

The Dynamic State of Being in Love

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To speak of the dynamic state of being in love with God pertains to the stage of meaning when the world of interiority has been made the explicit ground of the worlds of theory and of common sense.¹

First and Second Objectifications

A. Alexandra Gillis

First objectification

This sentence is astonishing. I can't believe the vision it holds. But the words don't hold the vision. Lonergan held the vision in his meaning of the words. I don't hold Lonergan's meaning or vision, not even close. But the words reach out to me and make me want to aspire to that meaning, to that understanding.

The sentence begins so innocuously, speaking of “the dynamic state of being in love with God.” That's a state I inhabit daily, or at least, that's what I thought until I read further. Being in love with God is a state I have inhabited from a very young age, feeling the dynamic mystery of God present in my life constantly, in the stillness of a neighbourhood evening and the quiet of morning dew on summer grass. It's a familiar state to me, descriptive of presence—God's presence in my life and my presence to God (of course, the latter is where I flounder and fail regularly). So the words, that is, my *meaning* of those words, feels comfortable and familiar and alive to me and in me. And that brings up the whole question of *meaning*. Lonergan's meaning of the words when he wrote them; my meaning of the words now; my meaning of the words in a year from now, after I've wrestled with them again and again, and with my understanding of them; others' meaning of the words and others' work of wrestling with their understanding and their meaning of these words. Meaning as growing, as genetic, as open; meaning nestled in my

¹ *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 107; *Method in Theology*, ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadasosky, vol. 14, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 103.

bones and molecules, lifted and pulled (screaming and yelling, at times) by unrestricted desire, heading for the known unknown stretching beyond me, ahead of me in my genetic climb.

And speaking of the genetic climb, there is the second half of this sentence. Suddenly, the sentence moves from the 'cozy, comfortable' description of 'being in love with God' (the word "dynamic" tends to make it less cozy, comfortable!) to the leap of when this world or this state will become a reality. The vision here! Lonergan is making the claim that we (he and I, he and his readers) aren't speaking about the same thing at all. He's saying that when he uses the words 'dynamic state of being in love with God,' he's talking about a future time, a future *culture*, when interiority grounds common sense and theory. A fantasyland, in the best sense: the x sense. This world of "interiority grounding common sense and theory" is a giant known unknown, an x to aspire to, an x that—if we are reading it well—pulls me (us) out of any cozy, comfortable settled view and throws me into my world of the open unknown, the explanatory x to be known: "dynamic state of being in love with God" at some far future time and distant me-us-place. According to McShane, maybe by 9011 we will see some semblance of this world. But these thoughts seem to be pulling me more towards the second objectification.

Back to this first objectification, and to the other words that really puzzled me: the simple introductory words, "to speak of." Somehow they throw a big wrench into the sentence for me. I thought, what is Lonergan saying here? Why is he speaking of speaking? He's not just making a claim that the dynamic state of being in love with God is x. Those three opening words indicate that he's speaking forward, somehow. In the sentence before this one he speaks about 'speaking about' sanctifying grace. I don't know the history of theology well enough to know where and how sanctifying grace fits in its development, except somewhat vaguely, so the comparison is something I need to flush out so that I can grow in my own meaning.

But the puzzle here is the speaking: "To speak of." There's a kick here. It's like Lonergan is pausing and saying to us, 'I'm not talking about what you might think I'm talking about. I'm talking about something entirely different, way larger, far-distant, beyond present cultural meaning, beyond what my readers might think I'm saying.' Lonergan's speaking is a speaking that is rooted in, grounded in the 'man on giant stilts' (Proust) climb. He's speaking out of a comprehensive explanatory vision of onto- and phylogenetic growth and of a precise, painful, explanatory collaborative cultural climbing to take place through the following generations and centuries and millennia. My horizon is not Lonergan's horizon. I/we have to

reach and stretch and sweat and work and struggle and have patience and get frustrated and annoyed and fail and be wrong again and again and again to be able to begin to grow toward our own speaking that might faintly echo Lonergan's "To speak of."

We are not living in a world of interiority grounding common sense and theory; that world is a far-distant fantasy that we (who?) have to strive toward, slowly. We're living in a world that is mostly common sense. Even though there are many people who live in a world of theory, they are also dominated by the culture of commonsense truncation. Truncation is our present state of being, cut off from the known unknown of our own explanatory ground of being: interiority. The world of interiority is the centuries-long climb to explanation, to my/our "conception, affirmation and implementation of the integral heuristic structure of proportionate being"²—and what possibly do those words mean to me (to us) now?

"To speak of" is a key. I have to speak out of *my* vision, *my* 'place,' *my* position, *my* understanding. I have to listen to every word I write and make sure it's coming from me, honestly spontaneously. It is a practice for going forward—in both senses of those words: in order to move forward culturally and collaboratively and explanatorily, as well as for my future self and our future selves and a future 'Tower Community.'

The difficulty with the word "spontaneously" is that I'm just this moment beginning to realize much more radically that I—and we as a slowly evolving human culture—have longstanding habits of *speaking of* things in ways that aren't deeply from *me*, from *my* position. How easy it is to drift into speaking that is a repetition of familiar words, and not a genuine inner meaning that resides in my bones. And it is more than speaking genuinely. It is also speaking genuinely and explanatorily. The latter is the distant aim, the unknown x that is our aim. For each of us "to speak of" interiority, or of interiority grounding common sense and theory, or of the dynamic state of being in love with God requires the genuineness of speaking out *my* meaning. And in that honesty, that spontaneity and that genuineness, I acknowledge that interiority and theory, explanatory understanding is my/our far-distant x, the known unknown for us to reach for, ever so slowly, as we are beginning to do in this Assembly/*Duffy Exercise*.

Second Objectification

From my position in the first objectification, the way ahead appears to be the cultural need to speak effectively of "To speak of." That is, we need to begin

² CWL 3, 416.

to speak effectively about our own speaking. In this Assembly quotation, Lonergan's astounding speaking places "the dynamic state of being in Love with God" in a far-distant world of integral explanatory speaking, where "interiority has been made the explicit ground of the worlds of theory and common sense." It is a disconcerting future world, with an effective talk like that of present-day engineers for whom the curve of a bridge is an intimate formula that lives in their molecules, embracing a complexity of mathematical understanding. In this future culture, our speaking is grounded in precise, remote, explanatory, scientific understanding, such as that indicated at the end of chapter 15 of Lonergan's *Insight* on genetic method, grounding the human sciences.

The forward-looking world of Lonergan's quotation is not just a world of remote explanatory theory. It is an *effective* explanatory world, in which theory and praxis hold hands, "a resolute and effective intervention in the historical process."³ The Assembly exercises seem to be a key: a practical intervention calling us to cut through⁴ normal patterns of academic speaking and move toward precise, explanatory speaking of speaking that assembles expressions in a way that "has to satisfy a genetic and dialectic unfolding of human intelligence."⁵ We need to reach out to new scientific meanings of ... well, shall I try a list?

- ✚ Meaning
- ✚ Adult growth
- ✚ Mystery occupying the centrepiece of the human group
- ✚ Human evolution/adult growth in an ontogenetic and phylogenetic sense. Genetic systematics. Geohistorical.
- ✚ Genuineness
- ✚ Openness and the unrestricted desire...
- ✚ And most crucial of all, of shared meaning, common *explanatory* meaning of the very things I'm/we're talking about: of adult growth, of interiority, of Mystery grounding human being, of phylogenetic geohistorical evolution and genetic systematics.
- ✚ This 'common meaning' isn't common sense. It is precise meaning, scientific meaning, moving beyond and indeed encompassing all of common sense and all of theory/science. *Integral* heuristic structure. So the view here is a view of a science of interiority, a science that

³ CWL 18, 306.

⁴ The upper blade of the scissors, CWL 3, chapter 17 section 3.5.

⁵ CWL 3, 603–604.

grounds all other human meaning in the positive Anthropocene age.⁶

“But we’re not there yet.”⁷ The view that results from developing my position is a view of a seed, a need to establish *somehow* a future explanatory community, a “Tower” community⁸ operating as a minority in some future global reality. It is a view of the need for us to shift the *somehow* to *how*, to weave these words into a shared diagrammed heuristic with strategies for effective intervention. It is a view that asks us to imagine and vision forward but to not lose sight of present pragmatic practical possibilities. Not lose sight of? It is to live within present pragmatic possibilities and harness them, like harnessing the wind for energy. It is a view that moves philosophy out of the ineffective realm of mere contemplation and shifts it into the world of science—a harsh shift for all of us, rooted as we are in centuries of schemes of recurrence of philosophy as higher speculation.

And it is more than a shift into explanatory science. It is a shift into *pragmatic* explanation: engineering rather than pure science, as McShane so vigorously urged.⁹ The view that results from developing my position is a view of our human need to *act*, to *value*, to find solutions to problems in this world, problems of hunger, suffering, greed, violence, bias, boredom, frustration, despair. *How*.

How do we go about lifting, for example, the endless cycles of changing governments? With every new government comes the dismantling of good ideas to be replaced by different, sometimes better, sometimes worse, ideas. The disruption to the small bits of progress that have managed to survive is repeated cyclically, over and over and over again. We need to harness the good ideas consistently and effectively to make our global lives and living better. We need to effectively embrace the massive two-fold solution put

⁶ See references to the negative and positive Anthropocene in McShane’s essays in “Religious Faith Seeding the Positive Anthropocene,” *Divyadaan: Journal of Philosophy & Education*, vol. 30, no. 1 (2019), 21, 30–31, 36, 48, 55, 62–63, 73, 83, 89, 90, 93, 97, 105, 122.

⁷ CWL 21, 20.

⁸ See “The Tower of Able: Lonergan’s Dream” in Pierrot Lambert and Philip McShane, *Bernard Lonergan: His Life and Leading Ideas* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2013), 163.

⁹ There are close to 50 references to engineering in *Interpretation from A to Z* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2020). See, for example, pp. vi, ix, xi, 5, 20, 22, 64, 67–69, 70, 75, 78, 94–95, 110–111, and 115. See also *Æcornomics 17*: “Engineering as Dialectic.”

forward by a genius of the 20th century: genetic-grounded collaboration and the precise critical genuineness of *Method in Theology* chapter 10, section 5.

Imagine, then (and *then*), a Global Association for Sustainable Progress (GASP). Consider that there are 11 of us participating in the *Duffy Exercises* assembled in this volume. Practical, pragmatic progress demands that we begin to lift McShane's Tower image¹⁰ off the page and into our lives. We need to invite others to embrace a future Tower-centred global community, functioning efficiently, effectively changing our cities and communities around the globe. In an attempt to be pragmatic, think about minimum criteria for GASP, to build a future explanatory Tower community. The 11 of us have *some grasp* (thinking now of the *x* to be known and of adult growth) of 'interiority,' of 'structured consciousness,' of 'generalized empirical method,' of 'explicit metaphysics,' of '*Insight*,' of functional genetically-grounded collaboration: the list could go on. How to invite others into the work? *The work is enormous and the labourers are few. Therefore, pray ye for labourers.*

Prayer, yes. And pragmatic effective explanatory position-developing thinking, which in itself is (kataphatic) prayer. Perhaps minimum criteria begin with commitment. Perhaps they revolve around the two central points from *Insight* and *Method* mentioned above: the growth of a collaborative genetic systematics and the genuineness of *Method* chapter 10, section 5.¹¹ Assembly, the *Duffy Exercise*, imposes on us the commitment to collaborate and the commitment to be genuine in our expression of our positions. Collaboration is not random, nor tied to present patterns of academic debate, but is explicitly functional, specialized, directed. Genuineness is not genuineness in general, but the highly uncomfortable and "unwelcome invasion of consciousness by opposed apprehensions of oneself as one concretely is and as one concretely is to be."¹² It is the *x*, the unknown that is to be known when we better grasp and understand and appreciate, on "the fourth and highest level of [our] intentional consciousness . . . the peak of the

¹⁰ Ibid., 65.

¹¹ McShane's name for the central page 250 (CWL 14, 235) in this chapter section is, *Lonergan's 1833 Overture*, paralleling the genius of Lonergan with that of Tchaikovsky. In this naming, McShane plays on the fact that the key lines regarding the demand for genetic genuineness, in a context of adult growth, begin at line 18 with the word *horizons* and end at line 33 with the word *reversed*.

¹² CWL 3, 502.

soul,"¹³ the challenging and uncom-promisingly self-reflective conditional and analogous law of genuineness.¹⁴

The road ahead is a road toward a science that was seeded by a genius of the 20th century. The road ahead is our struggle to nurture his words and grow our speaking of speaking toward that remote, far-distant, future maturity. We must begin to lift ourselves, step by agonizing step, into a future speaking of speaking. The periodic table of chemistry will have its future parallel in a shared diagrammed core heuristic of our human speaking of speaking.

B. Brendan Lovett

I have rarely met anyone who was not delightedly excited on reading for the first time our topic sentence above. But I am also sure that the reason for their delight—and mine also on first-time reading—fell far short of the meaning that Lonergan was expressing in writing it. Any illusion I might have had that my initial meaning coincided with what Lonergan meant died on reaching page 287 of *Method in Theology*¹⁵ where the second paragraph calmly invites us to go back and re-write the second, third, and fourth chapters of that work in a truly explanatory manner.

In the face of current crises, McShane has cryptically penned: "There is the pull, of course, of the divine mission, which sublates such pulls as the Covid-19 virus crisis, or the larger crisis of our intervention in the flight of carbon through finitude."¹⁶ That might, in some complex way, throw light on "the dynamic state of being in love with God." But the complexity is enormous. It is hinted at in Lonergan's own frustration in facing up to the impossibility of getting the whole of *Insight* into the first chapter of *Method in Theology*. The whole of *Insight* is dedicated to *facilitating* critically-grounded understanding of the dynamism of our emergent consciousness, as cognitive and as deliberative. There is no short-cut to such self-appropriation.¹⁷ Success here, no matter how limited it may be, is our entry into the realm of

¹³ *Method in Theology*, 107; CWL 14, 103.

¹⁴ CWL 3, 499–503.

¹⁵ Apologies to all for failing to provide references to CWL 14, but, separated from my library for the last three months of lock-down here in Manila, I am presently lucky to still have access to an old copy of *Method in Theology*.

¹⁶ Philip McShane, email message to Brennan Lovett, April 5, 2020.

¹⁷ "To say it all with the greatest brevity: one has not only to read *Insight* but also to discover oneself in oneself." *Method in Theology*, 260.

interiority. It is also this control of meaning through insight that has us speaking of a third stage of meaning.

What occasioned this move to interiority is well known. As science developed it gave up any claim to necessity and truth, settling for verifiable possibilities that offer an ever-better approximation to truth. It now ambioned its goal as the full explanation of all phenomena. Philosophy found itself confronted with the fact that “all human knowledge has a basis in the data of experience, and, since science seems to have acquired at least squatters’ rights to the data of sense, it [would] have to take its stand on the data of consciousness.”¹⁸ The key development was to *generalize* empirical method.¹⁹

At a different level of sharing, Tina Beatty speaks of finding in our current strange time a deep sense of the healing and joy of nature that has come with the enforced cessation of so much human activity. She echoes another woman’s sentiments in saying “the richness of this Spring has fed my faith, almost more than anything.” For herself, Tina tells us,

I cherished the heightened sense of the sacramentality of Creation that I owe not just to *Laudato Si’* but to many years of studying Catholic theology and participating in the Eucharist. There is a rich materiality to Catholicism—an all-encompassing affirmation of bodily sensed life—which I experience as the fundamental difference between my Protestant upbringing and my Catholic faith. Belief in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist is an important expression of that, but it belongs within a wider sense of the cosmic Christ who sanctifies all of creation.²⁰

If you can bear one more story, on the very next page of that issue, another woman, Hilary Davies, a poet, self-consciously atheist child of agnostic parents, shares her experiences about Masses, virtual and not, on her

¹⁸*Method in Theology*, 259. Not, as Lonergan goes on to tell us, that the realm of interiority could ever have been an explanatory treatment or gotten off the ground “without a manifold use of mathematical, scientific, and commonsense knowledge and of both ordinary and technical knowledge.”

¹⁹ The clearest articulation of what is involved here is in Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, ed. F. E. Crowe, (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 141: “General empirical method does not treat of objects without taking into account the corresponding operations of the subject; it does not treat of the subject’s operations without taking into account the corresponding objects.”

²⁰ *The Tablet*, 6th of June, 2020, p. 5.

road to faith. The story of hers I liked most refers to a moment in Paris of 1980. It was a time of personal crisis in her life and she arbitrarily decided to enter the next Church she would find, expecting to find it empty on a Wednesday afternoon. In fact a Mass was in progress with a congregation of all ages. The atmosphere was still and intense.

A young woman in a nun's habit walks to the lectern and begins to read in a calm, clear voice. It is of course in French and the effect it produces is to make the words less familiar, causing me to listen with greater attention. Suddenly I realise that what I am hearing is that towering text 1Cor 13, made new by being powerfully mediated through another language: "Maintenant donc ces trois choses demeurent, la foi, l'espérance, l'amour; mais le plus grande c'est l'amour." At the sound of the word "amour," instead of "charité," which I had been expecting from the many times I had heard it in English, the Church begins to dilate, a kind of wave accompanied by a sensation of sound, though there is none.

Simultaneously, descending down through the vaults of the nave, comes an absolute sensation of a personal God speaking to me, triggered by the word 'amour' but again there are no words. I *feel* the knowledge of this God as one might feel cool water or a breeze, though the after-effects could be likened to breaking the sound barrier where the boom and shock come after the event, itself impossible to hear. This Mass changed my life forever.²¹

One "statement" which refers to our topic and might qualify for Assembly is the *extent* of the index entry under 'Gift of God's Love' in *Method in Theology*, some sixty-two references on my count, some of them covering multiple pages. McShane, who compiled this index under extreme time pressure, tells us he understood the entry as being "at the heart of Lonergan's drive in *Method in Theology*." It seems, on the surface, an awful lot of writing about this topic unless indeed it be central to Lonergan's project of doing of theology methodically.

Very much earlier, with all kinds of implicit and explicit transpositions, the young Lonergan is clearly invoking the New Testament witnessing in writing the following:

Charity is an eternal fire of optimism and of energy, dismayed at naught, rebuked by none, tireless, determined, deliberate; with deepest thought and unbounded spontaneity charity ever strives, struggles,

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

labours, exhorts, implores, prays for the betterment of the unit of action of man, for the effective rule of sweetness and light, for a fuller manifestation of what charity loves, Wisdom Divine, the Word made Flesh.²²

What is it that could possibly give rise to such a transformation of our human living and relating? Perhaps, the experience of being indefeasibly and unconditionally loved and, in response, freed to love without conditions, qualification, conditions but with all one's heart, all one's mind, all one's strength. There would then be a new basis for all our valuing and all our doing good. In no way would the fruits of intellectual and moral conversion be diminished. Rather, our pursuit of truth and of the good "is *included within and furthered by a cosmic context and purpose* and, as well, there now accrues to man the power of love to enable him to accept the suffering involved in undoing the effects of decline."²³

Having reached this point in what I feel is my overuse of the invitation to write spontaneously, I sense that my assembly does not point very effectively to the meaning of our topic. It's time for more creative cheating.

Second Objectification

What is the question to be asked in relation to our topic question, the answer to which the goal of the first objectification is and which is to be refined on in this second one? Could it be phrased as follows?

Is our topic sentence as formulated really pointing to everything in *Method in Theology* such that understanding it fully²⁴ would enable us

²² Concluding part to Lonergan's 1934 "Essay in Fundamental Sociology," in Michael Shute, *Lonergan's Early Economic Research*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 43.

²³ *Method in Theology*, 242. Italics added here to indicate the phrase over which I glossed without a thought over many years. Had I paused, I might have sought the connection with the great sentence in *Insight*, CWL 3, 722: "Good will wills the order of the universe, and so it wills with that order's dynamic joy and zeal." Such a connection would surely have led me deeper.

²⁴ "The comprehension of everything in a unified whole can be either formal or virtual. It is virtual when one is habitually able to answer readily and without difficulty, or at least 'without tears', a whole series of questions right up to the last why? Formal comprehension, however, cannot take place without a construct of some sort. In this life we are able to understand something only by turning to phantasm; but in larger and more complex questions it is impossible to have suitable phantasm unless the imagination is aided by some sort of diagram. Thus,

to grasp that doing theology with contemporary adequacy requires persons committed to working in a cyclic collaborative process involving eight functional specialties, a process which unfolds in two phases such that those who are both morally and intellectually converted can participate in the first phase of retrieving the past but not in its second phase of shaping the future (where participation requires religious conversion), a praxis that in its culminating eighth specialty works in demanding interdisciplinary fashion with all other sciences to devise effective interventions in shaping history towards healing for vulnerable peoples and vanishing species on a deeply threatened planet?

I am anticipating that answering the whole of my complex question by setting it over against the presentation of chapters 5 to 14 in *Method in Theology* would show that Lonergan's sentence above is core to his whole achievement in that work.

In the famous "discovery page" of 1965, his invocation of Aquinas' *Summa theologiae*, Ia, q. 1, a. 1, "Theology is about God and all things in relation to God," is meant, not as a simple repetition, but as drawing attention to his new understanding, that is "mine" and "catholic," a doing of theology that culminates, not in systematics as in Aquinas, but in communications. In fact, all four forward-looking specialties of the second phase are dedicated to shaping the future, discerning, in regard to what does not yet exist, a possible way forward. In the face of present evil, the challenge is clear: evil has to be overcome. But evil cannot be overcome apart from doing a greater good. The greater good in focus has to be that of the flourishing of the planet and the good of the whole human family. They are totally interconnected. But since theology is not the full science of man,²⁵ at this point it needs to become interdisciplinary, critically uniting itself with the best of other relevant branches of human studies.

So, does the conversion to religious mystery as formulated feed into our being part of redemptive process, and if so, how?

There is a knowledge born of love.

There is a knowledge born of fear. Fear is the worst teacher. So far is it from promoting a future built on appreciation of the integrity of the given

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 the connections between them." CWL 17, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 151.

²⁵ *Method in Theology*, 364.

and protecting all that the Mystery has let be in love, it is hell-bent on doing the opposite. Only perfect love casts out fear.

C. Philip McShane

First Objectification

When, in the Summer of 1966, Bernard Lonergan paced edgily his little room in the Bayview Regis and shared with me his nervous poise with the question, "What am I to do?," I knew slimly what he was about, what was about him. Fifty-four years later I have a less slim grip on the *acquis*, on the Standard Model, that was about in his bones, that possessed him, that he possessed. He focused on the problem of making *Insight* present to and in the future readers of the book that he felt obliged to begin. The full problem, that he considered needed the context of *Insight*, was an X in that book,²⁶ so *Insight's* sharing was only the base camp to his Everest of February 1965. The X had been with him pretty clearly over thirty years earlier, when he posed to himself the key question and burst forth with his ready answer.

What is progress?

It is a matter of intellect. Intellect is understanding of sensible data. It is the guiding form, statistically effective, of human action transforming the sensible data of life. Finally, it is a fresh intellectual synthesis understanding the new situation created by the old intellectual form and providing a statistically effective form for the new cycle of human action that will bring forth in reality the incompleteness of the later act of intellect by setting it new problems.²⁷

Thirty-one years later, in the spring of 1965, he was gripped by the spiraling content and character of that control-tower of progress: "mine and

²⁶ *Insight*, 263, lines 16, 17. Lines 8–13 give a first magnificent identification of X. Lines 21 through the next pages present a broad sweep. As you will find, my focus here is in imaging comprehensive engineering, and it seems to me that allegiance (*Ibid.*, lines 11, 12) has a neat initial imaging in a paralleling of its collaborative dynamics with the murmur of starlings. See *Questing2020C*, "The First Mansions," pp. 2ff; *Questing2020D*, "The Alpha and the Omega," pp. 1ff; and *Questing2020E*, "Tyler and the Existential Gaps," pp. 12ff.

²⁷ I quote from Lonergan's "Essay in Fundamental Sociology," in Michael Shute, *Lonergan's Early Economic Research* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 20. It was written in the spring of 1934.

catholic.”²⁸ And so, in the summer of 1966, climbing out of illness, his brilliant “scrutinizing of the self-scrutinizing subject”²⁹ brought him to share, in a querying hello³⁰ to me, his fresh version of the frustrated question he addressed to a superior in a letter of January 1935: “What on earth is to be done?”³¹ Had I not been shy of pushing him better, I might have nudged him for detailed rambling. And might he not have said, putting the broad problem in a brilliant nutshell, “To speak of the dynamic state of being in love with God pertains to the stage of meaning when the world of interiority has been made the explicit ground of the worlds of theory and of common sense”?³²

In *Insight* he had pointed the way to making the world of interiority the explicit grounds of the worlds of theory and of common sense. That pointing neatly dodged the speaking that was his concern in 1966.³³ But now, had he answered my nudge with that statement, I would have had no doubt but that he was speaking precisely about a new speaking, a new speaking in “a statistically effective form.”³⁴ We both knew he was speaking of speaking of

²⁸ These words, doubly underlined, concluded a page of brilliant scribbling of that spring day in Rome. The page is reproduced in Pierrot Lambert and Philip McShane, *Bernard Lonergan: His Life and Leading Ideas* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2013), 160.

²⁹ *Method in Theology* 167; CWL 14, 158.

³⁰ I am thinking here of one of Lonergan’s great ‘hellos’ to me. We were talking about Dante and Beatrice, when he paused suddenly, waving his hand in the air, and exclaiming, “that’s what life’s all about: saying hello!”

³¹ I quote from page 154 of the volume mentioned in note 28. The full letter is presented on pp. 144–54.

³² *Method in Theology* 107; CWL 14, 103. Here it seems to me that we have the opportunity of a discomfiting self-confrontation throughout the readership of *Method in Theology*. The scientific poise of the “third way must be found” (ibid., 4[8]) is just that. “To speak” is not just loose chatting about a topic: think of the parallel with the simplest of sciences, physics. Experts are normatively required to speak, e.g., of *electricity* in the quantum electromagnetic symbolizations of the mature science. Such speaking is concretely effective. I would urge a fresh entry into Lonergan’s speaking about “Theology and Understanding” (CWL 4, *Collection*, 114–32). “The equations of thermodynamics make no one feel warmer” (ibid., 127, ll. 33–4), but is this true of the new way of Tower Engineering? I follow up this note with note 52 of the second objectification and note 93 of the third.

³³ See CWL 3, *Insight*, 754.

³⁴ Part of the quotation at note 27. Add the later precision of *Insight*, 144, lines 3ff.

a shockingly discontinuous and potentially effective³⁵ “fresh intellectual synthesis,”³⁶ “a process of spiraling upwards to an ever fuller view.”³⁷ But the knowledge, far from being common then or now, will not be psychically common until there are serious advances into the positive Anthropocene age. That psychic presence will weave into description, a Virginia creeper covering fences of culture in a manner way beyond the geohistorical shabbiness of the ordinary or the truncated negative Anthropocene ages, the axial slum of the layered lonelinesses of humanity. “This stage of meaning”³⁸ in the sentence following the one we are *Assembly*-considering, then, is a *this* of fantasy and faith: it is the sunflower, the Sonflower, but only in its stalk and its stalking³⁹ of “the glory and the freshness of a dream.”⁴⁰ Read now, freshly,⁴¹ that next sentence, and puzzle over Lonergan’s 1966 puzzle of speaking. “It follows that in this stage of meaning the gift of God’s love first is described as an experience and only consequently is objectified in theoretical categories.”⁴² The puzzle twists into a Catch-22 situation. What might you suggest to him about these two sentences? What might I have suggested in 1966? What might I suggest 54 years later?

But, at all events, is it not startling to think that he could indeed have begun the new book with that normative sentencing for and of theologians: “to speak of the dynamic state of being in love with God pertains to the stage of meaning when the world of interiority has been made the explicit ground of the worlds of theory and of common sense”? *Insight* gets in there, indeed in the cunning fullness of his rejection of Aristotle that dominates the second paragraph of *Method in Theology*. There he could well have written, “I advanced that Aristotle was a bourgeois, that he introduced the distinction between speculative and practical that put the ‘good’ as Socrates and Plato

³⁵ See note 92 of the third objectification.

³⁶ Part of the quotation at note 27.

³⁷ “Knowing, Believing, and Theology,” (1962), CWL 22, *Early Works on Theological Method I*, 140. The heading there is “The Genetic Circle.”

³⁸ Part of the quotation at note 42 below.

³⁹ On the richly suggestive range of meanings of stalk and stalking see Chapter Y, “Stalking Jesus,” in my *Interpretation from A to Z* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2020).

⁴⁰ CWL 3, *Insight*, 556.

⁴¹ But how can it be true that “one has simply to read, and the proper acts of understanding and meaning follow”? “One may not be ready to make that assumption on one’s own behalf.” CWL 2, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, 223.

⁴² *Method in Theology* 107; CWL 14, 103.

conceived it out of court."⁴³ But what, now, of a better version of fantasy after 54 years of "the arrogance of omniscient common sense"⁴⁴ that possesses the religious thinking of this truncated negative Anthropocene age? "Some third way, then, must be found and, even though it is difficult and arduous, that price must be paid."⁴⁵

Second Objectification

"Well, Bernie," sez me, 54 years the wiser, "you'll need a strategy to get towards a norm, a *nomos*, of reading and hearing you write and speak J-wrapped."

Reading J-wrapped? What in heavens do I mean to you with such a phrase?⁴⁶ Here I must ask you to think genetically, in geohistorical prolepticity. These exercises are a shot in the dark of history, initially then not occurring or thought of in the scientific *nomos* of Lonergan's powerful and far-reaching fifth section of *Method in Theology*, chapter ten. When that shift to maturing scientific dialectic sifting does occur, these exercises will be tightly expressed, expectational comments on not just the *Assembly* but on the sequence of the other five tricky weavings described in the third paragraph of the section.⁴⁷ Expectational? : "indicating the view that would result from developing."⁴⁸ That is what I am at here, but in the style of *positive haute vulgarization*.⁴⁹ Bernie would have "got" the 54-years-too-late point of my

⁴³ I quote from the letter mentioned in note 31 above: p. 152.

⁴⁴ CWL 17, *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965–1980*, "Questionnaire on Philosophy: Response," 371.

⁴⁵ *Method in Theology* 4; CWL 14, 8.

⁴⁶ The effective imaging-meaning is, in fact, the drive of this second objectification. See Essay J of *Interpretation from A to Z*, "Inventing Techniques." Briefly, I may intimate the point by saying that the present ethos of reading Lonergan is primarily a Jay-walking. The J-wrapped reader is psychically toned by symbolizations to say "hello," self-explanatorily, to the author's every word.

⁴⁷ Some pointers on that set of operations are given in *Questing2000E*, dealing with Peter Tyler's work on Teresa of Avila. I would note that the first seven essays in that series are suggestive and invitational. Might we follow up, e.g., on sublating the poise of The Interior Castle? Useful for that question is my essay *Æconomics* 16: "Locating Teresa of Avila."

⁴⁸ *Method in Theology* 250; CWL 14, 235: part of the second objectification.

⁴⁹ This is a large and subtle neurodynamic topic that first caught my attention in the conclusion of chapter three of *Lack in the Beingstalk* (Axial Publishing, 2006), although it was a reality of my lectures in mathematical physics of 1959–60. The class was select and enthusiastic, wrapt and rapt in an ethos of science. I wrote of

comment. Recall his dive into the zone to which I point, his view of Aristotle, his view of what I call J-wrapping: being luminous about the modern extension of Aristotle's smaller leap.⁵⁰ Recall his fulsome further discomforting pointing to the self-luminosity that I titled *aggreformism*.⁵¹

To this end there have to be invented appropriate symbolic images of the relevant chemical and physical processes; in these images there have to be grasped by insight the laws of the higher system that account for regularities beyond the range of physical and chemical explanation; from these laws there has to be constructed the flexible circle of schemes of recurrence in which the organism functions; finally, this flexible circle of schemes of recurrence must be coincident with the related capacities-for-performance that previously were grasped in sensibly presented organs.

I used the word *recall* twice leading up to the two relevant quotations, and surely we need to pause over its meaning. Lonergan shared puzzling with me in 1966 was about recall: how do we recall *Insight*? The tragedy we are dealing with is that *Insight* did not effectively call: there is then little to recall. Instead of J-wrapping emerging, the norm in reading *Insight* and indeed *Verbum* was Jay-walking.

this, in the website series called *Vignettes*, in term of the response of one particular very bright nun, who could pitch an advance question and receive my answer positively in that she could tune into the notion of the climb of years required to intussuscept the answer. Such a poise is virtually unknown in philosophy and theology classes, and so I was led to write the 20th essay, "The None's Story," in that same series, *Vignettes*. On the usual *haute vulgarization* check the brutal remarks of Lonergan in CWL 6, 121, 155.

⁵⁰ It seems best to put Lonergan's subtle and twisted pointing in a footnote, to be slid over in a first reading. In further readings you would tackle the meaning of the two textual footnotes n and o, thus disturbing yourself to a nudge about your poise in "scrutinizing the self-scrutinizing self." *Method in Theology*, 167; CWL 14, 158. Here you have the scrutinizing problem, taken from CWL 2, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*. "In a sense, the act of understanding as an insight into phantasm is knowledge of form: but the form so known does not correspond to the philosophic concept of form;ⁿ strictly, then, it is not true that insight is a grasp of form; rather, insight is the grasp of the object in an inward aspect such that the mind, pivoting^o on the insight, is able to conceive, not without labor, the philosophic concepts of form and matter." CWL 2, 38.

⁵¹ The quotation and the pointing are on CWL 3, *Insight*, 489.

So, let us pause again over my glib suggestion: “Well, Bernie,” sez me, 54 years the wiser, “you’ll need a strategy to get towards a norm, a *nomos*, of reading and hearing you write and speak J-wrapped.” He did not have the strategy nor do I. But what I have is the grounding of the networking of such strategies that is given by weaving a culture of linguistic feedback round relevant imagings.⁵² Again, the need is expressed by Lonergan quite neatly:

The comprehension of everything in a unified whole can be either formal or virtual. It is virtual when one is habitually able to answer readily and without difficulty, or at least ‘without tears,’ a whole series of questions right up to the last why?⁵³ Formal comprehension, however, cannot take place without a construct of some sort. In this life we are able to understand something only by turning to phantasm; but in larger and more complex questions it is impossible to have suitable phantasm unless the imagination is aided by some sort of diagram. Thus, 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 the connections between them.⁵⁴

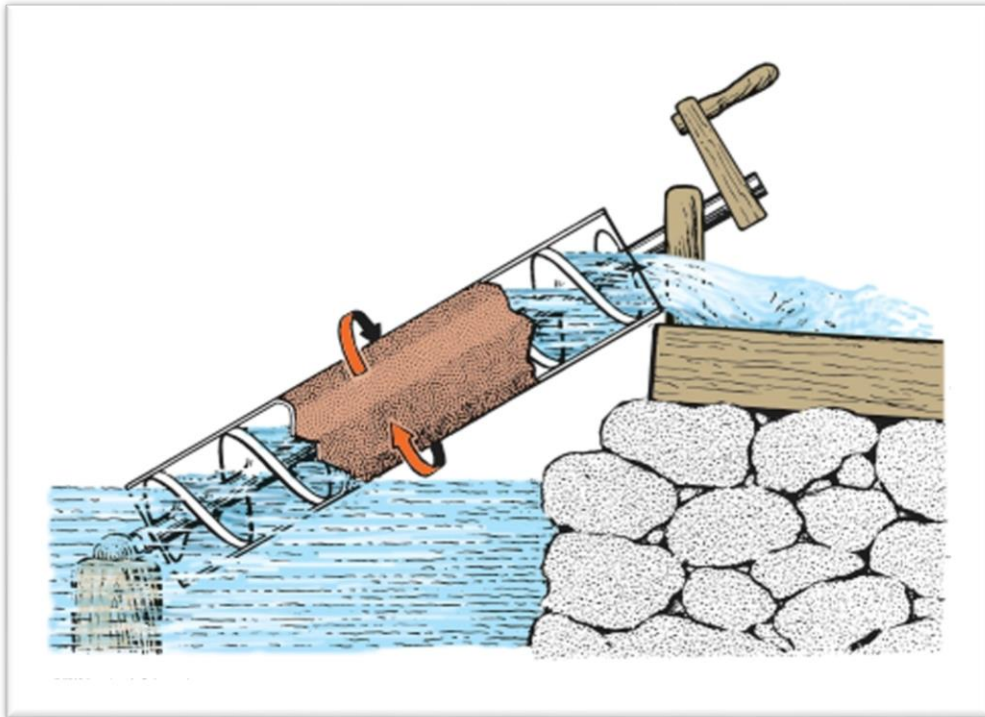
Back now to our Assembled statement, which I proposed as a first sentence of a new *Method in Theology*. It is a comprehensive pointing to everything about Tower Speaking: Is it formal or virtual? For Lonergan it is comfortably virtual; less comfortably for me. But what about formal comprehension? It is the question that lurks behind our chatting of summer 1966. The chat, in one way, was how to effectively present a heuristics of the

⁵² On linguistic feedback see *Method in Theology*, 88, n. 34; CWL 14, 85, n. 55. Its mention in *Method in Theology* and in CWL 14, 163, n. 17 are absent from the first edition. There is a passing mention of it on *Method* 97; CWL 14, 95. It is a very tricky topic and achievement of the future of imaging, to make psychically resonant, especially in Tower people, the concrete reach, in space and time, of their longings. See further the exercise dealing with the *Assembly* of the final paragraph of *Insight* chapter 5.

⁵³ Notes 30, 50, and 86 point to the challenge of that reach.

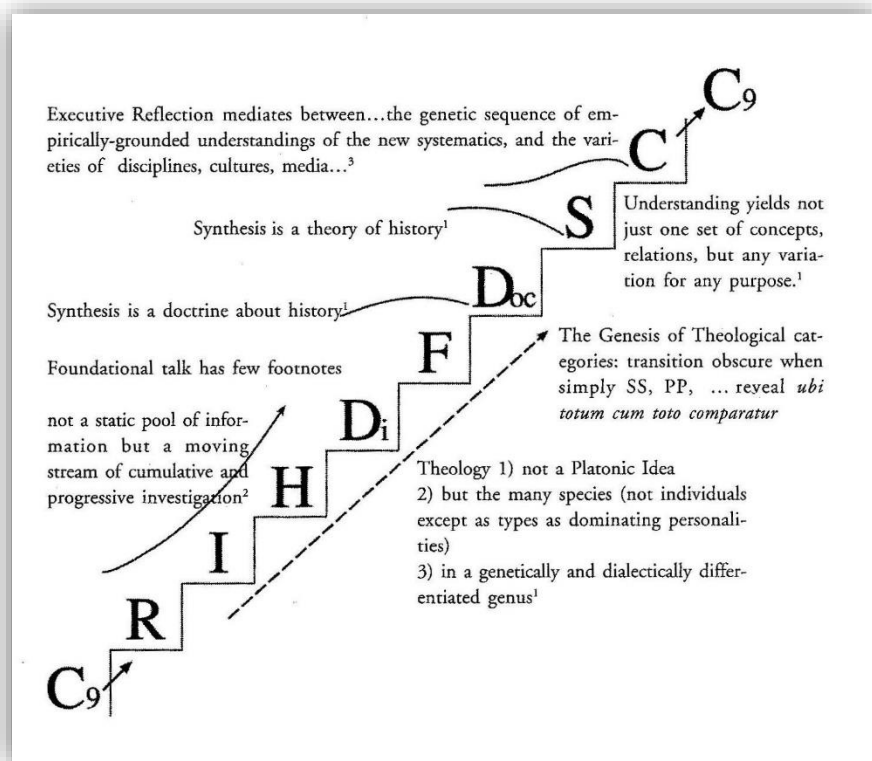
⁵⁴ CWL 7, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 151.

*Gift*⁵⁵ to be minded by the future members of Jesus the Engineer.⁵⁶ “We shall have to construct a diagram.” Well, at least I can present you with two diagrams that nudge us towards facing the need for diagrams. Can we find a network of forward-reaching heuristic diagrams around screwing up Grace’s Gift that fits the future task like Archimedes’ faced successfully screwing up water?



⁵⁵ My index of the 1972 version of *Method in Theology* was a rushed business, with pen and paper, to meet the publishers Christmas 1971 deadline. However, I did manage to focus in on a detailed index *Gift* as the heart of Lonergan’s drive. The entry of the improved index of CWL 14 does not push *Gift* in the same manner.

⁵⁶ The essay, *Æconomics 17: “Engineering as Dialectic,”* provides a context for the shift of meaning.



1. Bernard Lonergan, from unpublished notes of the early sixties available in the Toronto Lonergan center, Batch B, 8, 6, V.
2. Bernard Lonergan, "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections," *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah, NJ, Paulist Press, 1985), 82.
3. Philip McShane, "Systematics, Communications, Actual Contexts," *Lonergan Workshop*, vol. 6, ed. Frederick Lawrence (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1986), 151.

D. Pierre Whalon

First Objectification

"This is difficult to hear, who can stomach such talk?" (John 6:60)

If there is a notion in *Method in Theology* that I find particularly attractive, it is "being-in-love with God." Bernie quotes one of his favorite scriptures, Romans 5:5: "...God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us." (Of course, we have to reread the text to be certain that it is in fact God's love of us and not our love of God. Check the Greek, ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ—OK!) And we read in I John 4 that God is love—that is what God *is*, not just what God does. Which could lead to a basic understanding of the Trinity, except that it can't go beyond trying to explain what cannot be described. In other words, we walk and talk by faith.

And verse 5 begins, "and hope does not disappoint us, because..." So there we have it, faith, hope and love. These three. But as old Tommy opined

quite correctly, love is greater than faith and hope because unlike these two, love never ends. (Can't remember exactly where I stole that from him...)

So yeah, being-in-love with God sounds cool and biblical and all. And it resonates with me powerfully. But how we get that from God is not so clear in *Method*, or rather, to my mind at least. This point is where Bernie's critics like to go to say, "Aha! He is a fideist after all!" One can criticize Bernie—read, *exempla gratia*, Phil McShane—if one knows what one is doing. Or at least thinking. But no one who has read anything by the man can fairly accuse him of "<boom!> now you have faith"-thinking.

One of the better things I did in seminary was read. A lot. Including *Insight*, which began the cleansing of encrusted counterpositions, an ongoing task (de Gaulle: "Mort aux cons, vaste programme.") Well, I mean, *mort aux conneries, les miennes d'abord*, and that is a vast program indeed. But I also read most of Barth's *Kirchliche Dogmatik*. I figured out (for myself at least but not only...) that the Swiss cheese has great strengths, as well as holes, big ones. The key insight was this line: "this Word of the Lord directed to us is the Word which aims at us and smites us in our existence."⁵⁷ *Nein, Karl! Nicht wahr!* God's love poured into our hearts by the Spirit through the Word is *nicht* like a dinosaur-killing asteroid, a heavenly body that smites and slams and drives us to the ground.⁵⁸

"The third stage of meaning." "The world of interiority." "The explicit ground of the worlds of theory and common sense." Pertains to being-in-love with God. Oy! Now what?

Focus on the words "has been made." By whom? By God, in the first place. And second, by the speaker speaking of that dynamic state. It is of course Lonergan himself, but not only. So, we need to back up to the experience of being in love, "to speak of it." Charles Williams, an odd bird indeed, flitted about the theme of romantic love as theology: "It is something like a state of adoration..." "The beloved (male or female) is seen in a paradisaal knowledge and experience of good."⁵⁹ Of course, as anyone who has been struck by the arrow of romantic love (remembering that the ancients thought it was a tragic form of insanity) knows that it is unsustainable in the long run: the nervous system cannot long abide it, among other things.

⁵⁷ *Church Dogmatics*, I.1, §4.

⁵⁸ Unless you happen to be traveling to Damascus...

⁵⁹ Charles Williams, "A theology of romantic love," in *Charles Williams: Essential Writings in Spirituality and Theology*, ed. Charles Hefling (Boston: Cowley, 1993), pp. 68–90. Here p. 71. See also Owen C. Thomas, "Beatrice or Iseult: The Debate About Romantic Love," *Anglican Theological Review* Fall 1997, pp. 571–580.

Still, says Williams, romantic love must grow into something else if it is to be, in the long run, good. "The Beloved becomes the Mother of Love; Love is born in the soul; it may have its passion there; it may have its resurrection."⁶⁰

The analogy of romantic love to falling in love with God is that the onset of romantic love is unconscious. When the lover realizes what has happened, it is already too late, although what to do with it becomes a serious, even existential question. Should such love be unrequited, the resulting pain can drive people to serious breakdowns, even suicide.

Falling in love with God is where the analogy breaks down rather quickly. For the Lover is God and we are the Beloved. Like the romantic lover's beloved, we can either accept or reject God's love (though rejecting it for how long is another question entirely). Unlike the experience of romantic love, with all its psycho-neural undertones of sexual and other attraction, the capacity for God's love is already the work of the Spirit—we humans *qua* human do not have the means to love God in ourselves.⁶¹

Now for the three-body problem: the three "worlds" of interiority, theory, and common sense. In *Insight*, Bernie set forth the terms and conditions for an intelligent grasp of the existence of God, moving from common sense to theory, up to and especially including chapter 19. *Method* changes the focus from "reaching up" by intelligence, reason, and responsibility, to the prior divine "reaching down." So there are two reaches: from below and from above. Sounds like Christology, eh?⁶²

Intellectual and moral conversions are sublated by religious conversion. It seems hierarchical, especially as "vertical exercises of freedom" transform our horizon. Yet religious conversion, falling in love with God, is prior, because "being" even precedes "falling."

⁶⁰ Williams, "A theology," pp. 85–90. Here Williams means "passion" in the sense of "the Passion of Christ," i.e., his suffering and death.

⁶¹ Here we can get sidetracked into discussions of Bernie's concept of "obediential potency" or railroaded into Karl Rahner's better-known (though not better) concept of "supernatural existential." Of course: "... by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life." Eph. 2:8-10

⁶² Any resemblance to persons living and dead (and resurrected) is not at all coincidental.

And I am still without a lot of resources, intellectual, moral, or religious, to understand being in love with God. In my heart, my “interiority,” I do love God (most days; well, ok, more days than not...well...). And I do believe that God loves me, even though I often think God is nuts to do so. “God forgives everything, it’s his trade” —purported last words of Heinrich Heine.

I am trying to stomach such talk, trying to digest, in order that I may be built up. Into what?

Second Objectification

Both of these ways of speaking of God [the kataphatic and the apophatic] must, in their proper sense, be applicable to him, yet on the other hand neither of them— being or not being—can be applicable in a proper sense. Both are applicable in their own way, in that the one statement affirms God’s being as the cause of the being of things, while the other denies it because it lies, as cause, so infinitely beyond all caused being; on the other hand, neither is properly applicable, because neither way of speaking presents us with the real identity of what we are looking for, in its essence and nature. For if something cannot be identified as either being or not being in terms of its natural origin, it clearly cannot be connected either with what is, and what is therefore the subject of language. Such a reality has a simple and unknown mode of existence, inaccessible to all minds and unsearchable in every way, exalted beyond all affirmation and denial.⁶³

Our subject has been the act of insight or understanding, and God is the unrestricted act of understanding, the eternal rapture glimpsed in every Archimedean cry of ‘Eureka!’. Understanding meets questions for intelligence and questions for reflection. The unrestricted act meets all at once; for it understands understanding and all the intelligibility based on it; and it understands its own understanding as unrestricted, invulnerable, true. [...] God is...a single act that at once is understanding and intelligible, truth and affirming, goodness and loving, being and omnipotence.⁶⁴

When I first read *Insight*, and rereading it again and again, I have always admired the argument for the existence of God as unrestricted act of

⁶³ Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogia*, PG 91, 664AC. Translation adapted from Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *The Cosmic Liturgy: The Universe According to Maximus the Confessor* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003), 89.^[1]_{SEP}

⁶⁴ CWL 3, 706-707.

understanding. Hoisting my mind up to grasping that notion—at least on alternate Wednesdays—is a pulley/pull that all of us writing these exercises have attempted. Yet I have always had an itchy feeling about it, in that “the unrestricted act of understanding” is an analogy. An analogy to me, in that I can be, once a month or so at best, actually capable of being attentive, reasonable, rational, and responsible. Bernie asks us to accept personally a particular version of the *analogia entis*, one that clears out a whole lot of accumulated missteps and mistakes and sets us on a new hill from which to think and wonder and contemplate and question and decide.

But in my own experience of coming to faith, there is an echo of what Maximus means by God’s “simple and unknown mode of existence” to which there can be nothing more than analogy, even when one’s “world of interiority has been made the explicit ground of the worlds of theory and of common sense.” We can talk, we cannot but talk, about “the dynamic state of being in love with God,” lest stones start shouting. But in the experience of being in love with God, there come moments of bewilderment and anguish:

Psalm 30 *Exaltabo te, Domine*

- 2 O LORD my God, I cried out to you,
and you restored me to health.
- 3 You brought me up, O LORD, from the dead;
you restored my life as I was going down to the grave.
- 7 While I felt secure, I said,
“I shall never be disturbed.
You, LORD, with your favor, made me as strong as
the mountains.”
- 8 Then you hid your face,
and I was filled with fear.
- 9 I cried to you, O LORD;
I pleaded with the Lord, saying,
- 10 “What profit is there in my blood, if I go down to the Pit?
will the dust praise you or declare your faithfulness?”
- 11 Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me;
O LORD, be my helper.
- 12 You have turned my wailing into dancing;
you have put off my sack-cloth and clothed me with joy.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Psalter, Book of Common Prayer 1979.

If you remember Augustine's hermeneutic of the psalms, that it is actually Christ speaking, the power of the back and forth between praise and supplication becomes even more poignant, even more a warrant to accept that love that floods your heart no matter what you decide about it.

But it also means accepting dark nights of the soul. "When I feel secure" is when the rug is pulled out, and I return to the need to be converted all over again—to take up my own cross and follow into the darkness. It is not just in my "interiority" but intellectually and morally as well that I need conversion—the ever-recurring "three-body problem."

I end this second objectification with a line from Austin Farrer's "Very God and Very Man": "Jesus *knew how* to play his divine part rather than *knowing that* his part was, in a metaphysical sense, divine."⁶⁶ Learning to imitate that knowledge for myself insofar as in me lies is the analogical problem; the challenge then is to let that transform me.

Third Objectifications

A. Alexandra Gillis

In my second objectification, I focused on the opening words of Lonergan's quotation, "To speak of..." and the problem of our present need to begin to speak *of* our speaking in a way that will lead us toward the far-distant remote effective explanatory world of the quote, where interiority grounds theory and common sense. "To speak of..." Those opening words of Lonergan's in this particular assembly quotation point to a kind of speaking to which I personally aspire, and to which we can culturally aspire. But our aspiration is not enough. If we aspire to a third stage speaking well-grounded in interiority, then we need to engage in the daily practice of a continuously self-appropriating practical and forward-facing explanatory reflection, climbing into interiorly focused zones of problem-solving explanation—economics, mathematics, physics, chemistry, education, social justice, what have you. Yet, for me, my present employment severely challenges my energy, time, and commitment, and my practice falls far short of what I wish it would be. Many of us share this systemic dilemma, along with the ongoing challenge of convincing a truncated society that it has ways to go to become fuller and deeper. This, then, is the context in which I tackle my third objectification: the challenge facing all of us in speaking of the inadequacy of our own present speaking, and of our need to begin speaking in a more focused way, honestly

⁶⁶ In *Interpretation and Belief*, ed. Charles Conti (London: SPCK, 1976), 126-137 ; here 137, emphases mine.

and openly, about that inadequacy and the problem of moving toward more adequate speaking.

To tackle this third objectification, I have picked out the parts of Whalon's and Lovett's first and second objectifications that I feel are positional (or can be nudged toward being positional) and aligned (or aligning) with the future speaking of speaking of which I speak. Using quotations from their objectifications, I have tried to weave a narrative of positional visioning mixed partially with counterpositional critique. Quotations from Whalon's and Lovett's words appear in italics with my own words in regular text.

- Whalon's Objectifications

So yeah, being-in-love with God sounds cool and biblical and all. And it resonates with me powerfully. I home in on one word, *resonates*. In an explicit explanatory world of interiority, what do we mean by *resonates*, for example? That is an impossible question to answer, but the possible quest is to speak of resonance in our present world in a way that intimates the world of a future explanatory and effective interiority. The single word *resonance* then *becomes a serious, even existential question ... with all its psycho-neural undertones*. And the psycho-neural undertones become much more than undertones; they blossom into explanatory worlds of causality, associations, chemico-molecular dynamics alive in each of our within, with chemical formulae representing the dynamism of our active worlds of neuro-wonder. How to best point to that future world?

One of the better things I did in seminary was read. A lot. Including Insight, which began the cleansing of encrusted counterpositions, an ongoing task. Reading is one thing we can do to point our selves and the human group forward, and if our reading is positional, as we are attempting in this Assembly exercise, we can begin to identify counterpositions as a helpful way forward. But, we ourselves (including Whalon, Lovett, and myself) need to be aware of our own cultural trapped-ness within counterpositional ways of reading and writing, limiting our explanatory reach by remaining in the deeply entrenched habit of referring to others in the academic sphere without digging deeper into the explanatory world of which we read. And rather than write about our personal, sweaty struggle to understand in that explanatory way, communicating our hypotheses, our questions, our stopping points, our insights, our conclusions as we go, we can get caught in writing about what others have said and thought.

So, if reading is important, we need to communicate to others a view of 'best reading' for that future effective explanatory world. McShane was fond

of quoting Gaston Bachelard (1964) on reading ‘eyes off the page.’⁶⁷ Certainly *Insight* in its content invites us to read seriously, eyes off the page. But in its style of expression, *Insight* may invite us to miss the need to pause, to exercise, to puzzle, eyes off the page. Like Euclid’s proofs, the answers unfold before us, before we have ever had the questions. The temptation is to read on as if we understand, when we do not, or when we have only a nominal understanding and do not pause to enter the further depths of the explanatory. Reading, for the *then* of the third stage of meaning, is an activity that we need to disrupt, re-orient, and point forward constantly in ourselves and for future global human growth.

Above, I said “before we have ever *had* the questions,” but I realize that this expression is a disorienting present-day pattern of speaking about questing. I *am* the question, the quest, the questing. To best read *Insight* is to take Lonergan seriously and read ‘eyes off the page’. As McShane so forcefully nudged, a serious reading of *Insight* takes the opening illustration seriously. I have grappled and continue to delight in grappling with mathematics in my life, but I have not tackled Archimedes’ principles of hydrostatics. I know of one person who has, and perhaps there are a few others. How many of Lonergan’s readers do this sort of explanatory work or exercising? When we *resonate* with Lonergan’s words, then what do *we* mean? Even in using the word *resonate*, what do we mean? My meaning of the word *resonance* is mostly nominal, though I vibrate from my years of anatomy and physiology with a deep appreciation of the fuller meaning I could have; a fuller meaning requires comfort in speaking accurately and explanatorily with chemical formulae about dynamic human psycho-neural development. Add the context of chapter 15 of *Insight* with its grounding foundational view of development itself. Without such focused questing and ‘reading,’ the world of interiority and our *resonance* with it is reduced to mere common sense, a more or less random patchwork of stray quotations and thoughts from self and others.

‘The third stage of meaning.’ ‘The world of interiority.’ ‘The explicit ground of the worlds of theory and common sense.’ Pertains to being-in-love with God. Oy! Now what? Focus on the words has been made. By whom? By God, in the first place. And second, by the speaker speaking of that dynamic state. It is of course Lonergan himself, but not only. Yes, focus on the words has been made

⁶⁷ See references to Bachelard in *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations* (New York: Exposition Press, 1975), 98, n. 28; *A Brief History of Tongue* (Halifax: Axial Press, 1998), 143; *Economics for Everyone* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2017, 3rd edition), 6.

and that further question, by whom? It is our responsibility and commitment, for those who are drawn to this work, this world of meaning, to begin to actively point our selves and others in the direction of the world of interiority and the third stage of meaning, and the second time of the temporal subject (Lonergan, 2007).⁶⁸ On a personal and communal level, to take the steps in that direction is a serious existential question: will I tackle the puzzles? Will I set aside the comparative reading and quoting of others? Will I brave the 'bloody entrance' into a zone of theory? Will I commit my life to engineering this collaborative cosmic future-facing adventure? *Read* McShane quoting himself and Lonergan in his third objectification:

"The field is the universe, but my horizon defines my universe" (Lonergan, CWL 18, 199). The challenge of the jump? "They have to be people in whom the horizon is coincident with the field. If they are not, then all they can possibly do is increase the confusion and accelerate the doom" (*Ibid.*, 306). "We are in a situation where the people who can do the most harm are doing it and the people who could do the most good are not" (*Ibid.*, 307). We are in a situation that invites us all, yes all Lonergan folk, to turn for at least a decade or three into forward specialists, mainly indeed into the last specialty and its C₉ pusher-ons: 2020–2050 needs to be the age of a discontinuity in the genesis of street-smarts.

On a social, communal level, we need forward-facing effective collaboration. We need to reach out to others in all fields, in *the* field, in this assembly exercising. In his last weeks, McShane emphasized again and again what he believed were Lonergan's two key points for the ongoing work: the appeal to genuineness in *Insight* chapter 15 within the context of the 1833 overture dialectic assembly exercising, and a commitment to the wonderland of theory and explanation within the practical and effective context of genetic systematics. Are we committed to this ongoing way forward?

And I am still without a lot of resources, intellectual, moral, or religious, to understand being in love with God. In my heart, my 'interiority,' I do love God. We are given the resources; the resources are *given*, in us. It is the twist of mind that we need, a twist away from scholarly reading and quoting and into the explanatory depths of self-appropriation and explicit metaphysics. What, *then*, do we mean by *my interiority, my heart*? And how do we now begin to engineer our way to this future control of meaning?

⁶⁸ See also my article "Philip McShane's Axial Period: An Interpretation," *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis*, 4 (2003), 128–179.

- Lovett's Objectifications

Any illusion I might have had that my initial meaning coincided with what Lonergan meant died on reaching page 287 of Method in Theology where the second paragraph calmly invites us to go back and re-write the second, third, and fourth chapters of that work in a truly explanatory manner. There is no short cut to such self-appropriation.⁶⁹ Success here, no matter how limited it may be, is our entry into the realm of interiority (original footnotes).

*It is also this control of meaning ... that has us speaking of a third stage of meaning. As Lovett quoted in his 2nd objectification, McShane was adamant that to move in that third stage direction, we need heuristic diagrams, and he often referenced Lonergan (2002, 151) on this point: *The comprehension of everything in a unified whole can be either formal or virtual. It is virtual when one is habitually able to answer readily and without difficulty, or at least 'without tears,' a whole series of questions right up to the last why? Formal comprehension, however, cannot take place without a construct of some sort. In this life we are able to understand something only by turning to phantasm; but in larger and more complex questions it is impossible to have suitable phantasm unless the imagination is aided by some sort of diagram. Thus, 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 the connections between them.**

*So, does the conversion to religious Mystery as formulated feed into our being part of redemptive process and if so, how? Here I focus on metaphysics, mystery and myth from *Insight* chapter 17.1. According to one source on Ignatian spirituality, kataphatic prayer "has content" and draws on "words, images, symbols and ideas." In this sense, then, reading *Insight* is prayer; thinking is prayer; virtual and formal comprehension is prayer; and every question is a prayer, whether we acknowledge the fact or not: "The question of God, then, lies within [our] horizon."⁷⁰ As a culture, we need to begin to read these words 'eyes off the page.' The redemptive process is a process of redeeming our humanity, inching toward the minority global third stage self-possession of our kataphatic longing for Home: "The principle of dynamic correspondence calls for a harmonious orientation on the psychic level [with the detached and disinterested desire to know as operator on the intellectual*

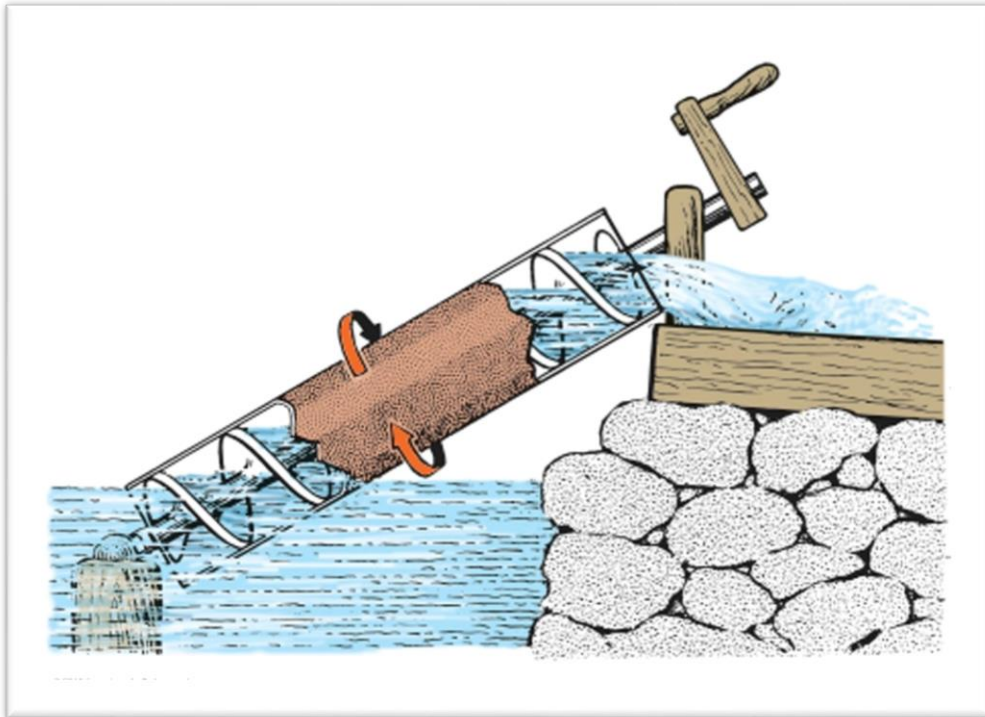
⁶⁹ "To say it all with the greatest brevity: one has not only to read *Insight* but also to discover oneself in oneself." *Method in Theology*, 260; CWL 14, 244.

⁷⁰ *Method in Theology*, 103; CWL 14, 99. See also CWL 3, 680.

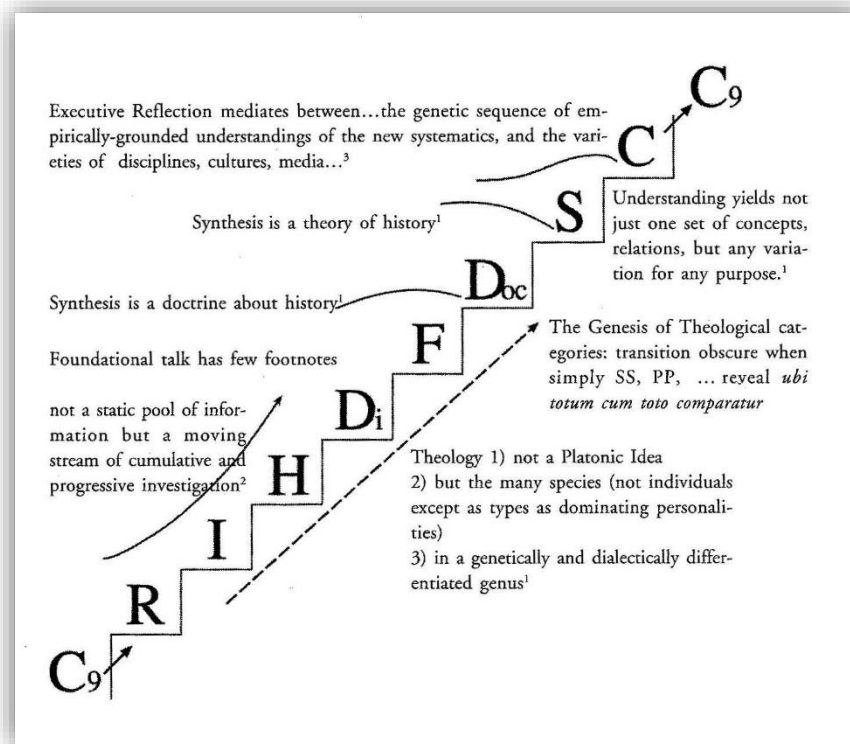
level], and from the nature of the case such an orientation would have to consist in some cosmic dimension.”⁷¹

McShane was fond of quoting Jesus asking his disciples, “What do you want?” (John 1:38). Whether Christian or not, the question confronts all of us. The remote far-distant explanatory future to which we aspire, and the problem of focusing on “to speak of” our own speaking, is a much different activity than we typically engage in at present. Can we make this shift to *resonate* with the reach of our own molecules for God?

I end with encouraging images and words from McShane in his 3rd objectification of “To speak of the dynamic state of being in love with God” quotation:



⁷¹ CWL 3, 555.



“Such is the absolutely supernatural Incarnate heuristic reach of the meaning of ‘to speak’ in the Assembly, in our future *Tower Assembly*.”⁷²

B. Brendan Lovett

Originating values are human subjects becoming their authentic selves by observing the four transcendental precepts. “Being attentive includes attention to human affairs. Being intelligent includes a grasp of hitherto unnoticed or unrealized possibilities. Being reasonable includes the rejection of what probably would not work but also the acknowledgment of what probably would. Being responsible includes basing one’s decisions and choices on an unbiased evaluation of short-term and long-term costs and benefits to oneself, to one’s group, to other groups.”⁷³ Failure in any of the four provides instances of human bias and derails the dynamics of the pure desire to know. If I am understanding him correctly, I would prefer not to take over Whalon’s suggestion of the pure desire having its “shadow side”: as I see it, the pure desire is either operative or it is displaced by other desires.

⁷² See page 60.

⁷³ *Method in Theology*, 53.

We read in *Method in Theology*, “There is then a rock on which one can build.”⁷⁴ Turning the page, we read, “The rock, then, is the subject in his conscious, unobjectified attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, responsibility. The point to the labor of objectifying the subject and his conscious operations is that thereby one begins to learn what these are and that they are.”⁷⁵ This is clearly not concerned with throwing light on the reference in the footnote to “the more important part of the rock.” This “more important part” was recently interpreted by McShane as “the rock of a poise on and in the spirit of these first four [transcendental precepts] which may well be considered as ... the Clasp of finitude.”⁷⁶

What then is the relation between the Gift of God’s love poured out in our hearts and our authenticity as knowers and doers? “Just as unrestricted questioning is our capacity for self-transcendence, so being in love in an unrestricted fashion is the proper fulfilment of that capacity.”⁷⁷ As “proper fulfilment” of the type of consciousness where we deliberate, make judgments of value, decide and act, responsibly and freely, it effects—in those who respond—persons “ready to deliberate, judge, decide and act with the easy freedom of those that do all good because they are in love.”⁷⁸

Turning to the presentation of chapter 4, though in no way attempting to provide the explanatory re-write to which Lonergan invites us,⁷⁹ I focus on some pointers provided. Perhaps the first pointer lies in the opening three pages under the section heading, “*The Question of God*.” He is content to establish the validity of a question and indicates how it can arise in any of three ways.

What I think is being put aside here is a relatively recent discipline called fundamental theology which came to birth within an extremely rationalist environment. For Lonergan, what is foundational to doing theology is the converted subjectivity of the theologian herself, a matter of religious, moral, and intellectual conversion. Although delighted to see Whalon’s references to some under-appreciated theological giants of the past, from Maximus the

⁷⁴ *Method in Theology*, 19. Unexpectedly, added to the text at this point is footnote 5: “It will become evident in Chapter Four that the more important part of the rock has not yet been uncovered.”

⁷⁵ *Method in Theology*, 20.

⁷⁶ *Tinctures of System 6*, p. 2.

⁷⁷ *Method in Theology*, 106.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁷⁹ See the end of the opening paragraph in the First Objectification above.

Confessor to the redoubtable Austin Farrer, I do not find their thinking echoed in the achievement of *Insight*.

The rejection of conceptualism is a constant from Lonergan's earliest works.⁸⁰ He rejects the Aristotelian idea of science as a deduction from "first principles." In the later chapters of *Insight*, he does retain the term metaphysics but as qualified by "in my sense of the term." His new naming is "the integration of heuristic structures," which is a matter of something quite new, a *verifiable* metaphysics.⁸¹ This is almost the polar opposite of a science of self-evident first principles where logic reigns supreme. True, we had to wait on the emergence of successful empirical sciences to have the data needed to develop the appropriation of our own interiority. This I take to be the significance of the exercises of the first five chapters of *Insight*: they are invitations to familiarize ourselves in initial fashion with how our minds are performing in different sciences. But that is just a propaedeutic to gaining explanatory perspective on how we perform as commonsense knowers in chapters six and seven.⁸² What is operative in those chapters is not an exercise in common sense but a new explanatory understanding of the operations of common sense, of *how* and *what* we come to know through such operations. It is our entry to the realm of interiority.

Responding to the Gift of God's love necessarily has us loving what God loves. But God loves everything that God has let be. Our looming planetary crisis of global warming has been humanly induced. It indicates that we have refused to appreciate the intrinsic value of every moment of emergence in "the immense journey" (Loren Eiseley), each moment of which constitutes part of the ground of possibility of our emergence and continued sustenance.

⁸⁰ This was already present in CWL 1: *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, Index, s.v. Some thirty years later, in *Method in Theology*, p. 336, n.1., we read: "The key issue is whether concepts result from understanding or understanding results from concepts."

⁸¹ I find myself in total agreement with Whalon's rejection of the radical orthodoxy people's judgment of Lonergan being naïve in his affirmation of modern science: his rigorous critique of the failure of our present human disciplines to reach explanatory – and therefore scientific – status does find any reason to deny the validity of their current striving to reach that goal. They just need to include Dialectic and Foundations in their heuristics.

⁸² "The history of mathematics, natural science, and philosophy and, as well, one's own personal reflective engagement in all three are needed if both common sense and theory are to construct the scaffolding for an entry into the world of interiority." *Method in Theology*, 261–262.

The complexity of our actual experience of being in love in an unrestricted manner, something which is honestly and deeply probed by Whalon with the help of the Psalmist, calls, Lonergan tells us, for the drawing of a distinction between “being in love in an unrestricted manner (i) as it is defined and (ii) as it is achieved.”

As it is defined, it is the habitual actuation of man’s capacity for self-transcendence; it is the religious conversion that grounds both moral and religious conversion; it provides the real criterion by which all else is to be judged; and consequently one has only to experience it in oneself or witness it in others, to find in it its own justification. On the other hand, as it is actually achieved in any human being, the achievement is dialectical. It is authenticity as a withdrawal from unauthenticity, and the withdrawal is never complete and always precarious.⁸³

“The field is *the* universe but my horizon defines *my* universe.”⁸⁴ The problem is how to escape from “the blinkers of a personal or communal horizon. They have to be people in whom the horizon is coincident with the field. If they are not, then all they can possibly do is increase the confusion and accelerate the doom.”⁸⁵ Yes. Which brings us right back to the crucial importance of the *Duffy Exercise* in which we are involved.

Heuristics of Completing the Circle

Gillis is surely right to see Lonergan as “speaking out of a comprehensive explanatory vision of onto- and phylogenetic growth (*Insight*) and of a precise, painful, explanatory collaborative cultural climbing to take place through the following generations and centuries and millennia.”

The nagging awareness of something crucial still missing which surfaces at the end of *Insight* with Lonergan requiring a still absent “specialized auxiliary” was to lead to a twelve-year search up to February of 1965.

“Making conversion a topic” implies that, at present, it is not a topic. If that be our present context, we cannot but be more than a little self-deceived in regard to our own state of conversion. Our immersion in our interpersonal and social and cultural world is so pervasive as to make compliance with the culture something almost determined. Escape from such determination is in part what the *Duffy Exercise* is all about: helping one another to reverse our

⁸³ *Method in Theology*, 283–84.

⁸⁴ CWL 18, *Phenomenology and Logic*, 199.

⁸⁵ CWL 18, *Phenomenology and Logic*, 306.

counterpositions where that is needed and free our transcendental subjectivity to stretch toward the intelligent, the unconditioned, and the good, above all toward the One “who alone is good,” Kavanagh’s “Beautiful, Beautiful, Beautiful God.” Truly, our home-sickness is our only guide, as Hesse’s Hermine put it.

I was deeply impressed by the honesty, accuracy, and precision with which both Gillis and Whalon, each in their own way, positioned themselves in relation to distinctive differentiations of consciousness, concentrating on our group’s topic of the Gift of God’s Love. Even prior to receiving third objectifications, I have already learned much that is painful but enriching and wish to heartily thank all for their participation.

Authenticity/conversion is (i) a slow process of maturation; (ii) while it is a withdrawal from inauthenticity, there is no surety of our not returning to inauthenticity; (iii) it is finding out for oneself and in oneself what it is to be intelligent, to be reasonable, to be responsible, to love.⁸⁶

C. Philip McShane

“He assured me that explaining and trying to explain seemed to him to be the fundamental error of all modern thought. Now such a view is perfectly outrageous yet absolutely in keeping with all contemporary Catholic philosophy.”⁸⁷ How much is this true of present orientations across religions?⁸⁸ But I stay with the Christian poise. My colleagues are with me in this in their different ways. But I express the issue now in my own odd way, in order to push us forward. So I wind forward from our first and second objectifications to identify the issue in a dense strange paragraph and follow with my suggestions of a sub-strategy that is not in conflict with the hopes of the team. They are seeking to add different sub-structures in the struggle in order to reverse effectively the present destructive trends.

Broadly, the issue is releasing the stalk and talk of nature and of Jesus from the axial weeds and toxins that weave round and into our W-enzymes.⁸⁹

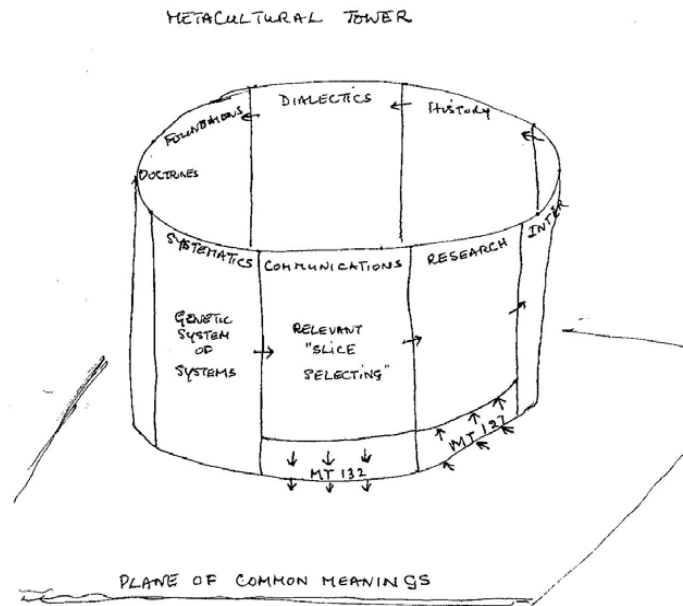
⁸⁶ *Method in Theology*, 259.

⁸⁷ I quote the letter of Lonergan, January 1935, to a religious superior, already referenced in note 43: *Bernard Lonergan: His Life and Leading Ideas*, 152.

⁸⁸ My context for this particular problem of Anthropocene reorientation is the set of five essays in *Divyadaan: Journal of Philosophy and Education*, vol. 30, no. 1 (2019). Its general title is “Religious Faith Seeding the Positive Anthropocene Age.”

⁸⁹ This fresh expression, which has an isomorphism with fresh discontinuous shifts in the Standard Model of theological engineering, is the result of the drive of my two recent books, *The Future: Core Precepts of Supramolecular Chemistry and*

More precisely, the issue now is the lifting of probabilities of attunement to the Gift's fermenting forward in Grace, by being *InWithTo* the Reality of Love, at the level of the times.⁹⁰ Such is the absolutely supernatural incarnate heuristic reach of the meaning of "to speak" in the Assembly, in our future *Tower Assembly*.⁹¹



My suggestions coincide with and extend the suggestions that conclude both the book *Interpretation from A to Z* and the seventh essay in the

Nanochemistry (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2019) and *Interpretation from A to Z* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2020). Such a shifting brings us into the crisis zone of the "Existential Gap" that is the topic of the two final chapters of CWL 18, *Phenomenology and Logic*.

⁹⁰ The meaning of this sentence, and of the odd word, *InWithTo*, pivots on the sublation into self-explanation of the sixth section, "The Divine Missions," of CWL 12, *The Triune God: Systematics*. That is a task of Interior Lighthouse dwellers of the next century. Leads to the venture are in my Epilogue to *Seeding Global Collaboration*, edited by Patrick Brown and James Duffy (Axial Publishing, 2016), 221–240: "Embracing Luminously and Toweringly the Symphony of Cauling."

⁹¹ I refer you here, image-seeking in stretched fantasy, to note 26 of the first objectification. Murmuration is to be a radiant and absolutely supernatural Tower weaving in and of history. Might I push you into further flights of chemo-fantasy by recalling "the problem of general history, which is the real catch"? CWL 10, *Topics in Education*, 256.

Questing2020 series. I quote the significant concluding footnote 119 on page 207:

See CWL 18, *Phenomenology and Logic*, index under *Field*. “The field is the universe, but my horizon defines my universe” (*Ibid.*, 199). The challenge of the jump? “They have to be people in whom the horizon is coincident with the field. If they are not, then all they can possibly do is increase the confusion and accelerate the doom.” (*Ibid.*, 306). “We are in a situation where the people who can do the most harm are doing it and the people who could do the most good are not.” (*Ibid.*, 307). We are in a situation that invites us all, yes all Lonergan folk, to turn for at least a decade or three into forward specialists, mainly indeed into the last specialty and its C₉ pusher-ons: 2020–2050 needs to be the age of a discontinuity in the genesis of street-smarts. Recall my 21 nudges that ended with note 103 above. Recall note 108 and Lonergan’s appeal of ³/₄ of a century ago. I have much on my mind regarding the way forward, not least the problem of sublating *The Interior Castle*, adequately identified, into *The Interior Lighthouse*. But I refrain from writing further: this seems a decent end-book of a long run. It seems best to venture on in a new website series, *Questing2020*, question and tentative answers about these next decades. That series will, I hope, be only the tip of the iceberg of *Assembly* that cools the business of present Lonergan studies in favor of a search for fertile seeds of a global effectiveness. But also I think of the *Questing* series as just a public tip of the bergamot of private communications with me about that task: a herbing of hearts towards Dionysian drives in these next generations.

The third line of the footnote talks of “the challenge of the jump.” My suggested focus emergent here, flipping forward to a *positive haute vulgarization* of a fuller foundational perspective, is on the contribution to reversal of counterpositions that would come from some few—or many, or all!—younger Lonergan students being led effectively⁹² to detect the fraudulence of their guided studies by them struggling into some involvement in the task of “implementation” that is at the heart of Lonergan’s

⁹² Here we hit the high pointing of Lonergan’s description of statistically-effective dialectic, when he moves in his last sentence **to speak of** “when positions are developed and counterpositions are reversed.” *Method in Theology*, 250; CWL 14, 235. Yes, the fullness of foundations and its climb to C₉ is the murmuration that is to meet that challenge. But the baton-handover of the fourth specialty is to tingle with the explanatory electricity of “something better than was the reality” (*ibid.*, 251; CWL 14, 236) of the past fifty years. The next note adds a nudge.

meaning of “to speak.”⁹³ The involvement cannot prudently be a direct questioning of their guides: I think of Lonergan writing to me in 1968 regarding my surviving Oxford successfully: “Give the guy what he wants — it’s only a union card.” However, there may be room for cunning in rocking local boats, trickily being operatively “at home both in the old and the new.” Might the cunning even reach to twisting essay and thesis topics towards the engineering of which Lonergan “speaks”? Thus beginners’ eyes and ayes can start to foment a backfiring that would give fresh operative meaning to the concluding sentence and sentencing of *Collection*. “What will count is a perhaps not numerous center, big enough to be at home in both the old and the new, painstaking enough to refuse half measures and insist on complete solutions even though it has to wait.”⁹⁴

D. Pierre Whalon

If Jesus knew how to play his divine part, but didn’t know that his part was divine, then there is hope for us yet. Specifically, for me, in this case. Because when I try to dwell in my interiority (no easy thing), I can see that falling in love with God is first God being in love with me. I can only respond, and when I try to bring in experience and intellect and judgment, I quickly run up against that oh-so-simple mode of existence, that absolute mystery toward which we humans are oriented. So I experience that back-and-forth that the psalmist described above: when I start to feel like I am onto something is when I lose it all and am terrified. Terrified of two things: that in the final analysis, what I am in love with is merely an illusion; or, that God’s hiddenness is a condemnation of my sins.

What little wisdom I have acquired in my 67+ years is that the back-and-forth is normal. Bright days on Mount Tabor, dark days in the valley of the

⁹³ I recall notes 32 and 52. I end these three notes by bringing us to a definite concrete challenge, a challenge that surely will be challenged by those teaching “Lonerganistically.” Think of the final words of the chapter on meaning in *Method in Theology* 99; CWL 14, 95: “Never has the need to speak effectively to undifferentiated consciousness been greater.” Speaking effectively is the challenge of moving globally into a mature positive Anthropocene of a mastery of murmurations (see note 26 above), but now I am asking you to think of the tricky creative road to speaking effectively to the present younger generations interested in Lonergan and religion but subtly lead into the sophisticated common sense of multi-referenced and multi-meshed “initial meanings.” See CWL 3, *Insight*, 567, note 5.

⁹⁴ CWL 4, *Collection*, 245: the conclusion of the essay “Dimensions of Meaning.”

shadow, and more darkness than otherwise. What emerges is the fact of that “consolation without a cause”—no direct cause indeed—but that can only come from or emanate from the One who loves us. And yet it is so difficult to accept, because it means (a) that I must change, i.e., convert; and (b) that I don’t want to. If I am to imitate in my shriveled impoverished way how to play Jesus’ “divine part,” the minute I start to think that this part really is divine (which Jesus didn’t know, saith Farrer) is the moment when I recoil. I backtrack because in objectifying God in this way I feel the temptation to idolatry (the religion of *Moi*) and the equal temptation not to try at all, because I ain’t divine in any way shape or form. And furthermore, I don’t want to be.

I’d still like a slice of that eternal life thingie, if You don’t mind, however...

Where I am ending up is thinking that faith in the triple whammy of the three-body problem is a dialectic in all three levels—and the fourth level of meaning as well. My senses do not apprehend God. They experience the beauty of this world and its ugliness; its glory and its depravity. My intellect does indeed want to know, but that “pure desire,” that “eros of the human spirit,” has a dialectic as well. “What’s that? How do I know? Why is doing that knowing?” also have a shadow side, so to speak. “What’s in it for me?” is the motion of the urge to know returning—action and reaction. And judging the truth and the value of some thing or event has also an analogous temptation to bias—*curvatus in se*. In my interiority and in my love of and for God there is always a need not only to eliminate counterpositions, but also to see clearly how such elimination requires purgation of other patterns of existence as well.

Like the making of books there is no end and in much study is weariness of spirit (Eccles. 12:12—the seminarian’s favorite Bible verse), there is no end to rooting out the perverseness of Whalon, and in confronting it every time I lift up my head to gaze on the crucified One there is much weariness. I get tired of myself, and that too is the doorway to the sin of acedia.

Finally, going over this strange terrain in these exercises reminds me that the radical orthodoxy folks are really wrong about Lonergan. He is quite cogent about describing decline; it comes from contemplating humanity, the Church, the Jesuit order, and of course, himself. And for Bernie there is no getting away from the Law of the Cross.

Nor for us. For me. One of my spiritual directors would often start sentences with “Sin being what it is,” and I think that is the second place in the dialectic of salvation: the counterposition to be reversed, of course. And its reversal is the position: our hearts in every sense of that word have been

and are being and will be flooded by the God whose Being is Love, and Truth, and Good, and Beauty, and Power, and Understanding, and..., and.... And whose Holy Humility invites us to respond again and again, "Let it be according to your Word."

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Pierre Whalon served as bishop for the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe from 2001 to 2019. His episcopal ministry has included much interreligious and ecumenical work, as well as refugee activism. He has published books in French as well as English, along with many articles in theology, economics, and philosophy of science. He is also an accomplished composer and organist. See pierrewhalon.info. Bishop Whalon lives in France with his wife H el ene.

