

Q. 10 (Olive Dewan; July 5th): What is this criticism of Lonerganism on which you have focused from time to time in your writings?

A. 10 (August 4<sup>th</sup>). You notice the gap between the asking and the answering. I pointed out to Olive at the time that there would be such a gap both because of the July Halifax Conference and because I wished to see what reactions there might be to the Website Effort and a parallel effort of mine on the new Marquette Webzone, Lonerganforum.com. There has in fact been no reaction. I have had a few other questions come in: regarding the difficulty of presenting Lonergan's cognitional theory, the need to "choirize" the congregation, the fixity of Lonergan gatherings and papers in old ways. I hope to fuse answers together here, in my fresh start of the Q. and A. series.

I began that fresh August [get the pun?!] start already in two zones, and it seems as well here to draw attention to them, bring my effort into focus for my readers. But I would hope that my readers sense that I am, as it were, going to war. The "from time to time" Olive mentioned is to become full time. Lonerganism is an insult to the strivings of a genius: might I annoy the participants enough to get them to battle my view explicitly?

First, then, I repeat my Marquette challenge of August 2<sup>nd</sup>, which connects with my entry there a month earlier – to which there was no response. First, the early entry under both the *Method* and *Insight* headings:

**"I only found out about this site in recent days and puzzle over its silence. So it seems no harm to break that silence with some musings about *Insight* and *Method*, two of its zones. These initial comments of mine seem appropriate for both sites.**

**The trouble with *Insight* is its difficulty; the trouble with *Method* is its simplicity. Let me start with the odder statement, about *Method's* simplicity. *Method* is really what remains of the giant project of the early 1950s, the bigger part of a two-volume work. The creative leap to solving the problem of Cosmopolis did not come till 1965, but in recent times I have mused over the solid possibility that the creative surging of the fifty-year old genius would have broken through to it in those next years because of the fuller context of writing what I can call – Lonergan's own name for it – "Faith and Insight". But Jesuit blindness shipped him off to the Greg, where the work became impossible. When he came to envisage writing the second big book in 1966 he talked to me of his basic problem, summed up in his room-paced**

statement, "I cannot put all of *Insight* into chapter one!" What he eventually produced was the tired short lightweight book.

*Insight*, on the other hand, was the isolated symphonic climb of a genius into a culturally-discontinuous heuristic. Symbolic of that discontinuity is his extraordinary scientific achievement in the heuristics of interpretation in *Insight* 17, section 3. The creative ventures of *Method* chapter 7 are just not in that ball park, and Lonergan was quite clear on this: *Insight* 17.3 "is elitist" (*Method*, 351), "calling forth vigorous resistance" (*Insight*, 603). Might we, forty years after he published his slim description of his solution to the problem of Cosmopolis, begin to ask about, interpret, humbly act about, round about, the X that is global functional collaboration?"

A month later (August 2<sup>nd</sup>) I wrote, the *Method* section:

"It is sadly unsurprising that the opportunity offered by this site is not attracting attention. My comment of a month ago, under both the *Method* and the *Insight* sections, was surely provocative? It is clear to me that there is a crisis in Lonergan studies, yet all seem, and alas are, too busy to take the critical turn suggested by the fourth characteristic of Cosmopolis (*Insight*, 266). The Lonergan movement cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered to be the seed of Cosmopolis: surely that absence of seeding merits serious attention?

I place this added reflection under the *Method* heading as a further invitation and appeal. And it is a challenge: I have identified the X that is Cosmopolis with the X that is the functional collaboration described sketchily in the second half of *Method*. It seems evident that the Lonergan community disagrees with me. Could the disagreement, please, be made creatively explicit?"

Under the *Insight* section I wrote:

"In the *Method* section I have added a further appeal to the broad common statement I gave a month ago under both the *Insight* and the *Method* headings. I now split my comments: The second half of *Method in Theology* warrants attention as a candidate for the X of Cosmopolis. There is a complex analysis it suggests is a division of labor that would lift the Lonergan movement towards that "final stage" in which "theological reflection bears fruit" (*Method*, 355). But I would note here, in the *Insight* context, the simpler division of labor that is forced on us by Lonergan's definition of metaphysics at the end of page 416 of *Insight*. Implementation screams for a certain type of woman or man. The simple distinction is not anyway effectively evident in our Lonergan community. In an addendum to a letter of May 5<sup>th</sup> 1946, in which Lonergan is quite blunt about second-rate educational culture, he makes some relevant simple initial comments worth quoting: "Individuals combining both academic

interests and executive ability are rare. The average run of men are like Bernie and Mark Lonergan: Mark does not disguise his dislike of the academic, but he did rather a brilliant job in an executive post during the war; Bernie disguises his admiration for the level heads who handle things well, but his ability is along the other line. Long-term planning for an organization has to take such differences into account. It cannot be based upon the assumption that it will have a lucky run of the exceptional people who combine both talents.” *Method in Theology* does, in fact, deal implicitly with the statistics (*Insight*, 144) of the lucky run in its brilliant long-term planning; but *Insight*’s defining of metaphysics calls clearly for a community capable of “a brilliant job in an executive post”. We need to take implementation seriously, even if we take a stand against the benefit of splitting “conception, affirmation” (*Insight*, 413) into a sevenfold dynamic.”

My other effort was on Skipperweb today, answering good pointers by two people, Marybeth and Andy, pointers towards the mess in credit-giving and the mess in corporate seed-control: both global sicknesses. Here is that entry:

“Thank you Marybeth,

Yes, there are good points here, but alas, the basis is missing, the basis in the two-flow analysis that would give precision to norms of money creation in a quite new way. The introduction of this basis in these next decades is one of my two fundamental concerns. The answer has been round for 70 years now, but there is no serious scientific spirit present in economists and governors to open groups effectively to the desperate need. The desperate need has to grow in representative momentum in more than just a Wall St. Occupation movement. The momentum, alas, is likely to come from some massive European or American collapse.

My other fundamental concern brings me back to Andy’s added context. It is the concern to push for the beginning of a global collaborative community structured on the lines of Lonergan’s suggestion of *Method in Theology*, chapter 5. More popularly and relevantly put in my chapter 5 of *Economics for Everyone*: “A Rolling Stone Gathers Nomos” It is paralleled by the third chapter of *A Brief History of Tongue*, with the same title. History will eventually (the rolling stone) push us to the nomos, the measure, the strategy, but as Andy points out it is already late in the day.

Only that strategy can make our chat here effective, and indeed at one stage I considered calling it “Lobbyism”, but I prefer the name “Fusionism”. It is, in my view, to replace the mess that is Lonerganism. I am taking up the battle now in two definite places: my Website Q. and A. on Functional Collaborative Talk, and the Marquette Website, Lonerganforum.com, where so far I have failed to annoy people into challenging my criticism.

But the key point here is for us to notice that we - and the people we refer to in these videos and texts - are ineffective. Stupidity and Cupidity are highly organized and in control. What Lonergan wrote of 60 years ago at the end of chapter 7 of *Insight* refers now to a deeper moral sickness. That deeper moral sickness seems in control of Lonergan studies.”

So I arrive back nicely at Olive's question, put aside the question about Lonergan's cognitional theory – which would be a distraction here – and wind in the questions about the fixity of Lonerganism and 'choirizing'. The Lonergan choir is being misled by Lonerganism's leadership. The singing is old-style bad chanting about dead Europeans, about descriptive puzzles, about trivial contributions to culture by third-rate scholars. "What will count is a perhaps not numerous center, big enough to be at home in the old and the new, painstaking enough to work out one by one the transitions to be made, strong enough to refuse half-measures and insist on complete solutions even though it has to wait" (So ends Lonergan's *Collection*.)