

Q. 43. (Mayday. **Mayday!**) You speak of a divide in Lonergan studies. Could you please say something brief and precise about it?

A. 43. First, a general note seems appropriate here regarding anonymous or named question-raisers. I now prefer to omit naming altogether. We have reached a stage in Lonergan studies where a clear split is emerging and it will become solidly and brutally explicit in Toronto on Bastille day 2014. It is best for people now to avoid problems of difficulty in getting through in theses and promotions, etc that could be associated with naming questioners here. Younger people do not sometimes realize the consequences of a raised voice, a raised question. So: henceforth, I intend to add no names to questions. On, then, to the question posed.

There are those in the fixity of non-functional commonsense theology, a theology rich in reference and comparison but no further on than Thomas was either in going beyond description<sup>1</sup> or in being either academically or politically effective;<sup>2</sup> there are, on the other hand, those who wish both to take Lonergan seriously regarding cutting out the “pseudometaphysical mythmaking”<sup>3</sup> that does not recognize the molecularity of human desire and loneliness, and to take him seriously regarding moving on to the genius of his final heuristics of an effective global reach for “cumulative and progressive results”<sup>4</sup> in history’s climb to glory.

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<sup>1</sup> This is an enormously complex point that is going to require, for its explanation, a communally developed operative meaning of the second canon of hermeneutics – recall paragraph 60910. Certainly one can claim that Thomas had some sense of a more distant view e.g. of a stone (“when I want to conceive the intelligibility of a stone, it is necessary that I come to it by a process of reasoning” [*Super Joannem*, c.1, lect.1]) but modern chemistry was utterly beyond him. What of his view of mind? I suggest that *Posthumous* 3, “A Commentary on **Inside**”, would baffle him, in spite of nudges from John of Damascus, and certainly a complex genetics of axioms of The Position was way above his pay-grade. What of his magnificent Trinitarian theology? I suggest that it awaits a forthcoming lift in the meaning of human spirit (see Part two of *Sane Economics and Fusionism*), a transposition to a contemporary meaning of *God* that climbs beyond *Insight* 19 to meanings of the symbol  $G_{jk}^i$ , and a sophistication of subjectivity that brings God closer to the patterned cravings of our molecular loneliness. What of his view of theology? One of the ventures of Lonergan after his discovery of February 1965 was to review Thomas’ axiomatics of the *Summa Theologica*, Q.1. More on that in note 2.

<sup>2</sup> No need to muse over Thomas’ academic failure but we might follow up the conclusion of note 3 above by an earnest fantasy of Thomas reading the Latin translation of *Insight*’s introduction to the problem of Cosmopolis. Pastoral theology he knew, and the culture of poetry, but what of putting effectiveness into the definition of theological system, a system that is to be a genetic system of systems?

<sup>3</sup> *Insight*, 528.

<sup>4</sup> *Method in Theology*, 4. The results are to be concrete (*Ibid.*, 355) There is a spectrum of related questions about the influence of “the Queen” (See the index of *Phenomenology and Logic* under *Queen*) and the needs of human

Fifty years of ineffective *Lonergerian* messing should have taught us that Lonergeran had a point in puzzling over an X called Cosmopolis and a further point in lurching round the question, “What is this X?” during the years 1953-1965. The **What** of that X is the **Nature** of a non-existent science lacking actual metaphysical equivalents - see chapter 10 of my website *Method in Theology. Refinements and Implementations* - but now having the vague descriptive names of eight functional groupings. Commonsense theology had and has no suspicion of the climb to that X, a grim matter of fantasy and theory. The previous question, Q/A 42, talked a little of scriptures-studies in that discomfiting light, and may be a help towards fantasy, but only the painstaking mess of seeding and watering can give us decent initial data on the glorious redemptiveness to come.

So, yes, the divide in Lonergeran studies is imminent. But those who take a stand with Lonergeran will not find the road easy. That is why we are puttering around in these Q/As. What on earth is functional talk? It is to be a quite new set of differentiations of consciousness, humbly collaborative in offsetting the idiocy of the politico-monetary allegiance, the military-industrial complex, and the farce of present structures of education, at all levels, that “make human life unlivable” (*Topics in Education*,239).

But I must say more about the divide. That divide is one that you can identify with relative simplicity in yourself : the divide of an honest approach to the bridge that is chapter 5 of *Insight*. You can think of it very concretely in terms of your own education in physics. Learning physics and “teaching physics without the student knowing the relevant mathematics is not teaching physics”<sup>5</sup> or learning physics.

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sciences (See *Insight*’s Epilogue). There is an abundance of plausible excuses about not needing competence in any science etc: treating these “dead horses” (*For a New Political Economy*, 36) is best done when the horse moves in life-simulant methodological protest: at the moment there is a loud silence. Best just point to two claims. Lonergeran’s claim regards the need and relevance of generalized empirical method as described on the top of page 141 of 3<sup>rd</sup> *Collection*: “it does not treat of the subject’s operations without taking into account the corresponding objects”. Without science what are the objects studied? My claim is that the effective control of global meaning calls for the eventual implementation of the vision of *Arriving in Cosmopolis* that could become fact in 9011 A.D. That effective control requires that the objects be those of global meaning gripped in a heuristics of the Field meshed with content “at the level of one’s times” (*Method in Theology*,350).

<sup>5</sup> *Topics in Education*, 145. From my experience of helping people through grades 8-12 in math and physics I am strangely optimistic that future Lonergeran people will have better footholds regarding and guarding  $d^2s/dt^2$ . We have reached an unbelievably low in teaching and texts. Nowhere to go but up: with a little self-appropriated help in these next decades. We need to invade the schools. But might not some present Lonergeran people take a few

So you can think of it in regard to the methodological future in terms of the “bridge”<sup>6</sup> that is chapter five of *Insight*, or more discomfortingly in terms of the bridge that is chapter 10 of *Bernard Lonergan. His Life and Leading Ideas*.<sup>7</sup> If you are willing to acknowledge the bad luck of your autobiography – as mused over in your version of the 1833 overture – you can still twirl into the Tower of Able, and certainly twirl people in the next generation into the required world of theory. But those opposed to the shift to cycling stand strongly against this need of acknowledgement or of pointing the next generations towards this elementary serious thinking, a thinking that is surely a prerequisite of “thoroughly understanding what it is to understand.”<sup>8</sup> The vast majority of Lonergan students live and teach and write in the world of subtle and refined *haute vulgarization*. Is there any point in me asking them to take seriously Lonergan’s brutal condemnation of that culture-selection to be “lost in that no man’s land between the world of theory and the world of common sense”?<sup>9</sup> Many of them would claim that they are not thus lost: are they not heavily into theory with subtle comparative work of Lonergan with Tom, Dick and Mary, or with his older or younger self? My contention is that such subtlety can be so pursued as to make no demand to move to the world of theory. At best it involves initial descriptions, just as the elements of meaning diagrammed in Appendix A of *Phenomenology and Logic* need only involve initial descriptions: I taught them thus, for twenty years, in introductory courses to young ladies in Mount St. Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.<sup>10</sup> They could eventually be quite eloquent about their dating

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months off to catch up on a bite of Newton? Then it would be no longer true for them that “they have never been bitten by theory; they have no apprehension, no understanding of the fact that Newton spent weeks ...” (CWL 6, 155).

<sup>6</sup> *Insight*, 162.

<sup>7</sup> I think now of another bridge, that of Catherine of Siena’s *Dialogues*, which center on the bridge Jesus. For some it seems to be a way round the kataphatic effort. I have written at some length on the problems associated with mystic groundings of method: see the five *Prehumous* Essays, 4 – 8, on “Foundational Prayer”. The Posthumous essays, especially 14 – 21, are an effort to point towards the Jesus of history in a full kataphatic way. As I noted in the concluding paragraph of Q/A 42, in that full kataphatic heuristic we live and move and have our theology in the womb of Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> *Insight*, 22.

<sup>9</sup> CWL 6, 121.

<sup>10</sup> We never raised such complex questions of complete explanation as are presented in *Posthumous* 3, “A Commentary on **Inside**”. You can notice this in the two introductory books I used over the period, both now available on my website: *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations. Axis of the Great Ascent* (1974) and *Process. Introducing Themselves to Young (Christian) Minds* (1990).

experiences: the other's inattention, unintelligence, unreasonableness, unadventuresomeness and unmatiness. That eloquence can be as subtle as Lonergan scholarship but no one mistakes it for world-shaking meaning.

But I am opening up the giant topic that was mentioned in note 1 above: the communal development of a serious heuristic version of that paragraph I call *60910*.<sup>11</sup> Going on here in compact brevity would be a silly optimism. But might I suggest that that deep paragraph of Lonergan gives us a lead for the abandoning of *Lonerganism* as a respectable title? He concludes the paragraph with pointing towards a fusing: "fuse into single explanation."<sup>12</sup> Many of you already know my preference for the title of *Fusionism* for the global omnidisciplinary caring that is to come. *Lonerganism*, on the other hand, instills varieties of amusement, disdain, resentment, in too many contemporary contexts.

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<sup>11</sup> It straddles the pages 609 and 610.

<sup>12</sup> *Insight*, 610, line 9.