

Dialectic Exercise on *Method in Theology*, Chapter 5

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First objectification: where am I coming from?

Let me begin with the experience I bring to my reading of chapter 5 of *Method in Theology*.

In many ways, Lonergan was for me a fortuitous discovery. I was part of a small group of Salesian students assigned to do philosophy at Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV) run by the Jesuits at Pune. Some of us 'discovered' Lonergan at this time. The name occurred here and there in the metaphysics notes of our professor, Jean de Marneffe, SJ, and one of the articles I read for the examination was "Metaphysics as Horizon." Given that we had a passionate neo-Thomist in our Salesian community, I found the article especially interesting, with its comparison of Kant, Gilson and Coreth – though I can hardly claim to have really understood it. I went on to Hugo Meynell's *Introduction to the Philosophy of Bernard Lonergan* and I think I was most impressed by the chapter on common sense, and more particularly by the biases – especially group bias and general bias, but also by dramatic bias. Eventually I took up *Insight*, helped also by another course by Marneffe. I don't think I went beyond chapter 10 or 11 at the time, almost certainly skipping over chapter 5 on space and time. Still, the reading was an experience of insight upon insight, a lighting up of the text that was at once a lighting up of the self, in Fred Lawrence's wonderful phrase. Here was a philosophy that was empirical, something that could be verified in oneself, and I found it exciting.

In 1981 I began teaching philosophy in the newly opened Divyadaan: Salesian Institute of Philosophy, then in Pune. I was assigned to teach Metaphysics, and I decided to take *Insight* as my text, so I began, naturally, at the beginning. When my neo-Thomist confrere, then Director of the centre, discovered this, he was not a little annoyed, and he assigned me also the Epistemology course, so that I could 'reach the metaphysics.' I read the first part of *Insight* extensively during these two years of teaching, and then during the four doctoral years in Rome – and every year I realized I had not really understood. The great breakthrough came when I began reading *Verbum*, discovered how *Insight* was a transposition of wisdom, and understood the great strategy of the first part of *Insight*, Lonergan's

cognitional theory and his peculiar ‘wisdom epistemology.’ I experienced for myself the cessation of ‘further relevant questions,’ at least in this regard.

The other exciting thing during the doctoral years was confirming that the place of the notion of the universal viewpoint was taken by method in the 1972 book – something that had been suggested to me by Philip McShane during the first Lonergan Workshop I attended in 1992.

In 1994 I resumed teaching at Divyadaan, now in Nashik, while also shouldering the responsibility of being superior of our rather large student community. Thanks to Fred Crowe’s sage advice ‘to protect my summers’ and to Fred Lawrence who kept inviting me to give papers at the Lonergan Workshop, I dedicated the summer months to a little bit of research.

I think I always had the idea that the method must be applied, perhaps because of Terry Tekippe’s attempt,¹ and certainly with constant encouragement from Phil McShane. Or perhaps I was led by my interest in the emergence of an Indian Christian theology. At any rate, I presented “Towards an Indian Christian Theology: Applying Lonergan’s Method in India” at a special conference for young Lonergan scholars organized in Boston by Joe Flanagan in 2001. This was eventually published in two parts.²

As for attempts to actually apply the method, there were two pieces on the Indologist Richard De Smet that I presented at the Lonergan Workshop in 2009 and 2010, with a paper on Lonergan and Indian thought serving as a kind of run up.³ These were “doing what one can” – the contribution of one individual to the collaborative process. But my doctoral thesis was itself an effort to use Lonergan’s method: I knew I was ‘doing interpretation,’ though

¹ Terry J. Tekippe, ed., *Papal Infallibility: An Application of Lonergan’s Theological Method* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1983). Tekippe had been visiting professor at the Gregorian, and I think it was own doctoral thesis (‘The Universal Viewpoint and the Relationship of Philosophy and Theology in the works of Bernard Lonergan,’ Fordham University, New York, 1972) that sparked my interest in the universal viewpoint.

² Ivo Coelho, “Implementations of Lonergan’s Method: A Critique,” *Divyadaan: Journal of Philosophy and Education* **15/3** (2004), 379-404; and “Applying Lonergan’s Method: The Case of an Indian Theology,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* **22/1** (2004), 1-22.

³ Ivo Coelho, “From Person to Subject: Lonergan’s Methodical Transposition as Upper Blade for Reading Sankara,” *Lonergan Workshop: Ongoing Collaboration in the Year of St Paul*, ed. Fred Lawrence, **23** (2009), 83-118; “Retrieving Good Work: De Smet on Sankara,” *Lonergan Workshop*, ed. Fred Lawrence, **24** (2013), 33-73; and “Lonergan and Indian Thought,” *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* **63/4** (2007), 1025-1047.

elements of dialectic were present, and unavoidably I had to put in a fair amount of research (sifting through the Lonergan archives in Toronto, establishing chronology, and so on, with some happy discoveries here and there). I must add that I made full use of 'lower blade' methods of interpretation learnt from Peter Henrici, SJ. Henrici's seminar at the Gregorian on methods of interpreting a philosophical text was a brilliant exemplification of the first kind of method outlined by Lonergan in chapter 1 of *Method in Theology*: "In the first, method will be conceived more as an art than as a science. It is to be learnt not from books or lectures but in the laboratory or in the seminar. What counts is the example of the master, the effort to do likewise, his comments on one's performance."⁴

Along these lines, I offered a similar seminar in Divyadaan. For several years the text to be interpreted was chapter 7 of *Method in Theology*. The disadvantage was the complexity – it involved interpreting a text on interpretation. Things worked out significantly better when we took chapter 10 of *Method in Theology* as the text to be interpreted.

I must add that I have never had time that I could dedicate exclusively to research and teaching. Still, three research focuses have emerged: Lonergan, De Smet and Thomas Stephens. I would like to link my major interest in De Smet and a minor one in Thomas Stephens to the 2001 paper on applying Lonergan's method in India. I spoke there of the need for a bibliography of Indian Christian writings as a key element in facilitating the emergence of an Indian Christian theology, and so there emerged the blog *Indian Christian Writings: A Bibliography*.⁵ Another little step in facilitating the appropriation of the past was the generation of critical editions, or at least the publication in easily accessible form of important sets of writings. A confrere and colleague had been engaged in providing translations (in contemporary

⁴ B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 3; CWL 14, 7. See also Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 170; CWL 14, 161: "The exegete also speaks to his pupils, and he must speak to them in a different manner. For notes, articles, monographs, commentaries fail to reveal the kind of work and the amount of work that went into writing them. that revelation only comes in the seminar. It can come to a great degree by working with a director on some project that he has still in process. But I think there is much to be said for the value of a seminar that repeats previous discovery. This is done by selecting some complex and basically convincing monograph, finding in the original sources the clues and trails that led the author to his discoveries, assigning one's students tasks based on these clues and trails so that they may repeat his discoveries...."

⁵ <https://indianchristianwritings.blogspot.com>

Marathi and English) of the great work of Thomas Stephens, popular known as the *Khristapurana*; this has already opened up a flurry of research, aided also, in a small way, by the Thomas Stephens bibliography easily accessible on the blog mentioned above.⁶ I myself have been engaged in the publication of the scattered writings of the great Indologist Richard De Smet, SJ, and this in turn has begun generating studies and research.

In the light of all this, what is my ‘spontaneous’ understanding of chapter 5 of *Method in Theology*?

In one sense, Lonergan did not invent functional specialization. In point of fact, there are scholars doing research, interpretation, history, doctrines, systematics, communications, and even some dialectic and foundations,⁷ though not always with a clear understanding of what they are doing and often mixing up the specializations. In another sense, Lonergan did invent functional specialization. I would like to think of the disciplines mentioned above, along with field and subject specializations, as the coincidental aggregate upon which Lonergan’s insight intervenes. As always, the insight is something radically new, and yet it emerges upon a prior set of data that is, without the insight, a merely coincidental aggregate.

To Lonergan, then, the merit of having clearly conceived functional specialization as distinct from field and subject specializations.

Next, we must recognize that Lonergan brings the functional specializations together into a unified method. That is where his 1965 insight, the breakthrough to functional specialization, is so central. Mastery of existential interiority (the addition of a new and full appropriation of the fourth level of conscious intentionality to the three-levelled cognitional structure of *Insight*) and the doubling of the four-levelled structure led to the

⁶ As far as ‘hard core’ research is concerned, we have the ongoing search for a copy of the print editions of the *Khristapurana*. Stephens’ *Khristapurana* happens to be one of the first books to be printed in the very first printing press in India, imported by the Jesuits in Goa. It was printed thrice, but we have not, to date, discovered a single copy. What we do have are handwritten copies of the print editions, and also an intriguing handwritten copy in the Devanagari script.

⁷ In *The Lonergan Enterprise* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cowley Publications, 1980), 88, Crowe says that there are no mature disciplines to which we can relate dialectics and foundations. Lonergan has pointed out that dialectic, foundations and doctrines are a take-off on the old apologetics, fundamental theology and dogmatic theology; however, the differences between these are so great that the old disciplines provide very little help in the setting up of the new.

breakthrough to 8 functional specialties patterned according to theology *in oratione obliqua* and theology *in oratione recta*.

Yet again, at the heart of the method Lonergan places dialectic and foundations. The task of dialectic is to handle conflicts in research, interpretation and history rooted in the conflicting viewpoints of those being investigated as well as in the investigators themselves. For investigators in the first three specialties have each their own viewpoints, but these specialties simply prescind from these viewpoints and their effects, knowing that there is another specialty, Dialectic, that is designed to handle them. Dialectic begins by *assembling* the results of the first three specialties. It notes agreements and disagreements. It *classifies* conflicts into those rooted in data, those that stem merely from difference in perspectives, and those that are truly radical. It *selects* and chooses to work only with radical or dialectical conflicts. It assumes that such conflicts are rooted not in relative horizons but in absolute horizons, and that absolute horizons are rooted in presence or absence of intellectual, moral and religious conversion. It invites, therefore, to a *reduction* of dialectical conflicts to their roots in presence or absence of conversions – or, in another way of putting it, to the objectification of subjectivity. It takes sides by *identifying* intellectual, moral and religious positions and counterpositions.

Clearly, such a process, when carried out by investigators with differing viewpoints, cannot be expected to yield uniform results. At this point, the investigators turn attention to themselves. *Method in Theology* envisages a double application of dialectic. The first application is already an encounter with the history-making persons of the past. The second application amounts to an encounter with the history-writing persons of the present, and so the communitarian dimension of knowledge is integrated even more explicitly into method.⁸ This double application of dialectic is completed and crowned by dialogue. For the second application may itself be done in two manners, one of which deals with subjects as objects and the other with subjects as subjects. The latter possibility is dialogue.⁹ In an atmosphere that is irenic and serene, in a context of trust and friendship, scholars challenge one another to conversion. Once again, this procedure cannot be expected to be

⁸ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 250; CWL 14, 235; cf. 331. "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," *A Third Collection*, 175–176.

⁹ Cf. B. Lonergan, "Third Lecture: The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," *A Third Collection*, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* 16, ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadosky (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 153. Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," *A Third Collection*, 176.

automatically efficacious; and still, in the context of a common search for authenticity, there is hope that it will, over time, prove effective. The addition of dialectic which flowers into dialogue gives us a method that is intrinsically ecumenical and inter-religious.

In the light of the intense and challenging procedure that is dialectic, the functional specialty, *Foundations*, calls each scholar to take a stand. This might involve changing one's basic options in intellectual, moral and religious fields; it might also mean a deliberate reaffirmation of one's commitments. The options that one makes, the horizons for which one opts, yield one's basic set of categories.

Functional specialization helped me understand the difference between what was happening at the Pontifical Biblical Institute (PIB) on one side of the Piazza della Pilotta in Rome, and at the department of biblical theology of the Gregorian (PUG) on the other side. In both one 'studied scripture,' and in both one could obtain a PhD. So where did the difference lie? At the time I thought that the PIB did research and interpretation, whereas the department of biblical theology concentrated on history, but perhaps the answer is not so clear, simply because universities are not yet organized on the lines of functional specialization. In fact, the website of the department of biblical theology candidly admits that the identity of biblical theology is still under intense discussion: "Biblical theology walks like a sentinel on the borderline, with the task of reconciling... exegesis and theology on the one hand, and of defining (or re-defining) the field of competence with dogmatics on the other."¹⁰ Reading this, I can't help thinking of the enormous fluidity of terms in the early Lonergan: historical theology, dogmatic theology, positive theology.... The fact is that university faculties and departments are an admixture of field, subject and functional specialization. I tend to think that while the PIB concentrates on research and interpretation (what the PUG website "analytical research"), the department of biblical theology at the PUG begins to pull analytical interpretations together: it "promotes synthesis, hermeneutics and interdisciplinary dialogue," which is, in my opinion, an effort to think about the bridge between interpretation on the one hand and doctrines, systematics and communications on the other. We must not forget that Lonergan spent a major part of his life thinking out how to introduce

¹⁰ See <https://www.unigre.it/en/theology/biblical/biblical-theology/> (as of 27 April 2022).

history into theology.¹¹ There is a huge amount of material in the archives that can shed precious light on this central struggle of Catholic theology since its discovery of the *Geisteswissenschaften*.

Another aspect that found an immediate echo in me was that the idea of functional specialization helps avoid 'imperialism' – the all too familiar tendency of one specialization to arrogate to itself the whole. If in a rapidly receding past it was 'dogmatic theology' that reigned supreme, later it was exegesis that tended to take centre stage. But functional specialization also helps avoid making excessive demands on any single piece of work. It is all too common to find doctoral guides insisting on adding 'criticism' to interpretation, and many students are not content till they can show the relevance of their work. But if the idea of functional specialization is accepted, one could well stick to interpretation, leaving dialectic and communication to others, for example. It is, in fact, one thing to ask about 'hermeneutical truth' and another to ask simply about 'truth.' In the first one would be asking, Have I understood this author well? and this is a first phase question, theology *in oratione obliqua*. In the second one would be asking, But is this true, what the author is saying? or else, What do I have to say about it? And this involves taking a stand, it is theology *in oratione recta*.

Then there is the whole complex question of the relationship between the two phases of theology – a question raised also by the department of biblical theology at the PUG: what is the bridge between exegesis and theology? This, as I said, is a question with which Lonergan grappled intensely during his middle years, the period between *Insight* and *Method in Theology*. The great answer to that is his theological method. A key element there, as I have said, is dialectic and foundations. Method is open to all-comers: everyone can do research, interpretation, and history, as in fact any other specialization. Horizons will be multiple, so results can be expected to display not only genetic but also dialectical differences. Lonergan's brilliance lies in offering a methodical way of handling dialectical differences, where method is not some simple recipe but necessarily involves subjects, the concrete realities of the investigators involved.

Second objectification: the fantasy

For my fantasy, I draw upon the 2001 paper mentioned above, in which I outlined at length a possible use of Lonergan's method in the emergence of

¹¹ "All my work has been introducing history into Catholic theology." B. Lonergan, in *Curiosity at the Center of One's Life: Statements and Questions of R. Eric O'Connor*, ed. J. Martin O'Hara (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1984), 427.

an Indian Christian theology.¹² This paper was subsequently published in two parts, one dealing with the critique of attempts to apply the method, and the other containing a reduced version of my 'fantasy'.¹³ Here I present an even briefer synthesis, and end by indicating certain concrete outcomes.

The fantasy

My clearly declared aim was to work out steps for applying Lonergan's method towards the generation of an Indian Christian theology, or better, to aid the generation of such a theology, which is obviously something that is already in process.

I began with two general considerations. First, with Fred Crowe I noted that the method is in need of a detailed programming that would mediate between the great idea and its applications.¹⁴ Second, I acknowledged space not only for 'strict applications' of the method – scholars coming together with the explicit purpose of using the method – but also for collaboration in the broad sense, given that in *Insight* Lonergan had enunciated a canon of successive approximations and had outlined a set of critical principles for making collaboration possible,¹⁵ and that in *Method in Theology* he had envisaged an interim period until method was generally recognized, in which any single contribution to a functional speciality would have a major and a minor part.¹⁶

I went on to suggest **possible projects** involving research (among which a bibliography of Indian Christian writings and critical editions of such writings), interpretation, history, and foundations. Looking at the suggested projects in foundations – e.g., study of the works of De Smet and his followers to recover theological categories from Sankara – I realize now that these would really involve the first three functional specialties, research, interpretation, and history, for it is through dialectic and foundations as applied to the results of these three that categories are to be generated. I also suggested an immediately possible project: an exercise of the first 6 functional specialties on the topic of the Christian word, complementing Crowe's

¹² Ivo Coelho, "Towards an Indian Christian Theology: Applying Lonergan's Method in India" (2001 MS).

¹³ See note 2 above.

¹⁴ Frederick E. Crowe, *The Lonergan Enterprise*, 59.

¹⁵ B. Lonergan, *Insight* CWL 3, 610-612.

¹⁶ B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (1990), 137-138; CWL 14, 131.

*Theology of the Christian Word*¹⁷ with interpretations and histories on the word in other religious traditions.

I envisaged a **team** that was ecumenical, interreligious, humanist, given that Lonergan himself recommended as much diversity as possible, so as to ensure that dialectic became a really significant encounter between radically different horizons:

Dialectic occurs principally, not within some one religion, but between many religions. It is the seat, not of authority, but of dialogue. It is not institutional but ecumenist. It is where the many meet, clarify their differences, eliminate misapprehensions, remove incoherences. It is where they endeavour to understand why the other fellow disagrees, to find behind what one thinks his error the truth to which he is so devoted.¹⁸

However, I also acknowledged Lonergan's recommendation that "very many theologians must pursue the attainment of holiness if theology is to discern appreciate, judge religious values and communicate such discernment, appreciation, judgment to others."¹⁹ Any application of method would have to somehow ensure the participation of a good proportion of "fully converted investigators" and also of investigators who were familiar with Lonergan's method.

The subsequent part of my paper discussed data, end products, and the relationship of Indian theology and world theology, and then went on to make further considerations about the functional specialties in three groups: (1) research, interpretation, and history, (2) dialectic, foundations and doctrines, and (3) systematics and communications.²⁰ Here I will restrict myself to a consideration of the second group.

Dialectic, Foundations and Doctrines

Dialectic and foundations, along with doctrines, constitute the most original part of Lonergan's method.

¹⁷ See Frederick E. Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word* (New York: Paulist, 1978).

¹⁸ Lonergan, "MiT X. Chapter Ten. Dialectic and Foundations" (15 pp., LRI Archives Batch VI.5, 1969, unpublished), 15.

¹⁹ Lonergan, "Method in Theology," Institute at Regis College, Toronto, 7-18 July 1969 (transcript by N. Graham, unpublished), 433.

²⁰ The grouping has been suggested by Crowe.

A first observation is about the close relationship between dialectic, foundations, and doctrines: the three specialties hang together. Categories begin to be generated in dialectic, and a stand is taken in foundations. Now “taking a stand” involves selecting between the range of possible options. Here I am really using my imagination because I have no experience to fall back on: I think taking a stand means opting for one particular doctrine or set of doctrines along with the categories involved in them. In a study of the Christian word, for example, dialectic would already involve the identification of positions and counterpositions, though one would still keep oneself open to being challenged by one’s colleagues, and therefore to a possible change of horizon / conversion. At the end of such a process, different people take their stands. This means they opt for one particular position about the Christian word, along with the categories implicit in that position. That kind of option amounts to the adoption of a particular doctrine about the Christian word.

The complication here is to imagine the generation of equivalent sets of categories and, accordingly, the transposition of doctrines over these sets. I guess this means that the doctrine about the Christian word could be expressed in categories sanctified by the Western Christian tradition, but also in others that have emerged in the process of studying the texts of the Indian tradition, etc. More exactly, I suppose, there would be, among the categories generated in dialectic, sets that were basically equivalent. In dialectic and dialogue, I guess, we could expect mutual recognition of such basic equivalence.

A second observation is about the structure of dialectic. The *aim* is to begin to handle conflicts in research, interpretation and history and the *strategy* is the objectification of the personal horizons of the investigators. To my mind, dialectic unfolds on three levels.

At a *first* level, each investigator subjects the results of the prior specialties to assembly, completion, comparison, reduction, classification, selection, and goes on to identify positions and counterpositions and to develop the former and reverse the latter.²¹ The *second* level consists in applying these eight steps to the results of the first level.²² The *third* level consists in dialogue.

The first two levels are clearly present in *Method in Theology*. The third level was formulated in the post-*Method* years. Dialectic, Lonergan observes, can deal with human subjects as objects, but it can also deal with them as

²¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 249-250; CWL 14, 234-235.

²² Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 250; CWL 14, 235.

subjects.²³ In the latter case, dialectic becomes dialogue.²⁴ In an atmosphere that is irenic and serene, in a context of trust and friendship, scholars can challenge one another to conversion.

At this point group work and actual interpersonal encounter become essential. The setting could be a retreat house or *ashram*. The participants may proceed to question one another, invite one another gently to change, move, undergo conversion. "Not every viewpoint is coherent, and those that are not can be invited to advance to a consistent position. Not every reason is a sound reason, and Christianity has nothing to lose from a purge of unsound reasons, of ad hoc explanations, of the stereotypes that body forth suspicions, resentments, hatreds, malice. Not every irreducible difference is a serious difference, and those that are not can be put in second or third or fourth place so that attention, study, analysis can be devoted to differences that are serious and profound."²⁵

No sudden or startling results can be expected. There might however be some convergence in terms of the elimination of at least some horizons.²⁶ In an atmosphere of friendship, much can be expected. For each person has his/her own type of questions, and his/her own way of putting questions. Where there is dialogue, there are as many principles for the elimination of bad judgments operative in the discussion as there are genuine persons there.²⁷ Panikkar says that only the 'other' "can help me discover my

²³ "Besides the dialectic that is concerned with human subjects as objects, there is the dialectic in which human subjects are concerned with themselves and with one another." Lonergan, "Third Lecture: The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," *A Third Collection*, CWL 16, 153.

²⁴ See B. Lonergan, "Third Lecture: The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," *A Third Collection*, CWL 16, ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadosky (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 153, and B. Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," *A Third Collection* CWL 16, 176.

²⁵ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 130; CWL 14, 125.

²⁶ "For while advertence, analysis, presentation of issues will occur from within some horizon, it is not true that all horizons are equally capable of advertent to the issues, analyzing them successfully, and presenting them clearly. On the contrary, the mere fact that an honest attempt at dialectic is made will result in the elimination of not a few horizons, and the further the task is pushed the larger will be the number of casualties." Lonergan, "Mit VII. 4. Dialectic" (LRI Archives Batch VIII.17, item e), 63.

²⁷ "The difference between dialogue and dialectic is that you have as many sources, principles of direction, of elimination of bad judgments, of value judgments, operative in the discussion, as there are persons there, or at least as there are genuine

presuppositions and the underlying principles of my science. In brief, *das Ungedachte*, the unthought, can be disclosed only by one who does not 'think' like me and who helps me discover the unthought magma out of which my thinking crystallizes. For my part, I can do him the same service."²⁸

Dialectic conceived in this way calls for a set of skills and instrumentalities that will seem strange to current academe, but they are the inevitable implications of a theology that does not and cannot bypass the interiority of theologians. By way of example, we could mention the arts and skills of encounter and of teamwork; willingness to engage "in an Augustinian confession of one's past"²⁹ and also to question one's personal authenticity³⁰; willingness to let theology be fecundated by prayer³¹ and by engagement in praxis; willingness to make a personal commitment ("letting Kierkegaard haunt one's theology," in Fred Crowe's beautiful expression³²). All this, of course, in an atmosphere of friendship.³³

The above is obviously somewhat different from the structure suggested to us by James Duffy.

Concrete outcomes

The fantasy outlined above has had some small but significant results.

First, in the area of research, as mentioned already, I set up a blog, Indian Christian Writings: A Bibliography. This was meant to be a collaborative effort, and the hope was that experts would contribute. The aim was "to collect as comprehensive a bibliography of Indian Christian Writings as possible, both primary and secondary, according to author." The blog has had, in its turn, small but satisfying effects. I have received several

persons there." B. Lonergan, Dialogue at the Lonergan Workshop, 1977, transcript, 92. Cf. also B. Lonergan, Dialogue at the Lonergan Workshop, 1976, transcript 57: The more personal approach of dialogue is needed simply because value judgments are personal judgments, and it is by bringing persons together that one gets some way to handle value judgments. See Coelho, *Hermeneutics and Method* 186 and note 97.

²⁸ R. Panikkar, *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics: Cross-Cultural Studies* (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 1983), 333.

²⁹ Crowe, *The Lonergan Enterprise*, 90-91.

³⁰ Crowe, *The Lonergan Enterprise* 90.

³¹ Crowe, *The Lonergan Enterprise* 91-92.

³² Crowe, *The Lonergan Enterprise* 90.

³³ For more details, see Ivo Coelho, "Applying Lonergan's Method: The Case of an Indian Theology," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 22/1 (2004), esp. 11-12.

communications from scholars around the world, asking for advice, help, or simply for material, mostly regarding the work of Richard De Smet and Thomas Stephens.³⁴ On the other hand, few have actually tried to contribute to the bibliography, perhaps also because I have not taken the step of allowing people to freely edit the bibliography. Perhaps the blog ought to be transformed into a Wikipedia type of collaborative endeavour, with all the necessary checks and safeguards.

Why have I been contacted for help mostly with regard to De Smet and Stephens? I think it is because of some other concrete fallouts of my fantasy. First, there is the effort to make De Smet's writings more widely available: to date I have edited three volumes of his work: *Brahman and Person: Essays by Richard De Smet* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2010), *Understanding Sankara: Essays by Richard De Smet*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2013), and *Guidelines in Indian Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2022). Second, there are the two articles on De Smet already mentioned above: "From Person to Subject: Lonergan's Methodical Transposition as Upper Blade for Reading Sankara" in *Lonergan Workshop 23*, and "Retrieving Good Work: De Smet on Sankara" in *Lonergan Workshop 24*.

On the other hand, there have been also efforts regarding the work of Thomas Stephens. One was an article length review of Nelson Falcao's edition of the *Khristapurana*.³⁵ The other was an introduction to another work of Stephens, the *Arte da lingoa Canarim*.³⁶ A third, also thanks to the blog, was

³⁴ Among others, see works by the following scholars: Giri K. John, *Brahmajijñāṣā of Śankara as Theology: A Post Colonial Appraisal* (Kolkata: Punthi Pustak, 2013); Scott Randall Paine, "Bernard Kelly, Richard De Smet and the Dialogue between Thomas Aquinas and Advaita Vedanta," *Divyadaan: Journal of Philosophy and Education* 30/2 (2019), 205-222; Daniel J. Soars, *Beyond the Dualism of Creature and Creator A Hindu-Christian Theological Inquiry into the Distinctive Relation between the World and God* (Doctoral thesis, Cambridge University, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.50569>), and *The World and God are Not-Two: A Hindu-Christian Conversation* (New York: Fordham University Press, forthcoming); Jacob Palaparambil, *Richard De Smet's Discovery of the Notion of Person in Adi Sankaracarya's Advaita Vedanta* (PhD dissertation, Salesian Pontifical University, Rome, 2022); and Yadhu Michael, working in Banaras Hindu University on De Smet's interpretation of Sankara's Advaitavāda.

³⁵ Ivo Coelho, "Thomas Stephens' *Khristapurāṇa*: A New Edition and Translation by Nelson Falcao, SDB," *Divyadaan: Journal of Philosophy and Education* 20/3 (2009), 473-482.

³⁶ Ivo Coelho, "Introduction," Thomas Stephens, *Arte da lingoa Canarim composta pelo Padre Thomaz Esteveo da Companhia de IESUS & acrecentada pello Padre*

the collaboration with Ananya Chakravarti in her effort to digitalize the Indian Christian manuscripts found in the Konkan coast.³⁷ A fourth effort was a study of one of the manuscripts of the *Khristapurana* available in Goa.³⁸

I end by mentioning again the seminar I used to run in Divyadaan, Nashik, on methods of interpreting a philosophical text. The seminar involved teaching students to apply ‘lower blade’ methods of interpretation to a selected text, methods which I had learnt from Peter Henrici in the Gregorian.³⁹ For many years, the text I chose for interpretation was the chapter on interpretation in *Method in Theology*. However, interpreting a chapter on interpretation is a needlessly complex affair, the more so if the students are not familiar with the Lonergan corpus, so in the last year that I offered the seminar, I switched to the chapter on dialectic. That was perhaps the most successful version of the seminar, and it gave me much hope of eventually setting up an exercise of dialectic. However, my transfer to Rome in 2014 put an end to my teaching stint in Divyadaan.

Obviously, all this has been a case of “doing what one can.”

Diogo Ribeiro da mesma Copanhia e nouemente reuista & emendada por outros quarto Padres da mesma Companhia. 1640. (Grammar of Konkani language composed by Fr Thomas Stephens of the Society of Jesus and enriched by Fr Diogo Ribeiro of the same Society and newly revised and corrected by four other priests of the same Society), A facsimile reprint of the 1640 edition with an introduction by Fr Ivo Coelho SDB (Margao - Goa: CinnamonTeal Publishing, 2012), 5–25.

³⁷ Ananya Chakravarti has since published *The Empire of Apostles: Religion, Accommodatio, and the Imagination of Empire in Early Modern Brazil and India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018), containing a chapter entitled “Christ in the Brahmapuri: Thomas Stephens in Salcete” at pp. 178–227.

³⁸ Ivo Coelho, “Thomas Stephens’ *Khristapurāṇa*: The Goa Central Library Manuscript,” *Mission Today* (Shillong) 22/1-4 (2020), 83–98.

³⁹ See Coelho, “Towards an Indian Christian Theology: Applying Lonergan’s Method in India,” section 9.1: Interpretation (2001 MS).

