

# Economics' New Standard Model

## The Second e-Seminar of 2015: The Minders' Reach for God

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The short essay to follow, written in May 2014, would seem to provide a link between the first e-seminar [Jan 17<sup>th</sup>–March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015, but now with an earlier start in mind] on *Economics New Standard Model* and the second e-seminar [September 15<sup>th</sup> – December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015] on *The Minders' Reach for God*. I leave it as written, since it gives the mood that I hope would be generated by the first seminar. The short essay ends with an early statement of Lonergan about “the capital of injustice that hangs like a pall over every brilliant thing,” and from there I would wish some group to reach inwards to savor the solution to this problem as Rabia of Basra (707-801) did, “sometimes God is too shy to speak in public / and he pinches me.”<sup>1</sup> But now with the fact of the *he* being **three** and the pinch being Trinitarian. I could have bridged that fact by changing the title to “The Minder's Reach for Infinite Subjectivity,” but that title already weaves in too much subtle and remote meaning: the goal of the seminar.

As with the first seminar, so in this seminar there is to be a run-up period. Formally it is to be from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 to August 31<sup>st</sup> 2015, but obviously this early announcement adds the chance of communal putterings and suggestions to help us find our way. I have made previous appeals regarding the possible way, for instance, in talking—see [Prehumus](#) 4-8 on *Foundational Prayer*—of a kataphatic shift needed in this millennium. The appeal is given deeper Trinitarian precision in the Epilogue to *Seeding Global Collaboration*, the published proceedings of the Vancouver Conference of July 2014 (Axial Publishing, 2015).<sup>2</sup> However, the quotation from Rabia indicates a wider reach. How wide? A rambling run-up may expose fresh flesh to the longing of the Divine pinch.

But, more deeply, the first seminar will reveal its need for the second seminar's pointings, and the second seminar will blossom into a need to meet the challenge of the first.

### The Short Essay: *From Tadpole twists to Froghorn*

This short note concerns the move from the Vancouver papers of 2014 to the larger shiftings of 2015 and beyond. Its core is Lonergan's blunt appeal in his *Essay in Fundamental Sociology* of eighty years ago. The central issue is our struggle to

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted from *Love Poems of God*, edited by Daniel Ladinski, Penguin Compass, 2002, 15.

<sup>2</sup> The Epilogue is available online: “[Embracing Luminously and Toweringly the Symphony of Cauling.](#)”

intussuscept—luminously, chemically, critically, creatively—the gross pre-determination, through axial brutalities, of the details of our details of our daily lives and our thinkings, and to do this in a manner that would effectively forward the seeding of functional collaboration. We are within the tadpole of history, at the possible but improbable turn towards an effective global science of humanity: its emergent probability pivots on some lunatic-fringe efforts in the present century.

But immediately ahead is the Vancouver Conference of July 21-25.

Obviously, there is still plenty of time to send further suggestions regarding the flow of that conference. A general consensus is that, yes, we focus on the two questions that have been dominant in recent work: “what is functional collaboration?”; “what is meant by talking of intellectual pursuits as academic disciplines?”

It seems useful at present to link those two questions to the suggestion that a possible topic for a conference in 2015 would be “Functional History and Economics.” Again that suggestion was well received, even though the larger ‘why’ of its choice was fuzzy for some, who had a sense that it might narrow our focus overmuch.

Certainly it leads to an identification of a core focus, which can be pinned down conveniently to the two pages 52-53 of *Futurology Express*.<sup>3</sup> They are the two pages that climb pedagogically from the standard ‘household to firms’ diagram of present economics to the two-circuit flow invented by Lonergan.

A first simple comment about that core – a step towards seeing the width of its reach - would invite relating it to your own autobiography, thus homing in freshly on Lonergan’s introduction to his treatment of history, beginning on *Method in Theology* page 182. But now we are trying to lift his effort more clearly into functional history, and a help there is to think of one’s life in the mode suggested by Progoff. I won’t enlarge on that here, but I would note that the exercise could lead one to an appreciation of the personal struggle with what I call the 1833 Overture.<sup>4</sup>

What I want to do here is to give an initial nudge—with some shock value—towards thinking, say, of our own politics and the entrapment of that politics—and indeed our whole lives—in the genesis and survival of the ethos that is the topic of the academic discipline of “Political Science”, as it is called in many universities. **Political science is not science but an academic discipline.** Can we, might we, push towards an intussusception of the ontic

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<sup>3</sup> Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2013. Also partially readable online: [Futurology Express](#).

<sup>4</sup> *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 250, lines 18-33.

and phyletic stories of that brutal fact in a way that will tune us psychically, discomfotingly, effectively, out of “the monster that has stood forth in our day”<sup>5</sup>?

Let me get the shock value in immediately by recalling Lonergan’s take on nationalism in his *Essay on Fundamental Sociology* of 1935. “Nationalism – the stupid appeal to a common language and a united geographical position as something of real significance.”<sup>6</sup>

Does this claim of Lonergan not give you pause? Perhaps, even, it seeds a new poise over his search for Cosmopolis and his claim of a couple of years later (1938) that “the Church realized international society before progress had impressed upon man its importance and inevitability.”<sup>7</sup> But how is progress to so impress? The brief answer is back before the first quotation I gave, a piece of the text on the previous page 29.

Seventhly, we prove our assertion that the state is the villain of the modern piece [of history]. For in so far as the state really could progress, it had to be subject to the higher control of intellect. The higher control of intellect we may honestly attribute neither to the general run of kings nor of parliaments.

Does this stuff not shake up your viewing of those lines and colours that seem so fixed and firm on world maps? Had you thought of this as you read about “[Arriving in Cosmopolis](#)” in 9011 A.D.? Does it not give a lift to thinking about the Promised Land, where money’s meaning as promise dummies in the Promise? How does it fit in with the challenge: “Do you view humanity as possibly maturing—in some serious way—or just messing along between good and evil, whatever you think they are?”<sup>8</sup> The question invites you to take the surreal stand with which Lonergan ended the essay of 1935: “Is this to be taken literally or is it figure? It would be fine and fair, indeed, to think it no figure.”<sup>9</sup>

So, have we not an impossible stretching of the imagination ahead of us, a task of lifting autobiography and history beyond the entrapments of party politics and deranged economics and the solid flow of evils from them that corrupt—feel it in your surrounds and in your innards—the chemicals of our daily doings?

All this, of course, takes on serious Tower meaning, a meaning of the global Froghorn of the distant future, only through the contemplative climb to the standard model named by W<sub>3</sub> and initially sketched by me in [Cantower 9](#), “Position, Poission, Protopossession.” That

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<sup>5</sup> *Method in Theology*, 40, line 10.

<sup>6</sup> I am quoting from Mike Shute’s copy of it in *Lonergan’s Early Economic Research*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), p. 30 (hereafter *LEER*).

<sup>7</sup> *LEER*, 48.

<sup>8</sup> *The Everlasting Joy of Being Human*, (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2013), 77.

<sup>9</sup> *LEER*, 44.

scrappy sketch has since been stumblingly enriched and emended e.g. by [Posthumous](#) 8 and 9. The above stuff points further skimpily, and yet I can note, communicably, a broad possible commonsense shift of later times that was a topic in *Cantower* 9 where I quoted Friedrich Schiller's *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* at note 53. It is a neurochemistry that we can aim at now even though its global realization is only a distant hope, a device of Nadia. Schiller writes of how Beauty's heals

.... in the intricate totality of society, and reconciles everything gentle and violent in the moral world after the pattern of the free union which she contrives between masculine and feminine gentleness. Weakness now becomes sacred, and unbridled strength disgraceful, the injustice of Nature is rectified by the generosity of the chivalric code. The man whom no force may confound is disarmed by the tender blush of modesty, and tears stifle a revenge which no blood can slake. Even hatred pays heed to the gentle voice of honour, the victim's sword spares the disarmed foe, and a hospitable hearth smokes for the fugitive on the dreaded shore where of old only murder awaited him.

Schiller's twisted eloquence points, for me and I would claim for Lonergan, at an injustice of culture, not Nature, a matter of "men brought up on the strong drink of expansion"<sup>10</sup> and other idiocies that have been fleshed into a warped feminism. "They have to be fitted out with a mentality"<sup>11</sup> that in seven millennia will be a global poise. In the time between—but now!—there have to emerge "a perhaps not numerous center"<sup>12</sup> with the courage "to struggle against the inherited capital of injustice which creates such objective situations that men cannot be truly just unless first the objective situation is changed: and, finally—I am not certain I speak wildly—out of the very progress itself to produce a mildness of manners and temperament which will support and imitate and extend the mighty power of Christian charity. This, then, is the virtue of progress, the virtue of social justice, by which man directs his action so that it will be easier for his neighbours and his posterity to know and to do what is right and just."<sup>13</sup> Thirty years later Lonergan discovered "the specialized auxiliary ever ready"<sup>14</sup> to make statistically certain—go figure—that his wild speaking would be, globally, "no figure"<sup>15</sup> in 30 by 300 years. But now, here and now, glocally, is our time to detect, through stressful functional history and biography, especially of this past century, and especially indeed of this past 40 years of Lonergan studies, the brutal and suave "transmission of pre-motion ... that culminates in the dull mind and sluggish body of

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<sup>10</sup> *For a New Political Economy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), *CWL* 21, 98.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Concluding page of "Dimensions of Meaning," *Collection* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988) *CWL* 4, 245.

<sup>13</sup> *LEER*, 42-43.

<sup>14</sup> *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3, ed. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 747, end.

<sup>15</sup> *LEER*, 44.

the enslaved people or the decayed culture.”<sup>16</sup> We may thus slowly come to view quite differently—luminously, chemically, critically, creatively—the brilliant thing that is his neglected thought of a functional recycling of the meaning of promise—the promise of a global control of minding, in the mesh of mystery—when we read the sad unintended prediction of the 30-year old genius: “the greatest evil in the world is the evil that is concretized in the historic flow, the capital of injustice that hangs like a pall over every brilliant thing.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *LEER*, 43.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*