

Prehumous 9

Lack in the Systems-Talk

[This essay, and the essay to follow, were rejected, respectively, in 2004 and in 2007, by *Theological Studies*. Both essays raise the same central topic: the need for functional specialization. That global need is the central topic of the Halifax Conference of 2008. The rejection in the present case was for a variety of reasons, among which was that the referees “find your prose too elliptical and fanciful to communicate clearly to our readers on a very difficult subject”. The previous essay was rejected on similar grounds, through I found the twist on difficulty in that case amusing : “it is above the heads of the readers”. In serious scientific journals such a criterion is a criterion of acceptability. The two essays are added to the present context, the *Prehumous* series, because they belong to my cumulative argument for us having a shot at the collaboration that was the crowning suggestion of Lonergan’s lifework. They are two of the three essays promised at the end of *Prehumous 8*, a diversion on the road to a continued reflection on foundational prayer. The third essay focuses, in a discomfortingly practical fashion, on the task that was my concern at the end of the previous *Prehumous*: getting oneself honestly onto, into, page 250 of *Method in Theology* in a positioning of oneself regarding functional specialization. But it is not brain-surgery - or perhaps it is precisely a surgery of brain? - to detect that I am asking my three colleagues in the article to follow to take a public stand on the full meaning of *system*].

The title of the present essay may bring to mind for some of you my recent complicated book, *Lack in the Beingstalk*,¹ but I hasten to assure you that this is not at all a complicated article. I wish to make a few plain and massively important points about

¹P.McShane, *Lack in the Beingstalk. A Giants Causeway*, Axial Publishing, Cape Breton, 2007.

Lonergan studies. The mood of this essay, then, is the mood of the series *Eldorede*² rather than that of *Lack in the Beingstalk*. It is the mood of one struggling to speak as briefly and plainly as possible about a present need for re-orientation of interest in Lonergan. My hope is to find some few in the next generations of Lonergan students that might support a move beyond present muddles.

The occasion of my writing is a serious grappling with the three articles on Systematics that appeared in the 2007 *Theological Studies*.³ But the grappling reaches back to my first struggles with the power of functional specialization in the late 1960s.⁴ The reach, however, is broader in that it wishes to get to the guts of this whole business of self-appropriation in a manner discomfiting to present conventions of its practice.

Where might I, conveniently and pleasantly, begin? Well, first of all there is the cheerful news that you do not have to read, or have read, the three articles to which I refer. They are pretty heavy going, specialized in various ways. So come, pleasantly, with me, as I make convenient selections on a few topics. To add to your pleasure I shall try to meet the need for satire and humour, and add the spice of bluntness.

1. What are These Three Scholars At?

I would claim they are quite removed from the powerful collaborative project

²The title is an echo of Joyce's unwritten final work, a parallel to Dante's *Paradiso*, where Joyce claimed that he would write plainly. The title also relates to a major present problem of adult growth.

³*Theological Studies* 68 (2007): Charles Hefling, "On the (Economic) Trinity: An Argument in Conversation with Robert Doran", 642-660; Neil J.Ormerod, "Two Points or Four? - Rahner and Lonergan on Trinity, Incarnation, Grace and Beatific Vision", 661-673; Robert M.Doran, "Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis", 674-682. I shall refer to these below as simply Hefling, Ormerod, and Doran.

⁴That first interest was in the power of the division of labour to sort out the mess of musicology. It was one of two papers presented at the Lonergan Florida Conference of 1970. Both papers are available on my Website as chapters 1 (on botany)and 2 (on musicology)of *The Shaping of the Foundations* (1974).

that Lonergan sketched in his 1969 article, to which I would add but a single page of *Method in Theology*: page 250.

The three have shades of disagreement below the level of that enterprise, and indeed the disagreements go right back into the guts of self-appropriation. How do they manifest or tackle their disagreements? In an old style of disputational theology that, really, has little effect in resolving their differences, in reorienting theology, in the reaching of something we might teach and preach. Who are they talking to anyway?⁵ Are they even seriously talking to each other? What are they at? I have the advantage of listening to all three at recent conferences, and here I repeat a piece of text and a footnote about what is going on with two of them, Doran and Hefling. I am being provocatively vigorous here: the trouble is that good work is being doing, good will is abundant, but a salvific available paradigm context is missing.

“Then there is the dedicated work of Robert Doran, worth singling out precisely because he stands out in his effort to see the task whole and to push forward in it, in relative solitude. In the Loyola Marymount Conference in Los Angeles, this year (2007),⁶ and more elaborately at the Boston Conference of June,⁷ he presented his hopes of a move forward in systematic both through refinements of Lonergan’s thematic of the absolutely supernatural and through the sublation of scripture scholarship such as that of N.T.Wright into a systematic context.⁸

I could not possibly do justice to the facets of his push forward here, nor to the refined disagreements that Bob and I have shared for more than two decades. To the

⁵This is a magnificently telling question introduced as a criterion by Tom Halloran in his paper, “Finality, *Insight*, and *Method*: My stand on Lonergan’s contribution to philosophy and theology” at the Australian Lonergan Conference at Melbourne, September 2007.

⁶The title of his paper there was “Envisioning a Systematic Theology”.

⁷His presentation there was simply titled “Report on a Work in Progress”.

⁸I note that he makes no mention, here or elsewhere, of the cleansing process involved in operations of the type suggested on page 250 of *Method in Theology*.

note below I would only add the broad comment that such work as he is doing is desperately needed within a present pastoral effort to bring the subjectivity of a loving Three into the Christian community's lives. But, as a move forwards towards the fresh systematics anticipated heuristically by Lonergan the effort is too hasty and too undifferentiated..⁹ “

Now I am not asking you to get seriously into this topic, or especially into the complications referred to in the footnotes. I am asking you, and them, to pause over the issue of their haste and their focus. I am asking you, and them, to pause over another pace and another focus.

Of course, I have asked for this before, indeed from each of them, and now freshly from you. There is the shambles of two millennia of Christian pre-scientific

⁹I would note that I find this true of other good work that is emerging at present. For instance, at that same Boston Conference of 2007, Charles Hefling Jr. dealt magnificently with the topic “Lonergan, Schleiermacher, and Christian Systematic Theology: Possibly Relevant Questions”. But he was compactly ranging over a half-dozen specialties: he would certainly admit this, but I would like that admission to emerge operatively, in community, as the central possibly relevant question. On Doran's work there are my extended reflections in Part Three of *Method in Theology: Revisions and Implementations*. See also chapters 9, 10 and 12 of *Lonergan's Standard Model of Effective Global Inquiry*. Finally, *Joistings* 18, “the Field and Unified Field Theories; God and I” and *Joistings* 20, “Identifying Systematic Theology” focus on broader problems of identifying systematic theology. A central key theological problem is his reading of Lonergan's hypothesis regarding graces' relations to the Eternal Processions as blossoming into “a new form of the psychological analogy”. I had best quote, in context, from his Los Angeles paper in what I hope is a helpful pointer towards reflection and discussion. “I suggest that the hypothesis provides us with a new form of the psychological analogy for understanding the divine processions, and analogy within the order of graced experience itself. And I propose that systematic theology itself has evolved to the point where it can begin with a position that integrates the divine processions with the divine missions from the outset of the systematic enterprise.” There is a problem here regarding the meaning of “from the outset,” a problem I dealt with in *Method in Theology: Revisions and Implementations*, by appealing to an analogy between the 4-hypothesis of Lonergan and the 4-hypothesis contained in Maxwell's 4 electrodynamic equations: from the outset, when fully understood, Maxwell's equations contain all the relations that are termed in investigable situations. So with the Eternal Processions' relations to the historical missions. Further, a full genetic systematics of systems would mesh fresh glimpses of the Relations into the entire structure, not as new but as missed, acknowledging the seeds of that freshness in earlier meanings of the tradition.

theology which Lonergan met slowly but head-on (in both senses of head-on!). The paradigm shift he suggests is massive. If we respect him, should we not give it a chance, a whirl? Our three theologians are busy with other things, but I really don't see them having the same excuse regarding the paradigm as an old and tired Lonergan.¹⁰ For one thing, they were not too busy to write their complex articles. They may claim that, still, tackling the paradigm is for yet a later generation. But might they not be up to each writing a simpler article? Then they would help to prevent the next generation getting into the same old same old.

What simpler article?

2. What Might These Three Scholars Do For Us?

Later here I shall get sketchily into issues of dialectic and foundations as these are illustrated haphazardly in the three essays. But would you not agree that it would be nice to have some statement from them of their own different foundational positions? Wouldn't it be nice if, like ideal historians, each of the three were "at pains

¹⁰First, I would recall Lonergan's reply to a question Val Rice posed to him about using his method: "Well, the thing is, using the method - conceiving the method is one thing but implementing it is, you know, its something for younger people to do" (I quote from the 7th of 15 interviews with Lonergan done by Professor Rice between March 1980 and September 1981). Secondly, I would join the crowd of those that find excuses: I have edged around the issue of functional specialization for forty one years. Am I too old to have a collaborative shot at it? It involves, in full development, subtle talk of self-as-subject (see *Phenomenology and Logic*, the index under *self-as-subject*), but in its initial stages of practice it asks for a grim effort to control one's thinking and writing sentence by sentence, groping for the required new differentiations of consciousness and for a Standard Model of control in each specialty, one that is to eventually include a cycling operative grasp of the genetic systematics talked of below in note 55. This leads to a complication of the diagram I presented on page 124 of *A Brief History of Tongue*, reproduced on page 205 of my essay, "The Importance of Rescuing Insight", *The Importance of Insight: Essays in Honour of Michael Vertin*, edited by John J. and David S. Liptay, University of Toronto Press, 2007. In the diagram one must replace "UV" by "UV + GS". I would note, by the way, that when I write of *Lonergan's Standard Model* I do so only in the way I write of Einstein's Gravitational Equations. The equations are not really Einstein's.

not to conceal his tracks”¹¹? This, I would claim, would be a step in the right direction, a direction of doing a low-quality version of the task described in that single brilliant page, page 250, of *Method in Theology*. Then we would not have to rummage here and there in their stuff to find out just what foundational differences leave them in clear and present danger of keeping their cloud of unknowing going?

We can get into that a piece of that rummaging shortly, but here I wish to make a single point: my foundational position, and I would claim Lonergan’s, is in opposition to their operative foundational perspective. As I say, they might claim otherwise: of course functional specialization is the new paradigm for theology, but they are occupied in other tasks.¹² However, I would boldly claim that their preoccupations are misleading the goodwill of the next generation. And what I would like you to do - and I include them - is to think out the dynamics of paradigm shifts in terms of the best of scientific practice.¹³ On that analogy the goings-on of these three is, well, dare I parallel the flat-earth society stuff?

3. Taking a Foundational Stand

Well, not quite a flat-earth stand: but, again on analogy with a decent science, an 1860s stand in Chemistry after 1875.¹⁴

¹¹*Method in Theology*, 193.

¹²They may also argue, indeed legitimately, that they are being relevant. We desperately need a new systematic theology. Or, in Ormerod’s case, as he remarked in the Australian meeting to which I already referred, we need a dialogue between systematics and the social sciences. Such a dialogue, on Lonergan’s terms, is a function of communications, not systematics, not then too easy if a new systematics is a missing piece of the project. A broader reaction to Ormerod’s efforts in ecclesiology is expressed in Joistings 18, “Ormerod’s Defective Ecclesiology”. It falls within the context of Joistings 18 and 20, critical considerations of Doran’s Systematics.

¹³Section 11 here touches briefly on this topic. See chapter 1 of *Method in Theology, Revisions and Implementations*, available on the website.

¹⁴I developed this analogy in chapter four of *Process: Introducing Themselves to Young Christian Minds*.(available on the Website).

The analogy helps with placing in oneself more wholesomely the question of theological method. A first year university student takes - is forced to take indeed - a stand on the periodic table. It's a matter of belief. You, if you are still young, you may be in that position with regard to Lonergan's various suggestions: you are a believer. The difference between Mendeleev and Lonergan is that you are also the data, so you can shift to a knowing status more easily in procedural analysis than one can in chemistry. This holds even for the 8-fold Way, since you are looking towards past and future is a simple fact of life, and, less simply, you can identify four "slants" either way.¹⁵

An elementary comment on the book *Method in Theology* helps here. Lonergan asks, half way down page 250, for the taking of a foundational stand. If he put himself into the page, then he would have put in here the stand that is summarized in *Method in Theology*, pp. 286-291.¹⁶ This is an important methodological pointer for the future: if and when page 250 is taken seriously, Lonergan is in there for the "final objectification". The dialectician has to take seriously Lonergan as "contender". So, the book *Insight* gets in as a challenging component in theology, something that has not happened seriously

¹⁵The slants are not simply related to the 'usual' levels. Here I would note the need, expressed in Appendix A, *Phenomenology and Logic*, of meshing in the transcendental precept "be adventurous" between "be reasonable" and "be responsible". Adventurousness is to be a primary character of the new genetic systematics and its global fall-forward. A help here is to recall *Method in Theology*, 53, where Lonergan is commenting on the precepts: "Being intelligent includes a grasp of hitherto unnoticed or unrealized possibilities". My appeal in this article is, of course, for a preliminary operative grasp of the adventure of functional specialization.

¹⁶There is a serious need to contemplate, as a community of Lonergan scholars, this stand as it is related to *Insight* and its larger unwritten partner. It is worth quoting a relevant passage from a letter of Lonergan to Eric O'Connor (July 23, 1952) on the matter of his untimely transfer to Rome. "....Hence, if I can possibly do it, I must try to finish and arrange for the publication of the first part of my work before my departure. It would be entitled , *Insight*, and the remainder could be named, *Faith*, or *Insight and Faith*. This leaves me with a long row to hoe yet." What Lonergan adds, in 1965, to his perspective of those two volumes, *Insight* and the unwritten *Faith and Insight*, is his stand on the need for the new differentiation of consciousness that grounds an adequate division of labour. See the following note.

so far.¹⁷

I have been lucky in my searchings for foundations of almost sixty years: when I found Lonergan in 1956 I had already a decent unpacked foundational stand in both music and physics. *Insight*, in 1957, challenged me to unpacking, e.g. the foundation of physics. Despite my serious background in the area, chapter 5 of *Insight* was thoroughly opaque to me then: it is now less dark. But, at all events, I was a believer from the get-go and after fifty years, yes, I would claim Lonergan's foundations as my own, granted the difference between genius and a second-rate plodder. There are apparent sophistications in my stand that do not seem explicit in Lonergan's, though I would claim that the one I write of immediately is lurking there in *Method in Theology* and supporting lectures and writings. That sophistication is simply the claim that there is a minimalist view of the division of labour that is operable and that meets a crying need now, globally.

4. And where do you stand?

You being, perhaps, a younger lady or gent who has been attracted to Lonergan's perspective as identifying your own hidden longings. You may find

¹⁷I suggest a sequence of chapter contents for the missing, larger, work, *Faith and Insight*, mentioned in the previous note. I suspect that Lonergan would have had a contextualizing chapter, containing or leading to a powerful explanatory heuristic of Faith. I am thinking here of that "come-about" attitude that serious theology cries out for: "So it comes about that the extroverted subject visualizing extension and experiencing duration gives place to the subject oriented to the objective of the unrestricted desire to know and affirming beings differentiated by certain conjugate potencies, forms and acts grounding certain laws and frequencies." (*Insight*, 514[537]). He would have tackled the problems lurking in the present dispute, without of course having the fuller context of functional specialization. One could envisage a much more five long complex heuristic chapters covering the ground sketched descriptively in the five special categories-list of *Method in Theology*, 290-91. Think also of the place of *Method in Theology* 287, lines 18-23, in that work, and the sublation of lines 1-12 of page 288.. It would have been a massive foundational achievement, and it certainly would have pushed towards the genetic systematics I write of later (see note 55), something bubbling out of both his Epilogue to *Insight* and the perspective of chapters 16 and 17 of *Insight*.

yourself, as I did when I was twenty four years old, a believer. “This guy Lonergan makes sense, to me,” at some level.

Now it is important to find your level. Over the last four decades I have found it increasingly important to help people find their realistic level. The *Eldorede* series is a partial general answer to that. As a teacher of, say, grade 10 chemistry you don’t need to battle with *Insight*: get a personal grip on the basic question-dynamic that is diagramed in Appendix A of *Phenomenology and Logic*.¹⁸ As someone who wishes to get closer to God, discover how that dynamic can lead you to a thinking friendship with Them.¹⁹

But you may want to go further, through the sufferings of a master’s or doctorate thesis. Then I would advise you to conform during that struggle and to keep your foundational perspective to yourself. Indeed, I can give you no better advice than Lonergan gave me, so I quote from his letter to me of October 23, 1968: “Find out what your man wants, and figure a way to give it to him”. I suspect that he learned this lesson in his undergraduate days in London University. A sad reality of the longer cycle of decline!

Whether you are teaching grade 10 or driving for an academic position, I would obviously hope that you would take a supportive stand on Lonergan’s crowning achievement. That stand needs, however, to be informed, a matter of energetic fantasy. But I would repeat now that my interest is not in the vast complexities of the stand hidden in the book *Insight*. My interest is a stand on functional specialization. One has to come to grips with the division of labour as an omni-disciplinary business, a

¹⁸I slip past the deeper problem of aggreformism. See the leads on it in *Cantower XXIX*. On chemistry teaching, see *Cantower XXVIII*, sections 3 and 4. A broader context is my *Randomness Statistics and Emergence*, Gill, Macmillan, and Notre Dame, 1971.

¹⁹There are elementary comments on this in *Eldorede* 3, “Prayer and Spirituality” and *Eldorede* 11, “Spirituality in the Third Stage of Meaning”. See also the early *Joistings* such as *Joistings* 6, “Jesus My Pilgrim Pacemaker” and *Joistings* 7, “The Friendships of the Invisible Man”.

possibility and probability of solving on the global scale Plato's problem with Athens, and leaning forward into many millennia of humanity's search under the sun.

5. Procedural Analysis: Subtleties

The title here, *Procedural Analysis*, is an old title of mine from my teaching in the 1960s. What's in a name? I am trying to lean strategically into the distant future and to leave behind a muddle of names: various forms of generalized empirical method, intentionality analysis, whatever.²⁰ The meaning is clear, with a range from superficial description - we are dealing with the everyday procedure of sciences, arts, etc - to the reach towards understanding the mysterious divine procedures.

But it is the drive away from every subtle verbal descriptiveness that concerns me here. As an aid and a nudge it seems worthwhile to slip in now a quotation from Part II of *Bernard Lonergan: His Life and Leading Ideas*.²¹ It may not be worthwhile to you immediately in regard to the precise stand that is my concern, but it must be returned to as a manifestation of the need for that larger stand: roughly speaking, the private task of *Insight* needs the communal support of functional collaboration.

So, a preliminary musing on what follows is worthwhile but also worth tackling slowly and privately later, even if functional specialization is not to your taste: there will still remain your problem of being luminous regarding what I might call your

²⁰In Joistings 21 and 22 I consider four definitions of generalized empirical method. The second one, from *A Third Collection*, 141, is the important one here, though the third one, with a mediated focus on the subject, is central to contemplative theology. But these are complex and remote topics. In a fuller thematic of the issue there would be a transposition of the discussion in *Insight* of balancing the focus on content and act, moving forwards empirically from Lonergan's suggested representation of "any series of experiences by the series of pairs, AA', BB', CC', where the unprimed letters denote contexts and the primed letters denote the corresponding acts." (*Insight*, 81[104]). One advantage of the name *procedural analysis* is that it shifts away from a certain mystique attached to intentionality analysis and does not immediately raise issues of the relation of consciousness to intentionality.

²¹Part II is titled, "Images of Lonergan". It includes both photos and other images, and is prefaced by a discussion of imaging from which the quotation above is taken.

ABCs, your “AB seize” of your foundational reality.

I had been talking of the presentation of the ABC exercise during Lonergan’s Logic lectures of 1957, and move on thus:

“I pose the fascinating question, What was Lonergan’s intellectual and psychic stance as he spoke thus into history to his priestly audience?²² Some seven years earlier he had comfortably written his basic expression of a definition of potency, “potency denotes that component to be known in fully explanatory knowledge by an intellectually patterned experience of the empirical residue,”²³ and here he is, inviting a beginning of that journey in old comrades, inviting them into his strange home. He was, by then, well on the way - “not without labour,”²⁴ - to a psychic and explanatory control of the “given”²⁵ and of curiosity’s life within that given.²⁶ The ABC exercise of those lectures, and of chapter one of *Insight*, is only a beginning of that labour to reach a post-Hegelian possession of finite minding. What “intellectual patterns” had he in mind, possessing that mind, in that forty-fifth year of his climb? Might we not suspect that he had adequate control of his binocularity²⁷ and its equivalent in other zones of sensibility

²²“It is evident from the content that Lonergan was lecturing to fellow Jesuits.” (*Phenomenology and Logic*, xii).

²³*Insight*, 432[457].

²⁴*Verbum*, 38.

²⁵See section 4 of chapter 13 of *Insight*.

²⁶Link this challenge with that of the notes 18 and 20. There is a great deal of nominalism in this area, from which one escapes only by a long road that parallels the road beyond Hegelianism. One discovers with massive slowness that one’s curiosity, holding its identity, nonetheless rambles round the empirical residence, “what’s that I hear?”, “what’s that I smell?”. And it is a further struggle to find the bubbling of an inner word, an inner bump, as it were, on the skin of one’s minding.

²⁷This is a very complex existential challenge which needs lengthy descriptive instructions if it is to become a possession of individuals and so getting on the road to being a tower culture. It requires a massive effort of intellectual control to, as it were, flatten the image, where flatten is a spatial business but it refers to an equivalent re-possessing of other

to give him positional dominion over the all-too-human mistaken take on “the universe of being” as “a matter of meeting persons and dealing with things that are ‘really out there’”?²⁸ As he spoke “the intellectual pattern of experience is presupposed and expressed,”²⁹ but his audience is comfortably looking at him, already out there. What was it like to be so alone? No wonder he marked vigorously in his copy of my *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations* my recalling of Jung’s remark that the truly contemporary man is alone.³⁰

But the issue is you and me, herenow, therethen, in the presence of an image of real print, both the print and the image being an effect of the integral consciousness of a religious genius, “a new psychic integration through affective contemplation of the mysteries of Christ.”³¹

So ends the quotation and the exercise. The issue herenow is my claim that such refined procedural analysis cannot move forward in coherent scientific fashion unless the data is in a controlled environment, under positional and positional dominion. That sentence may not mean much to you, but let us experiment. Recall you reading of the phrase “judgments of value” in section 4 of chapter 2 of *Method in Theology*. What were you thinking of when you read the section last? What are you thinking of herenow? Herenow, now here, nowhere. Are you, were you, thinking of that nowhere of procedure within your curiosity’s dwelling place, the empirical residence?

I have the brutal suspicion that much of Lonergan’s is a familiarity with what

sensibilities. A help here is the study of drug-experiences, phantom-limb experiences, so-called ‘out-of-body’ experiences, but the primary lift is from self-appropriating of neuropsychology.

²⁸*Insight*, 385[411].

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰See *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations* (1975), 102. The book is available on the usual website.

³¹*Insight*, 741[763].

is no doubt a powerfully suggestive vocabulary of interiority, but with no serious positional grip on “the real generative principle.”³² The science of procedure awaits birth, and a concomitant birthing of a new language, subsuming Lonergan’s aspirations regarding “linguistic feedback.”³³ That birth and infancy and effective presence requires the global omnidisciplinary enterprise of Lonergan’s cyclic system of progress.

6. Hefling’s Venture.

I have no doubt about Hefling being one of those rare positional freaks: he writes as one cherishing the generative principle, the Generative Principles. But what of use might I say here about his packed 18 pages in *Theological Studies*? I certainly can start by recalling the comment in note 5 above, about him “compactly ranging over a half-dozen specialties: he would certainly admit this, but I would like that admission to emerge operatively, in community, as the central possibly relevant question.” The latter admission is my longing here, and the aim of the rest of my earthly daze.

The focus of each of section 6, 7, and 8 is on that. My simple point is that there is a better way of going about the set of problems raised by the three authors: and of course that way is the way of an increasingly differentiated and collaborative division of labour. Acknowledging notionally the differentiation of consciousness and procedure is important: but moving into that larger task is too much for my brief appeal. Enough to invite the acknowledgment through a build-up of plausibility from the writings of the three authors.

³²*Insight*, 647[670].

³³See note 34 of page 88 of *Method in Theology*: “At a higher level of linguistic development, the possibility of insight is achieved by linguistic feed-back, by expressing the subjective experience in words and as subjective”. I would note another occurrence of the phrase in *Method*, lost in the shift from typescript to book: “... in the measure that linguistic **feed-back is achieved, that is in the measure that** explanations and statements provide the sensible presentations for the insights that effect further developments of thought and language”(line 16 on page 92): the missing piece is in bold-face.

So, Hefling helps towards a broad sweep. "Constructing a systematic-theological hypothesis is not a matter of quoting or even interpreting authorities. At least it should not be. The criterion, as Doran would agree, must finally be methodological."³⁴

Now, within a pre-*Method* perspective, this means that we are into a philosophy of theology, into something like "the refinement of metaphysical categories,"³⁵ and perhaps a "'transposition' rather than a wholesale abandonment."³⁶ But what is philosophy of theology? Let us stay in the pre-1950s: then we are back in those muddles where schools and authorities come to the fore. And indeed what Hefling does here is mainly an appeal to Lonergan as an authority. But it is not a full-blown appeal: for instance one does not find - read, with this puzzle, his final paragraph - a location of faith or love in the context it has from the final chapter of *Insight*. That is the context of considering a higher integration and what is integrated has a heuristic of the human that can be symbolized as $f(p_i; c_j; b_k; z_l; u_m; r_n)$.³⁷

7. Doran's Venture.

On now, abruptly, to Doran's response, and indeed from Hefling's last paragraph to Doran's first paragraph. We get beyond authority to group collaboration."No one person can write such a systematics in our time, but a group sharing the same assumptions regarding the fundamental issues that Lonergan discusses under the rubric of religious, moral and intellectual conversion can go a long

³⁴Hefling, 647.

³⁵Hefling, 649.

³⁶Hefling, 650.

³⁷The symbolism is reasonably obvious. The semi-colon draws attention to the problem of grasping luminously the aggreformic nature of the hierarchies. The last semi-colon is, however, massively problematic. (See note 46, on the obscurity of the presence of the absolutely supernatural). Recall notes 16 and 17 above, and add the pointing of note 18 regarding aggreformism. This is a very large challenge to present theology and to Lonergan studies.

way. One hope of mine in recent years has been to assemble such a group and start working with them, and that hope seems to be taking the form of an online research enterprise that could soon be up and running. Before my hope takes that cyberspace form, though, it seems to have found a more traditional organ of communication. And for this I am grateful.”³⁸

But the traditional organ, in the case of the three authors here, generates dissonance. Humour and satire lead me to think of “Three Tenors in Discord”. Doran, like Hefling, is appealing and continues to appeal to Lonergan: our Verdi, say. Yet he has his own unyielding convictions on the matters of discord: “I have been convinced,”³⁹ “on the conviction I will not yield.”⁴⁰ I would like to have expressed the fuller explanatory grounds of his conviction, including his grounds of moving away from functional analysis to website research. But here I leap to Doran’s final paragraph and his concluding words, rendered somewhat implausible by his settled convictions: “I hope that Hefling and others will continue to express concerns over what we are about. Mutual and respectful consideration of concerns, after all, is surely one avenue to theology’s fruitful development”.⁴¹

8. Ormerod’s Venture.

Ormerod’s response to Doran’s perspective on the systematic coherence of supernatural entities is to support the effort through a comparative study of Rahner and Lonergan on the topic. He is “comparing these two starting points for systematic

³⁸Doran, 674.

³⁹Doran, 678.

⁴⁰Doran, 679.

⁴¹Doran, 682.

theology”⁴² with the added agenda of searching out both the impact on Christology and the origin of the perspective. My interest is not at present in the complex ten pages of comparative study, nor in origins, but in the fundamental methodological point that lurks in the phrases “starting points of systematic theology”. Ormerod’s undertaking springs from “posing a number of questions, with comments on each”: these are starting points for his reflections. “The first and most obvious question is *whether the beatific vision is the right starting point for the development of a theology of grace*”; “second, one may ask, *is the life of grace sufficiently accounted for by the divine self-communication of the Holy Spirit?*”⁴³

Ormerod’s reflections show pretty obviously that neither question is obvious. What is obvious is that there are presuppositions to his starting points and to his questions, presuppositions that pirouette on attitudes of reading the New Testament and the tradition. We are back, for example, at the authority of Aquinas and “Aquinas evokes the authority of John 14: 23.”⁴⁴ We are back, indeed, at the problem raised by Hefling’s remark, quoted above at note 34: the start-issue is a methodological one.

9. Lack in the System Stalk

I have cut back severely from content in these three articles to bring us in some illuminating fashion to the methodological issue of starting point, but also with the hope of pointing to a realistic ongoing starting point. We are back, if you like, at the beginning of Eric Voegelin’s farewell volume in *Order and History*, where he poses the question, “Where does the Beginning begin?”⁴⁵

⁴²Ormerod, 662.

⁴³Ormerod, 666,667. The italics are his in both quotations.

⁴⁴Ormerod, 667.

⁴⁵Eric Voegelin, *In Search of Order*, vol. 5, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1987, 13.

Certainly the beatific vision is the right starting point for the development of a theology of grace: the beginning is the Word. But that is a God's eye view.⁴⁶ Humanity's beginning is, Where humanity is at here-now. The trouble is to discover where humanity is at in this dawning of its journey: it is to discover the journey's reach in its roots, its stalk. "Developments can be analysed as processes from initial global operations of low efficiency,"⁴⁷ where the analysis thrives when it is boosted by graced good will, and "good will wills the order of the universe with that order's dynamic joy and zeal."⁴⁸ We are back with humanity's humility, listening to the zeal of 13.7 billion years of integral Trinitarian labour. And we may expect two more billion years of that

⁴⁶The God's "I" view refers to the sole Speaker etc in the Trinity. (See Lonergan's Systematic Trinity, *Quaestio XX*). The affirmative answer above, far from being trivial, is at the heart of the entire dispute over Doran's proposal. In the old-style systematics of either Aquinas or Lonergan, one may start after either the 26th question of the *Summa* or the 26th place of *Insight* with "The Hypothesis of Intelligible Emanations in God" (the title of the McShane presentation in *Theological Studies*, (23), 1962, taken from q. 27 of the *Summa*), leading to a deductive expansion that, like the expansion of the 26- place hypothesis, lacks strict linearity. The four-point hypothesis falls within that expansion, but it carries with it a previously-inserted axiom of mystery (See Thesis 5 of Lonergan's *Doctrinal Trinity* on the relevant inverse insight, and *Quaestio XI* in his *Systematic Trinity*). I have previously criticize the Doran effort on the grounds of a metaphysics of relations that applies equally to the 4-point hypothesis of Maxwell's Equations (See above, note 8, and more elaborately *Method in Theology: Revisions and Implementations*, Part Three), but here we find a new twist on the difficulty of the hypothesis. The difficulty relates to the simple fact that obscurity enters at the beginning: what precise meaning is one giving to the absolutely supernatural character of the "content" of the hypothetical entities? The Maxwell parallel brings out Doran's confusion about real relations and their secondary determinations, but now an axiom of mystery would seem to wipe out the core "fructuosissima intelligentia" that should dominate the expansion prior to the blocking of mysteriousness. On Rahner's dispersing of the focused mystery see my *ChrISt in History*, the beginning of chapter 4.

⁴⁷*Method in Theology*, 288. The sweep of the following twelve lines are relevant to the fuller search.

⁴⁸*Insight*, 700[722].

listening, that labour of love, of Love.⁴⁹

10. What might be done?

Even without lifting our hearts into the zone of functional collaboration, there is the might-be-done of each of our three authors meeting in some fashion the request of *Method in Theology*'s 250, lines 18-33. "The results will not be uniform" (line 18), and Doran's vague consensus, "a group sharing the same assumptions regarding the fundamental issues that Lonergan discusses", just doesn't cut it. It is worse than an honest state of *voraussetzunglos* inquiry,⁵⁰ that *de facto* leads to an "effete"⁵¹ theology of disputed questions rather than to a "homely affair"⁵² that, in its very remoteness, would hit the streets. But it will not thus hit streets, senates, soldiers, serial-killers of the academy - "there is no fruit to be borne"⁵³ - unless there emerges globally a reflective community of concrete local care. That street army needs the back up of remote minding.

"But we are not there yet."⁵⁴ Lonergan begins the magnificent page-paragraph that follows with the point, regarding brain-work, that "it must not direct its main effort to the ordinary final product of standard of living but to the overhead final product of cultural implementation." It seems to me that present theology is committed to the

⁴⁹On the possible probably future in the context of physics, see e.g Paul Davies popular treatment of the topic, *The Last Three Minutes*, Phoenix pb, 2000, 139-46. The "dead line" could be extended by galactic colonizations. On the circumincessional drive of the cyclic system see Lonergan's "Assertum XIV", of his Systematic Treatment of the Trinity.

⁵⁰*Insight*, 578[600].

⁵¹*Method in Theology*, 101. See also page 353.

⁵²*Method in Theology*, 350.

⁵³*Method in Theology*, 355.

⁵⁴*For a New Political Economy*, 20.

production of its own ordinary final product of its own standard of theology. Might not, then, Lonergan's reaching of that paragraph be also twisted towards theology, the heart of human searching? "It must lift its eyes more and ever more to the more general and more difficult fields of speculation, for it is from them that it has to derive the delicate compound of unity and freedom in which alone progress can be born, struggle and win through."

So I would ask the three disputants to add to their 250 stand their take on Lonergan's eye-lift of the twelve years, 1953-1965, that led him to "derive the delicate compound of unity and freedom" that is a cyclic foundationless system of theology in which a massive global genetic systematics⁵⁵ would find its fruit-bearing place. That is its stalk. That is where the sufferings of those twelve years led Lonergan. The tragedy of both theology and Lonerganism is that the lead has not been taken seriously.

11. Procedural Analysis: Vulgarities

But the deeper tragedy is that history is not being taken seriously. The history of human searchings is increasingly manifesting itself as "processes of low efficiency"⁵⁶ groaning, with and within Paul's cosmos,⁵⁷ "through differentiation and specialization, to the integration of the perfected specialties."⁵⁸ Our longer cycle of decline and incline has brought us to the edge of Plato's problem of efficiency, with Atlas instead of

⁵⁵I have made relatively unsuccessful attempts in the past thirty years to communicate this perspective on the future geohistorical complexity of a genetic systematics. It seems best just to refer to two sources. There are the contextualized reflections of *Cantower VII*, "Systematics and General Systems Theory". The fuller theological treatment is in *Method in Theology. Revisions and Implementations*, which draws on an analogy with the problem of development studies in botany. Doran's undertaking would seem to be focused on a mystery-burdened piece of a slice of one integrator-operator within a particular culture.

⁵⁶*Method in Theology*, 288.

⁵⁷*Romans* 8: 22.

⁵⁸*Method in Theology*, 288.

Athens. The vulgarity I talk of is the vulgarity of the mess of each and every specialized discipline of human searching, a commonsense smell of common nonsense. That vulgarity bubbles, in each field of inquiry, towards a division of labour, not because there are identified levels of consciousness, but because the history of inquiry is leading us slowly towards their identification. Theology needs to re-enter that real world: or perhaps I should just say “enter”. Otherwise it will remain, as Lonergan described it to me in Easter 1961, a matter of “big frogs in little ponds”.