books with “Political Economy” or “Macroeconomic Dynamics” in the title. Neither field nor subject specializations that dominate academic disciplines nudge economists or theologians to alter their sabbatical reading lists.⁴⁸

The hypothetical “would” also goes to the heart of the crisis, not just of our effete academic lives, but also of the impact of our lives on the lives of our grandchildren and great-great-grand-students. Who cares enough to make their lives slightly more livable than ours when such caring begs we fantasize a wonderland of “large numbers and long intervals of time”⁴⁹ in which “the probability of combination of events constitutive of the scheme leaps from a product of fractions to a sum of fractions”?⁵⁰ Who cares enough to begin to begin to imagine the circulation and implementation of timely economic ideas, not through random debates between followers of Keynes, Kalecki, Krugman, Galbraith, or Lonergan, but rather in and through a gorgeous shift to

⁴⁵ Bernard Lonergan, *For a New Political Economy*, ed. Philip McShane, vol. 21, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 7, 9, 10.

⁴⁶ See Michael Shute, *Lonergan’s Discovery of the Science of Economics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

⁴⁷ “Nor is it impossible that further developments in science should make small units self-sufficient on an ultramodern standard of living to eliminate commerce and industry, to transform agriculture into a superchemistry, to clear away finance and even money, to make economic solidarity a memory, and power over nature the only difference between high civilization and primitive gardening.” CWL 21, 20.

⁴⁸ See the last three paragraphs of Bernard Lonergan, “Healing and Creating in History,” *Macroeconomic Dynamics: An Essay in Circulation Analysis*, ed. Frederick Lawrence, Patrick Byrne, and Charles Hefling, Jr., vol. 15, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 105–106.

⁴⁹ CWL 3, 136–137, 149–150.

⁵⁰ CWL 3, 144. See also the conclusion of Philip McShane, *Posthumus 2*, “The Riverrun to God: Randomness, Statistics and Emergence.”

<http://www.philipmcshane.org/posthumus/>

“some third way”?⁵¹ Academic disciplines are “‘our life, our culture, the way we make our living.’ Who is to up-girt our robe so that we might dance wildly, less than a king, and more?”⁵² Clearly “moving from one set of roots to another” will include someone “crying out: Repent!”⁵³

Experto crede. I believe, help my unbelief. I care, help my uncare. I imagine all the lonely people, help my crippled imagination.

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⁵¹ See the second paragraph of the editor’s introduction of *CWL* 21, page xxv.

⁵² James Duffy, “Ethics as Functional Collaboration,” *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis* 7 (2012), 146.

⁵³ See *Method in Theology*, 271.