

Effective Dialectical Analysis

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Introduction

The common description of science as ‘an organized body of knowledge’ possesses more than merely metaphorical significance. Like any self-organizing body—be it a tadpole, a giraffe fetus, an animal species, or humanity in its space-time solidarity—science develops. It develops through cumulative discoveries, especially significant discoveries, which often enough involve “a series of emergent leaps from the logic of one position to the logic of the next.”¹ The displacement of one logic by another raises the question of method. Is there a logic of leaping?

In the historical process of developments and discoveries, sometimes sides are taken and debates get heated.² It is within the to-and-fro of debate, comparing and contrasting, distinguishing and differentiating, that breakthroughs occur. It is a concrete process in which virtue and vice mix, as the desire to know and to do what is best is sometimes displaced by one or other contrary desire. A common or general failure of all humans is a disregard for unfamiliar fields mixed with a concern for the immediately practical that makes light of or simply ignores the long term.

¹ *Insight*, CWL 3, 502.

² When Galileo returned from Rome to Florence in the summer of 1611, four books were published in six months to refute his treatise *Discourse on Things that Float on Water*. See Arthur Koestler, *The Sleepwalkers* (New York: Penguin, 1959), 434. Koestler writes about the fertility of Kepler’s errors (265–66) and how the empirical Galileo “rejected Kepler’s mystical *a priori* speculations and with them the whole book [*Mysterium*], without realizing the explosive new ideas hidden among the chaff” (277).

Investigating the historical to-and-fro is the work of dialecticians, who themselves are part of the dialectic of history which they investigate.³ Lonergan discovered and articulated a dialectical method, a meta-logic of leaping, which can lead those involved to a new self-understanding, possibly to a new maturation. While this is not the place to attempt an extended or nuanced account of the genesis of the method of dialectic, it may be sufficient to note that Lonergan himself gave a precise formulation of the structure of dialectic, its levels, steps, and stages, in *Method in Theology*.⁴ Cumulatively, these steps flesh out dialectical oppositions in the materials. But they also flush out the investigators who are assembling researches, interpretations, and written histories, adding an evaluative interpretation, seeking out affinities and oppositions, identifying the similar affinities and oppositions and tracing them to their roots, and proceeding with the tasks Lonergan names *Classification* and *Selection*.⁵ In other words, the dialectical method invites a painstaking effort to make the implicit achievements and failures of each investigator explicit. Those achievements and failures are to “be brought out into the open,” not in one stage, not in two stages, but in three distinct stages of “objectification” of the personal horizon of each investigator in the group.

The aim of this article is to implement the specific procedure outlined by Lonergan and to invite others to do likewise. Five individuals do an exercise in dialectic aimed at promoting development and correcting oversights. It consists of taking up a communication of a solution to a problem, expounding a personal position, laying out what follows from it, and finally assembling and evaluating the resulting views.

We begin with the problem and the identification of the proposed solution, followed by various attempts to come to grips with this proposed solution by implementing the structure of dialectic.

³ See further, “The Dialectic of History,” the final section in Lonergan’s late essay, “Natural Right and Historical Mindedness,” *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 176–182.

⁴ *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 249–50; *Method in Theology*, ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadosky, vol. 14, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 234–35.

⁵ *Method in Theology* (1972), 250; CWL 14, 235.

The Problem and Proposed Solution

In *Insight*, Lonergan stated the problem in these words:

It may be asked in what department of theology the historical aspect of development might be treated, and I would like to suggest that it may possess peculiar relevance to a treatise on the mystical body of Christ. For in any theological treatise a distinction may be drawn between a material element and a formal element: the material element is supplied by scriptural and patristic texts and by dogmatic pronouncements; the formal element, that makes a treatise a treatise, consists in the pattern of terms and relations through which the materials may be embraced in a single coherent view.⁶

Philip McShane was aware of the problem and puzzled over it for decades. In 2012, when he discovered a possible solution to the problem in his interpretation of *Comparison*, he wrote:

When I got sufficient distance in my reach for the meaning of *Comparison*, finding it meshing with a fullness of the second canon of hermeneutics, and indeed with a fullness of a Standard Model,⁺ it took on the dimension of a solution to the problem of the treatise on the mystical body of Christ that Lonergan had posed in various places from 1935 to 1953.⁷

Stumbling upon the tentative solution caused “wild delighting shock”⁸ in McShane, who shared it with the community. So far, however, there has been silence regarding his claim. Why haven’t theologians, especially those

⁶ *Insight*, 763–74. See also note g on page 807 and Frederick Crowe, *Christ and History: The Christology of Bernard Lonergan from 1935 to 1982* (Ottawa: St. Paul University Press, 2005), 34, 39, 49.

⁷ *Road to Religious Reality*, 20. The first note (*) within the text cited reads: “I explicitly introduced the name standard model in the 2008 website book, *Lonergan’s Standard Model of Effective Global Inquiry*. The second note (+): “See Frederick Crowe, *Christ and History: The Christology of Bernard Lonergan from 1935 to 1982* (St. Paul University Press, 2005), 34, 39, 49. See also note g on page 807 of *Insight*.”

⁸ *Road to Religious Reality*, 13. See also pages 18–22 for a narrative of how the solution emerged while preparing for the on-line seminar “Functional Specialization” (2011–2012) and why McShane prefers “The Seamless Symphonic Christ.”

who have read the works of Bernard Lonergan, scrutinized his proposal and either refuted it for missing the mark or corrected and developed it?⁹

First and Second Objectifications

A. James Duffy

My positioning will focus on the importance of diagrams and heuristics. The first task is to make explicit, to talk about, that which I am capable of talking about, as well as to identify that which I am not capable of talking about.

In my many years of teaching, I have fiddled around with appropriate exercises—if not the “five-finger exercises” in the first eight chapters of the book *Insight*, then simpler ones. Inviting students “to experience themselves understanding, advert to the experience, distinguish it from other experiences, name and identify it, and recognize it when it occurs”¹⁰ has not been easy for me, and there have been issues about which I have been mistaken.¹¹

I have also discovered that diagrams and heuristics are immensely helpful for thinking, planning, and doing, as well as for thinking about

⁹ Lonergan had asked for similar attention be paid to “Finality, Love, Marriage” in 1943, but was met with relative silence. See *Collection*, CWL 4, 52. McShane writes briefly about the possibility of circulating “the key insight” of “Finality, Love, Marriage,” in an Appendix to “Epilogue: Embracing Luminously and Toweringly the Symphony of Cauling,” *Seeding Global Collaboration*, eds. Patrick Brown and James Duffy (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2016), 241–245.

¹⁰ Bernard Lonergan, “*Insight Revisited*,” *A Second Collection* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), 269.

¹¹ In 2010 I participated in a graduate seminar “On Time” at the Universidad Michoacán de San Nicholas de Hidalgo (UMSNH), the local, public university where I live in Mexico. In the seminar there was an antecedent expectation of hearing names dropped—not Archimedes, Galileo, and Lorentz, but Husserl, Heidegger, and Foucault. What was the precise issue on which, undoubtedly, I was mistaken? I forgot that “great problems are solved by being broken down into little problems” (*Insight*, CWL 3, 27). In the seminar I got caught up in a total coverage of musical time, psychological time, clock times (Aristotle, Newton, and post-Newton), and theological time (see CWL 1, 105, 323). If I had to do it over again, I would do my best to cajole and invite the group to perform ‘apparently trifling problems,’ for example working up to Newton’s first law, and marveling at the importance of inverse insights for residing “in” the empirical residue.

thinking, planning, and doing.¹² They can be as simple as making a list of invited guests, together with their needs, likes and dislikes, and making a list of possible entrees,¹³ sketching a map of the banquet hall, or naming the known unknown X, Y, or Z. The same holds true when I humbly, honestly self-search what goes on ‘inside’ my mind and heart and what might go on in the minds and hearts of those performing the “new and higher collaboration.”¹⁴ Implementing diagrams and heuristics is the way to proceed.¹⁵

What would result from a development of my position? Since I regard breaking great problems into little ones as normative, that is part of my “resulting view” promised land. Teachers on all levels incorporate appropriate diagrams and heuristics to orient the search and keep both themselves and their students humble.¹⁶ Scrutiny and debate are normative

¹² Two diagrams are provided in Appendix A of *Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18, 322–23.

¹³ “But which possible entrée are you going to go for? That question and choice is an enormously complex process in you, bringing in matters of temperament and background, nerves and molecules. At least you get a sense of that complexity as you imagine and think your way through this exercise. With the ‘what-to-do?’ question there is associated an imperative, Be Adventurous, Be Foresightful.” “The Joy of Choice,” J. Benton, A. Drage, & P. McShane, *Introduction to Critical Thinking* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2005), 80.

¹⁴ *Insight*, 740. I find it helpful to distinguish collaboration as achievement (fact) from collaboration as dream (future fact). Collaboration as achievement is the topic of “The Notion of Belief” (CWL 3, 725–740). The dynamics of a “new and higher collaboration” were discovered by Lonergan after writing *Insight* and are sketched in *Method in Theology*.

¹⁵ This is true of the unknown cosmopolis, capable of critiquing and intelligently directing history. “Like every other object of human intelligence, it is in the first instance an X, what is to be known when one understands.” *Insight*, CWL 3, 263. Is it any wonder that the word “heuristic” appears over 200 times in *Insight*? In his essay on Lonergan’s “intimate and complicated” relationship with Hegel, Mark Morelli begins by drawing the reader’s attention to four images that Lonergan had drawn up. See “Meeting Hegel Halfway: The Intimate Complexity of Lonergan’s Relationship with Hegel,” *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, n.s. vol. 6 no. 1 (2015), 64–70.

¹⁶ In the classroom I do not find it easy to embrace a Socratic attitude that is mindful of the distinction between nominal and explanatory definitions (see *Insight*, CWL 3, 35–36). It is simply too easy to utter words like “values,” “happiness,” “good,” and “vicious.” In *Lonergan Gatherings 7*, “Words, Diagrams, Heuristics,” I reflected on the importance of implementing convenient symbols

for progress, so those things are also a part of my “resulting view.” As dialectic catches on, and “sources of lack of uniformity [are] brought out into the open,”¹⁷ one result will be a widespread scrutiny of McShane’s proposed solution to the problem of the treatise on the mystical body of Christ as proposed by Lonergan. I do not understand all that McShane writes,¹⁸ but it seems to me that he might have discovered something significant that needs to be discussed and approved, modified, or rejected.

B. Alexandra Gillis

The materials to assemble have been given to us. *Insight* 763–64 is a dense page-and-a-half written by the middle-aged Lonergan confronting the problem of how or ‘where’ to include “the historical aspect of development” in the theological context, weaving together the “need for a theory of history” with the “need for a theory of development.” His view encompasses the “contemporary crisis of human living and human values” and provides a genetic-historical solution to the problem of progress. This dense paragraph regarding “the concrete universal that is [humanity] in the concrete and cumulative consequences of the acceptance or rejection”¹⁹ of the good news holds seeds of Lonergan’s later view of dialectic.

McShane takes us further by identifying *Comparison* as the much more precise solution to Lonergan’s problem in *Insight* 763–64. How, in a much more practical and effective sense, do you bring the historical aspect of development to bear on the problem of progress? McShane’s solution requires from us a far larger leap of imagination to begin to sniff out a way, a method, of sifting and sorting geohistorical genetic sequences.

It seems to me it should be clear we are entering a scientific zone (indeed not just for this task but entering a scientific zone in encountering Lonergan’s meaning, period). Here, we are encountering principles of genetic development within a full heuristic of a functionally collaborative implementation of an explicit metaphysics, to effectively confront the problem of progress. As I reflect on the words “It seems to me” and “should

while teaching undergraduates. (This essay is available at: <https://itesm.academia.edu/JamesGerardDuffy>)

¹⁷ *Method in Theology*, 250; CWL 14, 235.

¹⁸ For example, his article “Method in Theology: From $[1 + 1/n]^{nx}$ to $\{M(W_3)^{\theta\Phi T}\}^{4n}$ ” in *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis*, vol. 10 (2018), is a difficult read. When I hear the name “Higgs,” I usually think of fig newton cookies, which are a favorite of mine.

¹⁹ *Insight*, CWL 3, 764.

be clear," written in the opening of this paragraph, I recognize that I am moving into my own casual completion. I am soundly of the view that Lonergan studies is being non-scientific in not taking up McShane's solution. (There are for me lurking questions regarding the other tasks that I am sliding over in this exercise, as I land here at my completion).

My first objectification takes me now into a short rambling on my position. After 30 years of wrestling with Lonergan's meaning, with undergraduate degrees in Physical Education (Kinesiology) and Music, a Master's Degree in the philosophy of music (echoing McShane's work of 1969 on functional collaboration in musicology), and a Doctorate focused on the aesthetics of education, I will claim that I am positioned intellectually, morally and religiously in a line that is genetic to Lonergan's positioning. In the past decade and more, I have moved into Education from both the professional pedagogical perspective and the wider policy perspective. My day job in the zone of educational policy and system growth adds for me now a precision in one area of intellectual conversion: the specific need for effective theory.²⁰ Whether we are considering foundational standards for teachers in a province, or the efforts to understand the Body of Christ through time and eternity, a fulsome 'genetic memory' is required. The need to compare emerges in every area. How can we effectively move forward with improved practices or improved understanding if we have no genetic memory of where we have come from?

My second objectification moves me toward a view of the future. The 'promise' I begin to see is of a new scientific control of meaning fulfilling Lonergan's broad hope expressed at the end of *Insight*, "theology possesses a two-fold relevance to empirical human science."²¹ The full heuristic content of Comparison takes up that hope and is to be recycled with global effectiveness, "providing a statistically effective form for the next cycle of human action."²² But this vision is far-reaching. What of short-term practical visions that might begin to effectively handle the present problematic non-scientific avoidance of this solution? Does that view or promise belong to the third objectification or is it part of the second?

²⁰ CWL 6, 121, 155.

²¹ *Insight*, CWL 3, 766.

²² Lonergan, in his 1934 "Essay in Fundamental Sociology," in Michael Shute, *Lonergan's Early Economic Research* (University of Toronto Press, 2010), 20.

C. Robert Henman

I have been reading Philip McShane's writings on *Comparison* and his proposal of a solution to a problem posed by Lonergan in the Epilogue of *Insight*. I thought it time to offer my response and express my existential gap.²³ This is, for me, a difficult challenge in that, to my surprise, I have not really paused seriously over my positioning. It has been something assumed, but now I am pushed to realize that articulating it adequately is extremely difficult. There is the added difficulty that the occasion of the articulation is in passing a deliberative judgment on the suggested move forward that is McShane's solution to the problem in *Insight*²⁴ of identifying the place in theology of a treatment of the mystical body. The formal element, Lonergan suggests,²⁵ is incomplete as long as it fails to draw on a theory of history and that need be complemented by a theory of development.²⁶ McShane's solution emerges as an identification of the meaning of *Comparison* in section 5 of Chapter 10 of *Method in Theology*.²⁷

Is the meaning of genetic thinking the key to our ongoing historical efforts? I think so, but regarding intellectual conversion, and laying our cards on the table, I can honestly say I have not made the leap back from extroversion. I am too familiar with talking, writing, and teaching about the elements for 35 years. I have experienced them occurring in me when puzzling, when teaching, but something blocks me from the leap, or the startling strangeness experience. Is it psychological, or that I have not had sufficient explanatory experience? I am not sure, perhaps a bit of both. I just know I am only part way there.

I do find that such familiarity helps me pick out anomalies in the 'other stuff,' such as in my work with neuroscience.²⁸ But that said, familiarity

²³ Bernard Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic: The Boston College Lectures on Mathematical Logic and Existentialism*, ed. Philip J. McShane, CWL 18 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 281–284.

²⁴ *Insight*, CWL 3, 763–4.

²⁵ Lonergan seldom suggests without having thought such things through to a sufficient enough degree to support his suggestion.

²⁶ *Insight*, 764.

²⁷ *Method in Theology*, 250. I do not find that McShane's solution is incompatible with Lonergan's suggestion nor do I find an inconsistency between Lonergan's suggestion in *Insight* and his outline on page 250 of *Method in Theology*. Page 250 of *Method* spells out what *Insight* suggests.

²⁸ Robert Henman, *Global Collaboration: Neuroscience as Paradigmatic* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2016).

does not seem to help too much in offering explanatory insights for progress in the field. They may have methodological implications, but readers from the 'other side' require examples, and that I find very hard to offer if I am lacking explanatory experience. And perhaps that is where the lack of explanatory experience, the existential gap, raises its truncated head.

Strangely, how do I know I have not experienced the leap back if I have had no experience of it? The implication of stating I have not is that I know what that would be like. Well, I don't. So, is the existential gap somehow with me? Do the potency and ground of being in my reaching know it is not there yet? Perhaps?

This achievement of McShane seems to me to be no normal assembly or suggested advance. While we have been invited to be casual about the five operations that follow *Assembly—Completion, Comparison, Reduction, Classification, Selection*—it is evident that what I pick up on is, in fact, the fruit of some sliding through those five to arrive at a *Selection*. That sliding begins with the "seems to me" that was part of the first sentence of this paragraph. That, for me, is an act of *Completion*, indeed of enthusiastic *Completion*.

What comes through the problematic journey—I do not understand the five—to *Selection*? It "seems to me" that I have to explicitly oppose the silent treatment of McShane's proposed solution, which *Completion* has brought me to share. So there is now, for me, a *Selection* of McShane's Thesis C (C for *Comparison*) and a dialectically, foundationally opposed positioning that is implicit in silent treatment.

How much do I have to say? Concretely, that would be solved in the circumstances of the type of meeting anticipated by Lonergan. A group of dialecticians would be familiar with all their individual positionings. After more than a half century battling with Lonergan's meaning, led in by McShane in my undergraduate degree,²⁹ I claim that I have come to be in a position that is a stage on the road to Lonergan's intellectual, moral, and religious positioning. Above I have added some precisions regarding intellectual positioning that affect my view of the present *Assembly* and *Selection* that have emerged, dialectically and genetically, through my career of guiding and teaching and writing. That career—which includes successfully publishing in the world of neurodynamic psychology—has pushed me to an increasing respect for theory and indeed its inclusion in itself of its own genetics. This is taken for granted in writing and debating

²⁹ I met Philip McShane in the summer of 1977 at Mount St. Vincent University in a course titled "The Question of God."

in journals but not thematized. One needs to know what is going on, and has been going on, and most of all globally. It “seems to me” there are questions to be asked, that at present, lurk behind the crippled diplomacy, of a very strange notion of academic collaboration, which is outside a possible flow of a genetic sequence that would eventually implement Lonergan’s discoveries.

D. Terrance Quinn

First objectification

I briefly point to just a few aspects of my present positioning that I find relevant to the advance made by McShane.³⁰ I structure my discussion by focusing first on *comparison*; and then on *mystical body of Christ* and *mature Christian theology*.

Minimally and descriptively, with the help of two diagrams,³¹ I compare states, acts and operations.³² But, what of my growth in, for instance, mathematical and biological sciences? Without presuming to know Lonergan’s remote meaning, regarding my own experience, I take some of his words as my own: “The history of any particular discipline is in fact the history of its development. ... To the extent that the one studying this movement learns about this developmental process, one already possesses within oneself an instance of that development which took place perhaps over several centuries.”³³ Christian doctrine has developed.

³⁰ For some details on my positioning, see Terrance Quinn, *The (Pre-) Dawning of Functional Specialization in Physics* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd, 2017); *Invitation to Generalized Empirical Method in Philosophy and Science* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd, 2017); “Searching for a Philosophy of History,” *Dioyadaan: Journal of Philosophy and Education*, 30/2 (2019): 1-22; and “Lonergan’s Core Shift in Theological Method,” *Dioyadaan: Journal of Philosophy and Education*. Vol. 27, No. 2, 2016, 123-144. They remain valid but I have made progress since writing these. Growth is also part of my positioning.

³¹ See, e.g., Bernard Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic*, Appendix A, “Two Diagrams,” 319–323.

³² On twelve “steps” within dynamics of choice, I was helped by Aquinas, *Summa I^a, II^{ae}, QQ 6–17*.

³³ Bernard Lonergan, *Early Works on Theological Method 2*, tr. Michael G. Shields, vol. 23, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 175. Word-count precludes typing in the full quotation, the entirety of which is relevant.

Among other things, then, I find that the task of comparison also is to identify sources and meanings in (genetic) sequences of doctrinal systems in history.³⁴ Making the effort to hold to a basic position,³⁵ I have been (and continue to be) especially helped by studying instances of biological growth, while clinging also to Lonergan's "growth-map."³⁶ Indeed, I find it helps to add "self" to the first sentence, "(self-) study of an organism begins."³⁷ Slowly, then, I have been growing in a heuristics of *aggreformism*.³⁸

I have found that (as Lonergan insisted) working with instances is necessary;³⁹ and that working with elementary examples can be enormously fruitful. I have also found that (as Lonergan pointed to) attending to "notions of space and time"⁴⁰ provides a "bridge."⁴¹

What is the *mystical body of Christ*? The question, of course, is beyond me. However, might not I (and we) begin with an apparently simpler question? What is my (our) body? I find, then, that I am (we are) brought back to the challenge of understanding our here-now. How far does "the body" go? Who can say? But, in my eyes, I have beheld the light of Andromeda.

There is a task within dialectic that Lonergan called *Comparison*; and there is the work of obtaining a "treatise on the *mystical body of Christ*." McShane points to a linkage. For my part, I am finding that, in both cases,

³⁴ Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Doctrines*, tr. Michael G. Shields, eds. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour, vol. 11, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

³⁵ CWL 3, 413.

³⁶ See CWL 3, 489.

³⁷ "Generalized empirical method envisages all data." Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, eds. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadosky, vol. 16, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 136.

³⁸ Two quotations that, for me, map main features of the challenge are: CWL 3, 537 and CWL 3, 609–10. I have found it essential to have suitable symbolisms and diagrams. On this point, see Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, tr. Michael G. Shields, vol. 7, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 151. There are the various metagrams that I have found to be helpful. For a preliminary list, see McShane, *Prehumous 2*, "Metagrams and Metaphysics," available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.org/prehumous>

³⁹ For the sake of brevity, here I do not provide details on instances.

⁴⁰ CWL 3, 413.

⁴¹ CWL 3, 163.

data, realities and reach for explanation are the same. And so, I am beginning to envisage the possibility of increasingly adequate front-line theses of our unity-with-Jesus, a unity that in this part of our lives is, remarkably, *emergent probability*.

Second objectification – Promise in McShane’s discovery

McShane’s theorem is a precise pointing from a mature (and still accelerating) senior scholar. Considering his theorem from my younger and lesser position, it seems to point to the need and possibility of a major shift that would include: a new *kataphatic* Christian theology that would normatively build on progress in the sciences and that, statistically speaking, would be operating “at the level of the times”; rescuing “theology” (and, in particular, “theology of the mystical”) from counter-positional notions of “spirit,” “soul,” “mind,” “body,” “space,” “time,” “universe,” “multi-verse,” and so on; helping theology and philosophy make progress in *effective heuristics of engineering progress*;⁴² and the possibility of collaborating fruitfully with all areas of human endeavor, including other theologies. It would seem that the identification made by McShane also will: help us grow in the fact that the “mystical body” is to be known through human experience and understanding; and ground a transformed pastoral theology that will support human needs and potentialities in all cultures.

E. William Zanardi

The selected pages offer some clues to what McShane means by “comparison.” First, it purportedly is part of “a long-term effective answer to the problem of Cosmopolis.”⁴³ What is that problem? I understand it to be a question of how to effectively intervene in history to make it better than it has been. Lonergan envisioned Cosmopolis as a means to that end. It was to be a trans-cultural and semi-institutionalized collaboration among those persons intent on implementing his understanding of finitude’s relation to being. By the mid-1960s, his more detailed candidate for this massive task was functional specialization. Specialists would “divide up the labor” among eight groups of specialists with some diagnosing situations, others planning effective solutions, and still others

⁴² This points to a more recent advance made by McShane, *Æconomics* 17, “Engineering as Dialectic,” available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.org>.

⁴³ *The Road to Religious Reality*, 19.

communicating their results and gradually earning respect as key players in the making of public decisions.

What does this have to do either with comparison or with the mystical body (or with, as McShane's rewords that phrase: "the Seamless Symphonic Christ")? He writes that understanding the latter has been the goal of his struggle with the meaning of "comparison" and that arriving at that meaning is the solution to the problem of writing a treatise on the mystical body.⁴⁴

From these clues I infer that comparison, in some form, heads toward unity, in some form. One expression of the anticipated unity is the Scriptural passage, "that they be one in us."⁴⁵ Who are the "they"? The term may refer to a hope that humankind slowly progresses toward some degree of maturity, intellectually, morally and spiritually. It may also refer to Christ's long-term answer to the question of how that maturation is to proceed. McShane maps this second meaning by listing sections of the Table of Contents in *Method*. The list begins with the early stages of meaning and various horizons. In his recent works, he has been exploring a fourth horizon of contemplative thought and repeatedly posing a question for decision to his readers, i.e. his "Amendment A."⁴⁶

These clues lead me to surmise that the key puzzle in the selected text is the question of progress for both individuals and the human species. Taking a stand on this question means having at least a semi-articulated view of human history. Today a theology of history, "operating at the level of the times," would offer a positive and explanatory view. As well, specialists contributing to that theology would operate from a developmental perspective, i.e. they would assemble the most promising treatises, past and present, and sequence them to identify a best-to-date theological or philosophical view of history. To arrive at that sequencing, they will need to engage in the first stage of comparison, namely, evaluating the assembled treatises in terms of an expanded universal viewpoint. In stating their reasons for their evaluations, the dialecticians will be performing the first objectification.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁶ "Do you view humanity as possibly maturing—is some serious way—or just messing along between good and evil, whatever you think they are?" Philip McShane, *Profit: The Stupid View of President Donald Trump* (Axial Publishing, 2015), 85 at note 2.

What of the second objectification? Here the task is to identify what is promising and worth further development. In my recent writings on finitude and on Lonergan's curious remark that, though conditioned entities are distinct from unconditioned being, they need not be distinct realities, I have had some glimmers of possible links between comparison and "the Seamless Symphonic Christ."

To reconstruct those links, I begin with my positive answer to McShane's Amendment A. I thought an earlier formulation of the question he posed was superior to a later one. He initially asked whether you think "your humanity" and humankind were capable of maturing. Now this is a good tactic since few thoughtful people would want to indict themselves as *puer aeternus*. Second, the developmental perspective that favors the sequencing of interpretations of some issue is in keeping (1) with the dynamic pattern of human intentionality, especially with the role of deliberative questions in that pattern, and (2) with a dynamic universe in which whatever types of entities emerge from antecedent conditions remain but temporary integrations because those prior conditions are only relatively stable.

Thus, the products of human inquiry, e.g., philosophies and theologies of history, depend on antecedent conditions that are only temporarily stable. Therefore, my understanding of any selected issue will have "unfinished business," i.e. further development is possible. A sequencing of interpretations that identifies a best-to-date view will not be a final word on the matter. A two-stage comparative approach that relies on the front-line position of the universal viewpoint and searches for a further front-line position on some selected issue seems to me a superior approach to evaluating competing views. It is an approach that takes history seriously and is efficient in avoiding debates over obsolete views.

What of the link to "the Seamless Symphony of Christ"? My recent writings have "located" finitude in the minding of God and "nowhere else." Insisting on the reality of an entity "here and now" (Bonaventure's *hic et nunc*) or "there and then" reflects one or more counter-positions. There is no "Noah's ark" for our lives.

As for finite entities being distinct from divine minding but not distinct realities, I cannot repeat in this short commentary all of the insights leading to this strange view. One deserves a brief mention. While the empirical residue eludes our explanatory understanding, God knows it. If "the Seamless Symphony" is God's minding of so many particularities (you, me and all creatures great and small), we exist in Thought.

Now, given these conclusions, if I try to make sense of finitude's relation to being, I begin by relying on the two stages of comparison and then affirm our reach for more comprehensive understanding and better doing is part of a symphony of billions of players, known in minute detail by its conductor but requiring so many particular performances before something emerges that is intelligibly unified, beautiful in its overall harmony and delightful to those already rushing ahead in anticipation of its next movement.

By comparison our present performance is that of a high-school band learning to play new instruments, producing a lot of dissonant sounds and trusting the patience of the band director. To think we are ready for some symphony hall is delusional. Still, hope is the currency of efforts to develop. The two preceding paragraphs indicate what I believe "backs" this currency.

Third Objectification

The third objectification, Lonergan's "final objectification," is de facto a complex task of five authors having a to-and-fro of suggestions and criticism that lead to a final common hand-on to foundational persons. Its reporting would make this a much longer document, so it was left to James Duffy to give some impression of the achievement. He wrote the following conclusion of this paper in consultation with the other authors.

All five presentations either point to or imply the importance of doing exercises guided by *Insight*.⁴⁷ There is a shared awareness of the novelty and difficulty of the task.⁴⁸ Also shared is the desire to learn something about the structure of dialectic by attempting to do it. Four of the five authors underscore the importance of either the historical aspect of development and/or a need for a theory of development.

⁴⁷ Those exercises, however, are far too advanced for beginnings—there is the need for "simpler ones" (Duffy). "If I had to do it over again, I would do my best to cajole and invite the group to perform 'apparently trifling problems,' for example working up to Newton's first law, and marveling at the importance of inverse insights for residing "in" the empirical residue" (Duffy).

⁴⁸ This is expressed by Henman: "I have not really paused seriously over my positioning. It has been something assumed, but now I am pushed to realize that articulating it adequately is extremely difficult" (Henman).

The five authors also recognize an unexplainable neglect of McShane's proposal to the community.⁴⁹ Duffy reverses the neglect by incorporating in his resulting view a scrutiny of the proposal. Gillis is of the view that the response by the community she calls "Lonergan studies" has been non-scientific. Henman explicitly opposes the silent treatment given to the proposal and questions the notion of academic collaboration. Quinn points to the possibility of a shift to a new kataphatic theology that includes collaboration in all areas of investigation. Zanardi indicates that a theology "operating on the level of the times" is one with a developmental perspective, one that assembles the most promising treatises and sequences them in such a way that one achieves a view of history. He also answers affirmatively McShane's question regarding the possibility of progress.

All five express some realization of the fact that the result over which we have been conferring (McShane's proposed breakthrough) is beyond us.⁵⁰ The phrase "it seems to me," which occurs a number of times, indicates

⁴⁹ Silence, then, is a choice. What is the meaning of that choice? To date, only indirect data is available, namely, a continuation of patterns of scholarship that (a) are "challenged" by McShane's discovery; and that (b) were repeatedly rejected by Lonergan throughout his *opera omnia*. There are, then, fundamental differences between the five objectifications already provided and what is implicit in the present dominant ethos in Lonergan studies. With few exceptions, senior scholars in Lonergan studies have rejected the need for appropriate modern symbolisms. Old fashioned philosophical argument, however, has provided no foothold for "engineering human progress" (see note 42). For instance, it is said that "insight is into image." What is this or that image? Neurochemistry has gone well beyond "the field's early naivety of thinking that the road to cures and treatments would be easy ('the cells know what to do') without having to engage in the 'intellectual heavy-lifting' of identifying the intricacies of the molecular pathways underlying development and pathology." Evan Y. Snyder, "The state of the art in stem cell biology and regenerative medicine: the end of the beginning," *Pediatric Research*, vol. 83 (2018), 191–204, available at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/pr2017258>. The body of history also is neurochemical, luminous understanding of which requires additional symbolisms. So far, however, Lonergan Studies has been resisting history's call to move beyond "the field's early naivety."

⁵⁰ "I believe that [McShane] might have discovered something significant that needs to be discussed and approved, modified, or rejected" (Duffy). "This achievement of McShane seems to me to be no normal assembly or suggested advance" (Henman). McShane's advance will "ground a transformed pastoral theology" (Quinn). "McShane takes us further ... McShane's solution requires from us a far larger leap of imagination" (Gillis). "I have had some glimmers of

a gap, a recognition of “that which I cannot talk about,” but also a belief. The phrase could be read, “I believe in order to understand,” which is a posture for advancing in any field of inquiry. The most general context of belief is collaborating in order to effectively circulate an increment of knowledge.⁵¹

While drawing attention to a possible solution to a theological problem, the contributors draw on different expertises.⁵² Duffy writes of the need to “identify that which I am not capable of talking about.” Gillis points out that a theory of history presupposes a theory of development that, by definition, makes normative claims about progress and decline. She writes of the importance of operating with a “genetic memory” that tracks what has lead up to our best-to-date understanding and practice.

In their manner of presentation, Duffy, Gillis and Henman bring out or draw attention to the crucial biographical component of “first objectification.” Duffy and Quinn are explicit about the fundamental importance of diagrams and symbolisms in modern contexts. Quinn writes of having made preliminary progress in heuristics through the study of organic development and its relation to studying the organism Quinn. He also relates the question “What is my (our) body?” to the challenge of understanding the here-now. Zanardi helps reveal the need for a (functional) interpretation of McShane’s work. He also discusses something of his own searchings for foundations.

Final Reflections

All this belongs to the to-and-fro that recognized differences of approach, some of which generated discomfoting exchanges. The problem at the end was to find the common foundational ground that would be effectively handed on. McShane’s proposal was accepted by all as a key and possibly major advance, indeed one putting the solution of Lonergan’s puzzle in *Insight* at the heart of theology. It has the nature of a touchstone to which all later assembled advances would be compared—not a fixed touchstone but a genetically open structure that could ground “a resolute and effective

possible links between comparison and ‘the Seamless Symphonic Christ’” (Zanardi).

⁵¹ See further “The Notion of Belief,” *Insight*, CWL 3, 725–740.

⁵² Duffy, teaching graduate and undergraduate philosophy; Gillis, a background in musicology and education; Henman, neurodynamics, psychology, and education; Quinn, foundations work in modern science and theology; Zanardi, issues of “progress.”

intervention in this historical process.”⁵³ The key shared problem of the group then became the effective intervention in the non-scientific silence of the community.

Perhaps first think of normal science. When an individual or team puts forth a tentative solution to a problem, colleagues close in, so to speak, sometimes quite roughly. Illustrations of that roughness abound even in mathematics and physics. The pivotal task of dialectic is to make the best of an individual or team, to clarify positions, to air differences, and to move forward scientifically. The task as described by Lonergan is biographical, indeed autobiographical. Data is assembled, positions are objectified, resulting views are laid out, and the assembly procedure recurs. This is the structure of dialectic. This is the normal science asked for by Lonergan.

It is the belief of the five authors that the exercise that we have attempted, while not perfect, is a small contribution to implementing effective analysis. The five authors have positioned ourselves and described resulting views, as best we can. Our hope is that the exercise has begun to reveal the remarkable effectiveness of the structure of dialectic and that others will participate in a structured analysis of McShane’s proposed discovery.⁵⁴

Our suggestion is that attention needs be given to McShane’s proposal that the meaning of *Comparison* provides a solution to the problem raised by Lonergan regarding historical development and the mystical body. Collectively we suggest that the problem of how to study development elicits the implementation of symbolizations, be they simple diagrams or complex heuristics. Discussions that proceed otherwise too easily fall prey to what Lonergan called “pseudo-metaphysical mythmaking.”⁵⁵

But, having made our positive point about the scientific significance of McShane’s discovery, we needed to poise effectively over the phrase, “attention needs to be given” with which the previous paragraph began.

⁵³ *Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18, 306.

⁵⁴ In writing about dialectic, Lonergan too was reporting on a discovery—his discovery of a structured way to proceed when results are not uniform. See further Patrick Brown, “Functional Collaboration and the Development of *Method in Theology*, Page 250” in *Himig Ugnayan: A Theological Journal of the Institute of Formation and Religious Studies*, vol. xvi (2015–2016), 171–198.

⁵⁵ *Insight*, CWL 3, 528. Explicit reflection on genetic method begins on page 484: “To reveal the heuristic significance of the notion of development and to prepare our statement of the integral heuristic structure that we have named metaphysics, attention must now be directed to genetic method.”

The to-and-fro on this brought forth a spectrum of means of “cajoling or forcing attention,”⁵⁶ which would be a cumbersome addition here. But one option is obvious: let a respected journal that has a readership in Lonergan studies publish this exercise and invite others to react, question, debate, develop positions and reverse counterpositions. “While it will not be automatically efficacious, it will provide the open-minded, the serious, the sincere with the occasion to ask themselves some basic questions, first, about others but eventually, even about themselves.”⁵⁷

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⁵⁶ *Insight*, CWL 3, 423.

⁵⁷ *Method in Theology*, 253.

Appendix: Correspondence with the Editorial Team of *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*

September 12, 2019

Comments on:

“Effective Dialectical Analysis”

James Duffy, Alexandra Gillis, Robert Henman,
Terrance Quinn, and William Zanardi

The article presents an “effective dialectical analysis” that grew out of a “tentative solution” offered by Phil McShane to a problem stated by Lonergan at the end of *Insight*. That problem is to fill in the “the formal element” that would make a treatise on the mystical body of Christ into a genuine treatise, which is to say “the pattern of terms and relations through which the materials may be embraced in a single coherent view.” “Materials” refers here to statements and other expressions that have some connection with the notion of the mystical body of Christ. There is also considerable emphasis in the article on Lonergan’s insistence that hermeneutics be not descriptive, but explanatory, which is to say, understanding the statements /expressions in relationships to one another (second canon of hermeneutics, *Insight* Chapter 17). Since later statements/expressions come in response to earlier ones, explanation thus means understanding the temporal/historical relationships among such materials. Hence the need for a *theory* of history. Lonergan himself claimed that essential to such a theory of history would be “a theory of development that can envisage not only natural and intelligent progress but also sinful decline, and not only progress and decline but also supernatural recovery.” [It should be noted that here Lonergan has departed from his technical account of development in *Insight* Chapter 15 to include non-developmental dialectical processes, where the transitions from one system/stage to the next is not naturally intelligible, which is to say, sinful transitions are fully intelligible only in the light of supernatural intelligibilities. This raises difficulties with Henman’s question, “Is the meaning of genetic thinking the key to our ongoing historical efforts?” (p. 7) It is not genetic thinking in the sense of *Insight* Chapter 15, but technically speaking, but “tripolar” dialectical thinking (*Insight* 749) that is needed. Therefore, some explanation is called for as to why this different meaning of “genetic” is being used at that point in the article.]

The authors report that McShane's breakthrough to a possible solution to the aforementioned problem came about when he arrived at an original interpretation of what Lonergan meant by the preparatory operations of "Comparison" in the functional specialty of Dialectic in *Method in Theology*. "Comparison examines the completed assembly to seek out affinities and oppositions." Subsequently Lonergan remarks that the results of comparison (along with the results of assembly, completion, reduction, classification, and selection) will differ according to the differences in horizon (stages, differentiations, conversions) of the ones doing the comparison. Dialectic is designed to call forth "objectifications" of these horizons, and comparison seeks to comprehend how these differences are related to one another. It would seem that McShane's breakthrough was that the requisite *explanatory* comparison of the differences should be a comparison that puts them explanatorily into this sort of developmental sequence. Finally, if this is to be fully explanatory, then comparison must explicitly put ["position" is the authors' term of preference] one's own horizon in which one is doing the comparison into the product produced by the comparison itself. Most of the article (pages 3-13) offers the efforts by the 5 authors to do exactly this. This includes several very frank admissions of their own incomprehensions, or areas where they sense that residues of counterpositions may still be operating in their own thought. This certainly is in the spirit of putting themselves into the ongoing dialectic of the history of humankind.

Finally, the authors make clear that their one of their most important objectives is to gain "attention" for McShane's proposal. The authors are not subtle about their sense that a grave injustice has been done McShane and his proposal by "the non-scientific silence" of the community that they allege constitutes the "dominant ethos in Lonergan Studies."

We offer these three paragraphs as our own attempt to clarify the objectives of the article. We do so because, *if* this is an accurate depiction of the article and its objectives, it is not at all easy for a reader to discern that this is so. It certainly could have been stated more clearly and explicitly, and that would be a great help to readers. In particular, it would be a great help to provide an explicit recounting (including quotations) of exactly *what* McShane's proposal is (not just that there *is* some unstated connection), so that the reader does not have to work so hard to figure it out. Perhaps there is a clear statement in one or more of the writings by McShane that are referenced. But not every reader will have read those, so a clear summary with quotations of the breakthrough would be very helpful and would probably draw readers to those sources. The authors repeatedly and

honestly admit they themselves have not fully comprehended McShane's solution (e.g., Duffy: "I do not understand all that McShane writes.") The editors of this journal freely confess the same difficulty with McShane's writings. But it is also clear that there is a deliberate strategy in the way this article was written, which seems to regard straightforward clarity and explicitness as somehow incompatible with its objectives. It seems to prefer modelling the difficulties of understanding these things, as an invitation to readers to admit their own difficulties, rather than offering clear and explicit statements of contents, however provisional. In this the authors seem to model themselves on McShane's own preferred strategy, which may be effective in establishing *aporia*, but not very effective in aiding readers' understandings.

The "problem" of formulating a treatise on the mystical body of Christ that is referenced by the authors, and by McShane before them, is of the utmost importance. If indeed McShane has made the kind of breakthrough acclaimed in this article, it should both explained as well as proclaimed. It would be even better if some effort were made, using McShane's breakthrough, to actually engage in the assembling, completing, comparing, reducing, classifying, and selecting the materials on the mystical body of Christ toward the formation of a treatise. (Duffy's section is a step in this direction.) Where are the historical materials to be "compared"? That is to say, real histories of theology dealing with the *corpus mysticum* and the major historical traditions that have to be assembled. Dialectic is mediated by history. The article does not supply adequate examples of this, although Duffy's section is at least a gesture in this direction and Zanardi does make a brief reference to Bonaventure (and perhaps a Franciscan tradition), but what is the reader supposed to do with this brief reference?

We cannot help but think such efforts would do far more to draw "attention" to McShane's breakthrough.

Therefore, we express interest in publishing a suitably revised version of this submission, as an invitation for dialogue, be in the journal, to invite Lonergan theologians to participate. This in response to the accusation that, by implication, we have not allowed McShane's breakthrough to be discussed. However, by suitably revised, we mean a version that tells the readers explicitly what McShane's breakthrough is. This would be a necessary requirement for publication, as would some concrete illustration of its importance and implications in relation to the history of theological discussions of the mystical body.

September 23, 2019

Dear Pat and the Editorial Team,

Many thanks for the feedback on the co-authored essay “Effective Dialectical Analysis,” which is, as far as we know, the first attempt at doing the procedure that Lonergan lays out in *Method in Theology*. We do not believe we will know the fruits of the exercise, described as “an objectification of subjectivity in the style of the crucial experiment” (*Method in Theology*, 253), until we actually give it a try.

Lonergan identified a major problem in Christian theology. For one reason or another, McShane’s discovery of a solution, published in 2012, has not yet been discussed by theologians in Lonergan studies. His proposal was the topic of the Dialectic exercise, but we could have discussed any number of a range of fundamental topics. Indeed, there are three teams doing the same exercise on (i) the general categories, (ii) the meaning of *probability* in *Insight*, and (iii) “general bias.” And Fred Lawrence has accepted the proposal of a workshop on Effective Dialectical Analysis for the June 2020 Annual Lonergan Workshop.

The co-authored essay aims at implementing a specific procedure of the fourth task, Dialectic. One limitation of the essay is that the third objectification was written as a summary by Duffy. On the bottom of page 13 he notes that “Lonergan’s ‘final objectification’ is *de facto* a complex task of five authors having a to-and-fro of suggestions and criticism that lead to a final common hand-on to foundational persons.” Another is that attempting to *Assemble, Complete, Compare, Reduce, Classify, and Select* interpretations and histories on the mystical body of Christ would have extended the essay considerably, not to mention beg the question, “What is *Comparison?*”

A concern raised by the editorial letter is that of being clear and explicit for readers of the journal about McShane’s tentative solution. This is a problem of communicating something that, one might suppose, is not all that simple to understand. Summary statements for general audiences are usually not part of the “lower” and “easier” sciences. In the present context, an analogy would be trying to communicate what a *thing* is to someone unfamiliar with, and perhaps uncomfortable reading, T_i , C_i , S_i , and E_{ijm} . CWL 3, 286–87.

McShane’s proposed solution to a theological problem might indeed be divorced from the ‘real life’ of the readers. That is understandable, as *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* is a philosophical journal, not a journal

of empirical science. In journals of empirical science, readers are expected to work hard to figure things out. That being said, we see no good reason to reject the “turn to the idea” that Lonergan writes about after asking “whose ‘real life’ is in question.” *Method in Theology*, 139. Indeed, the invitation of *Insight* is to embrace “apparently trivial problems” in order to figure things out.

A fundamental issue revealed by the editorial *Comments* on our paper is that we differ in our views about the problem of communication. The repeated request for clear and explicit statements and summaries so the reader does not have to work very hard “clearly” misses the significance of the primes and double primes in *The Problem in Insight*. CWL 3, 585–586; see also CWL 3, 581 (discussing the counterposition on expression Lonergan names “the popular fallacy”). The request for an explanation and proclamation of a breakthrough appears to us naïve, certainly not aligned with Lonergan’s tentative solution to the problem of communicating a good word “to all the nations,” a tentative solution that he left to his disciples to figure out and implement.

These are fundamental differences between those who contributed to the *Comments* letter and the views of the co-authors of “Effective Dialectical Analysis.” The good news is that a procedure for resolving, and growing from, such differences is compactly outlined on “*Method*, 250” in the original pagination (pages 234–35 in the *Collected Works* edition).

Might it not be helpful for the community of Lonergan scholars (and beyond) to attempt that structured exercise? And so we would like to invite the editorial team to join us in attempting to *implement* the procedure that Lonergan identified as the way to sort out differences and lay the ground for moving forward. As a focus, we could choose any fundamental topic. Based upon the *Comments* and our reply to them, one possibility would be the chapter on Communications in *Method in Theology*, or just pages 355–58.

We think that such an effort would set a tremendous example for younger Lonergan scholars. The “crucial experiment” could, if the editorial team wishes, be published in *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*. Or, indeed, as is done in the sciences, our results could be circulated as preliminary data obtained from a crucial experiment. It would be an opportunity for us to give the method a try, at a time when the need for resolving differences is so apparent.

James Duffy

Alexandra Gillis

Robert Henman

Terrance Quinn

William Zanardi

