Philip McShane, "Working Towards a Standard Model,"
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Chapter 4
Working Towards a Standard Model

A rather neat way of posing the problem of lifting our exercise in functional research towards a better appreciation of the need for and presence, or absence, of an adequate standard model is to bring together two chapters of Lonergan's works: chapter seven of *Insight*, "Common Sense as Object" and chapter six of *Method*, "Research." We have brought those two chapters together already, indeed, though implicitly, in that functional research, about which *Method* hovers ineffectually, is part of the answer that emerged in 1965 to the problem of Cosmopolis posed at the end of chapter seven of *Insight*.

It would be good to add to this a messy but slowly illuminating pause over the word **as** in the title of the *Insight* chapter, and pull in Lonergan's reflections, in *Phenomenology and Logic*, on the meaning and significance of the phrase *subject-as-subject*.[1] The messing is directed providentially for me, and so for you, by the challenge of commenting on four submissions to our project that I am trying to handle today. The four submissions are in the order mentioned in the e-mail that I quote immediately, sent to the four. The e-mail is an illustration of the fuller collaboration required by our project within this seeding of the full effective global functional collaboration. What we are finding is that the question, 'What is Functional Research?' cannot be isolated from the full question of the functional structure indicated by Lonergan in 1969 (eventually appearing as chapter 5 of *Method in Theology*).

But let me get into the messing first, which begins with my e-mail to the group. Notice, as best you can what is going-on.[2] The messing anticipates the emergence of precise conversations of all of us, linked together by diagrams that have yet to emerge, but the dominant diagram

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[1] See the index in that volume, under *Subject*, near the end. I do not pause much over this text here, but it haunts our search here for its word, ***HOW***.

[2] "Noticing what is going on" in its innovative fullness is a task of the third specialty, boosted to creativity by the inflow from research that is lifted to what-answerings by the second specialty. The functional researchers' task is to select, refine and channel on to interpreters, neatly and effectively, in micro-spurts rather than in a hose-ups, what is noted. In the full culture of the standard model I would not have to note for you that ***Notice*** at the beginning of the sentence to which this note refers had/has all those meanings for you. In almost all submissions regarding anomalies, including the four great contributions talked of here, there inclines to be a hose-up.

at the moment is the matrix of communications, available on page 108 of *A Brief History of Tongue: From Big Bang to Coloured Wholes*. There the 8-by-8 matrix, $\mathbf{C_{ij}}$, is surrounded by $\mathbf{C_9}$ in a flow-of-time tunnel. This imaging is strange to some of you, but there is no getting out of it, or out of the need in general.[3] More about that and the particular image as we struggle forward. But let us turn to the e-mail sent to the group of four.

Hello All,

I write this common e-mail re your four submissions that strike me as greatly helping us [certainly me!] to grasp the turning point of Lonergan in *Insight*, *Economics*, and *Method*. I would hope that you all would allow the submissions to go up on the Blog: let me know, and send them to Bob Henman if you have not done so already. I would ask Bob to put them up in the sequence: Duffy, Raymaker, Dolphin, Zanardi. I would like to Preface the sequence with a general orientation, which really pushes us ahead to Chapter 4. I should have that stewed up by tomorrow, then move back to reflect on each of the submissions so that we can see better in this twilight zone of the question, 'What is functional research?,' or in terms that turn up in Chapter 4, getting a better grip on chapter 7 of *Insight* by focusing on the **As** in the title and reading the chapter and the challenge of Cosmopolis freshly with each our little glimmer of ourselves **as** subject-**as**-subject looking for, and ploughing darkly in, The Field (see index, CWL 18, under *Field*)!!!

Phil

I leave the e-mail unedited, and this is symbolic of a lift that is due in communications from a pseudo-detachment to strategic talk, with refined subtleties of abbreviated exchange,[4] among familiars concerned with the time-flow of global common sense as, not an object, but of the flow forwards of 7 billion present subjects towards, perhaps, ten billion by the end of the millennium, a flow so far 100 billion strong moving on, perhaps endlessly, to something under a positive infinity of humans. The familiars, then, THEN,[5] are to be a matrix-audience of the global tower, a massive

[3] Need I quote Lonergan's powerful pointing towards this? His pointing concludes, "if we want to have a comprehensive grasp of everything in a unified whole, we shall have to construct a diagram in which are symbolically represented all the various elements of the question along with all the connections between them." (*CWL* 7, 151).

[4] A cute illustration occurs to me, from a British army report from India to the Seat of Empire which was just one word, *peccavi*. The army had captured Sind. Eventually there is to be a world of meaning in which the word ***HOW*** will say it all, and Lobbyism will dominate the advances of and on common sense as object. See the concluding paragraph of this essay.

[5] Our bent in this seminar is towards a fantasy of the future. The **capital**

refinement of what Lonergan talked of in *The Sketch* in *Insight chapter* 17, where he talks of one who grasps the universal viewpoint and talks to an audience with a similar grasp. The grasp is to be a luminous reach for The Field mentioned at the end of the e-mail above.

What I point to in that packed galaxy-gazing paragraph is the distant *acquis*, the standard model, that reads and is to read chapter 7 of *Insight* with shocking and increasingly-effective freshness. Think of a freshness of reading in a much later millennium that smiles at the X-end section on General Bias, living, as they are to be, in" The Longer Cycle"[6] of incline.

But, back to that e-mail and the four efforts that are now on the Blog.[7] This, obviously, is the Preface with its general orientation, but it is an orientation that is continuous with the effort of Chapter 3, where I invited a fresh viewing of the domain of research, and pointed towards the usefulness of envisaging a world map flowing through time. The research community is to be tuned, in strategic combinations and layers, to "Common Sense as Object." We are not thus tuned: indeed, most of the seminar members find these beginnings of tuning a psychic strain. Let me illustrate.

Think of the two texts, one on generalized empirical method,[8] one on being theoretical.[9] Both are norms, normative. Now, what of anomalies? Our early efforts reached for parallel texts. But think now of the a-*nomos* that is the present practice of either norm. The texts, referring to being in the making, certainly refer to the a-*nomos*–Voegelin would perhaps talk of *para-noia*–dense on the current slice of world-maps, the ongoing genesis of the longer cycle of decline. It is interesting to note that the first of John Raymaker's anomalies is in fact in this area; scholarly views of, and practice of, interpretation are just not in the ball-park of the universal viewpoint.

And I turn now, but briefly, to the first submission in the list, that of James Duffy, to note his questioning paragraph under "justification for the selected text": he talks of the 'newness lurking when considering the text

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reference is to *Cantower* 5, "Metaphysics THEN," which winds round a final poem of Samuel Beckett: "go end there / where never till then / till as much as to say / no matter where / no matter when

[6] *The Longer Cycle* is the title of section 8.1 of Insight chapter 7.

[7] The four blog contributions are: James Duffy "Demanding Specifically Economic Precepts," John Raymaker "Anomalies in the Notion of the Universal Viewpoint," Ciaran Dolphin "Functional Research," and Bill Zanardi, "Lonergan's Puzzling Comment about the *Vis Cogitativa*.

[8] No harm for me to quote what is now increasingly familiar and marvelously discomforting. "Generalized empirical method operates on a combination of both the data of sense and the data of consciousness: it does not treat of objects without taking into account to corresponding operations of the subject; it does not treat of the subject's operations without taking into account the corresponding objects." (*A Third Collection*, 141, the top lines)

[9] "Theoretical understanding, then, seeks to solve, problems, to erect syntheses, to embrace the universe in a single view" (*Insight*, 442).

in the concrete context of related texts ... etc" where now you may puzzle over the reach of the words "concrete context" freshly.[10] But I do not wish to comment at length on the four submissions, as I had originally in mind. So, I look at James' three great questions at the end, each bubbling with pages of possible reflections that could emerge instead of the "something comic" that we are doing in this seminar. Might I recall Fred Crowe's ending to his gallant but failed book: "someday too, I hope, theology will be restructured according to a method that operates on the level of our times; this book is meant to be a spadeful of earth in the moving of a mountain."[11] We are a stumbling seminar trying to move a mountain.

I return to John Raymaker and note that part of his reflection, in that anomaly, is in the ball park in which Crowe struggles, the struggle with Christian and Church meanings.[12] Both his and Crowe's reflections in fact belong in the second seminar, and we return to them later, especially in *FuSes* 10 to 16 and the related seminars.

John's second anomaly is in fact a cluster of anomalies, and it seems appropriate simply to quote my e-mail to him:

"The second set, connected with Natural Resultance is even more intriguing, but you have a variety of anomalies and suggestions packed in together. Here is where there are illustrations of the challenge of 'passing the baton neatly'... like Boyer just giving Lonergan one text. There are various angles here, and indeed Lonergan does not clear it up himself (so, a collection of anomalous pointers, as in that section of *Verbum*). For instance, the one road that I followed up myself is the road that leads to connecting Lonergan's full view of finality with the 'natural resultance' text: finality is a dynamics in being that makes it 'natural' to have–oddly, anomalously–**improvement** emergent. Right from the beginning, at the first second of the 13.7 billion years, chemicals emerge from things of physics. Is there something here that is more than efficiency, more than divine instrumental efficiency? A puzzle, a large metaphysical puzzle: one that is in those pages of *Verbum*.

But you see how difficult it is to actually pin down a treatable question and pass it on to the interpreters suggestively? All this is lurking in the question 'What is functional research?' **AND** I don't think that Lonergan had the time or energy to tackle that question in those years after 1966."

The beginning of this last paragraph of the e-mail is a question of How-difficulty that we have all found an answer to in our struggles to pass the baton: "it is not easy ... sweetness and light."[13] Perhaps we'll get closer

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[10] James Duffy "Demanding Specifically Economic Precepts."

[11] Frederick Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word. A Study in History* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 149.

[12] John Raymaker "Anomalies in the Notion of the Universal Viewpoint."

[13] *CWL* 3, 266. I am, of course, quoting the final characteristic of Cosmopolis, as I edge towards my final topic.

to neat exchanges in our third attempt?

I move on now to Ciaran Dolphin's contribution and find that I have little comment on what is a dense presentation of anomalies coupled with a tendency–we all have had it–to move on into wider zones that bring us all the way to issues of foundations and communications.[14] Quickly we get to the problem of a range of audiences ... 'the village of science,' the students in classrooms. And the large anomaly regarding scientists is densely expressed one-third of the way through: 'In the 'village of science' this would not be a readily appreciated view.' What the set of anomalies points to is the need for a massive effort of collaboration, and it leads me to recall where I sowed the seed of our present effort, in *FuSe* 1, when I pointed to the need to draw attention to anomalous texts in Lonergan in the sense that they were skimmed over by most members of the school: The Lonergan school is a primary audience. Ciaran, like Bill Zanardi later, reads like a refined comment on that text of page 755 of *Insight* about us being breathless and late.

I say even less about Bill's contribution.[15] It represents a successful effort to display the central anomaly to very serious interpreters of Lonergan, those who are tuned to that discomforting text of page 755. The difficulty is the range of interpreters: I see pointers for work in neurochemistry, but also powerful nudges to those trying to rescue human sexuality from an ancient negativity that eats up human loneliness in bogus norms.

So, I cut myself short here, for the present.[16] Others will enlarge on particular zones and suggestions.

However, I would like to conclude with what may seem a very odd suggestion of my own which emerged today. It is a matter of naming the reach of our efforts, and how the human group is to go about the work named by Lonergan in his unknown X, Cosmopolis.[17] It struck me that what we need is a lobby: yes, I am thinking of the thugs around Capitol Hill in Washington. But now I think of a persuasive attitude quite beyond present muddlings and greed, a new culture titled LOBBYISM, a culture that climbs in the Tower Community and flows into the subjects of common sense, an ever-ready-countercurrent[18] to general bias, flowing

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[14] Ciaran Dolphin "Functional Research."

[15] Bill Zanardi, "Lonergan's Puzzling Comment about the *Vis Cogitativa*."

[16] My communication with the four other contributors here is more refined and will continue. Some of it, no doubt, will be Blogged, and if not it will be accessible through normal communications such as occur in the usual seminar gatherings. We are only warming up to our topic, our *Topos*, our place in fermenting the self-luminosity of common sense as object

[17] In *Joistings* 22: "Reviewing Mathews Quest, and Ours" I brought out the identity of functional collaboration with the reach toward realizing the aspirations of Cosmopolis. Here I am pushing for an effective, unavoidable, "in your face" naming that could shift the statistics of successful realization.

[18] Ever-ready? "The antecedent willingness of hope has to advance from

through, and living in, global Common Sense as Object. It is the fantasy of a reality not of our time but of later millennia, so that those later luminous subjects will smile, as I suggested earlier, at chapter 7 of *Insight* with its description of the primitive common sense of these earlier times. They are to speak a HOW-language,[19] a language of, and true to, the heart of human loneliness, a language resonant with the promise normatively present in all human exchanges, including the exchanging of money.[20] It would be "above all politics. So far from being rendered superfluous by a successful world government, it would be all the more obviously needed to offset the tendencies of that and any other government to be shortsightedly practical."[21] It would be, with massive refining effectiveness, "concerned with the fundamental issue of the historical process."[22]

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a generic reinforcement of the pure desire to an adapted and specialized auxiliary ever ready ..." (*CWL* 3, 747)

[19] My first struggle with the need for this massive cultural shift was in chapter 2 of *A Brief History of Tongue*: "How-Language: Works." I had not even noticed then the neat connection with the root reality of the word HOW: **H**ome **of W**onder.

[20] I foresee a massive shift in the theology of money, money as promise sublated into a thinking of the New Covenant, itself a lift of the Old Covenant of Jeremiah 31, "a law in the minding heart." It is at this level that one finds full luminosity regarding the evil of derivatives.

[21] *CWL* 3, 264.

[22] *Ibid*., 263.