

Q. 49 (May 16th) The symbol W_3 to which you refer regularly troubles me in different ways. For example, do we really need this type of complication? The content to which it refers seems more complicated than necessary and to lack a basis in Lonergan. Also your double-meaning of double-u – did you plan that? – adds an odd religious tone to method.

A. 49 Let me take this in steps that differ from the order in the question. First, W_3 in its double meaning was not planned. The actual diagram emerged in a sudden burst as I prepared a short presentation for a Concordia University Conference of the late 1980s.¹ The diagram isn't there but appears in *A Brief History of Tongue* on page 124, but without the W_3 title. It was in that work, I think, that I began using the W_i : W_1 for the simple $f(p_i; c_j; b_k; z_l; u_m; r_n)$, W_2 for the more complex symbol (op. cit. 122) for language.

Back now to the double-meaning and the prayer, "Double You Three." The second meaning was quite startling to me, coming to me, in me, a quarter of a century after I invented the diagram. It reminds me now of a similar experience in my reading of Joyce's *Ulysses* which I recall for you also since, as you'll see, it is relevant to answering the question posed.

My *Ulysses* insight that I missed in previous decades of reading centered on the meaning of the beginning of the section in the book generally called "Oxen of the Sun." It is a magnificent circling round styles in English dealing with a birth in Hollis St. Maternity Hospital in Dublin. It ends with the birth and a nudge about the rebirth of language. This is all used by me elsewhere as a parallel of our task of renewing theology that was the issue of the previous question. But the point here is my – and your – reading of the three words *Deshil Holles Eamus* at the beginning of the section. *Deshil*? Is a Gaelic word for turning right, as used in army marching, turn around or about. *Holles*? Obviously it refers to the street and the hospital, but notice, too, the German meaning: all. *Eamus*? Latin for "let us go." So you have a meaning – one of various layered meanings, "Let us go round all." A Vico image, but yes, an image of our challenge. "Just you try it on."² Now back to our task of fresh reading. Perhaps, brighter than I, you got it already and can laugh at my decades of missing the pointing? The pointing is to personalizing the task. "Just you try it on," but it begins with James Joyce, whose Gaelic name is Seamus MacSeodhidh. Anyway, there it is: staring me and you in the print, hidden in a print-gap of *Holles Eamus*. Do I have to re-write the challenge for you? "*Deshil Holle Seamus*." Go round all James!

Go round all Bernie!

¹ Published in 1989 as *Lonergan's Hermeneutics* (eds. Ben Meyer and Sean McEvenue).

² The concluding five words of the section "Oxen of the Sun" in *Ulysses*.

So, “let us say that explicit metaphysics is the conception, affirmation, and implementation of the integral heuristic structure of proportionate being.”³ In there is the mention of implementation and it pulls in the whole horrid problem of the longer cycle of decline. It would take Bernie another twelve years to see that going round all meant closing an obvious Gap obviously.

When I first began envisaging the answer to this question, I started accumulating the various relevant topics and pointers: Lonergan’s early work on Euclid and symbolisms,⁴ his scribbles in the spring of 1965 of the dimensions of the task of Logics,⁵ his investigation of and optimism about axiomatics,⁶ his view of the sophistications of linguistic feedback,⁷ etc. etc. The full answer of my musings and notes was to be a thorough account of the characterization of Tower people that I indicated, in a creative burst, at notes 32 and 33 of A. 48. But now and here is not the time for that full answer: that this ongoing complication of symbolism is rooted in Lonergan and centrally necessary to the Tower and its care of humanity.⁸ Now is the time for, “dare I say, kindness.”⁹ So let me ask you to bring together Lonergan’s startling view on metaphysics with his view of the imaging of ... metaphysics, “this comprehension of all as a unified whole.”¹⁰

Not all readers may have the relevant text so best put it in here. It is central to my thesis regarding Lonergan and regarding the character of Tower people, a view of that character massively unacceptable to commonsense, to commonsense philosophy, and to the present bent of Lonergan studies. So here we go, reading the text with Lonergan’s view of metaphysics in mind.

This comprehension of everything in a unified whole can be either formal or virtual. It is habitual when one is habitually able to answer readily and without difficulty, or at least

³ *Insight*, 416, bottom of the page.

⁴ “A Note on Geometrical Possibilities,” CWL 4, 92-107.

⁵ His scribble jottings for a first chapter of the book *Method* contained heavy pointers regarding the dynamics of logics.

⁶ You might follow the trail through the index of *Phenomenology and Logic*.

⁷ See note 84 on page 88 of *Method in Theology*. There is a further comment in the Mss missing in the text on page 92 at line 12. The line should read “in the measure that linguistic feed-back is achieved, that is in the measure that explanations” I note here that in this and in the previous three notes I am skimming over the future possibilities of a large and complex literature.

⁸ So, there is to be a fuller care of humanity’s feelings. Here is where the symbolism adds a discomforting wake-up call to Lonergan studies, particularizing in a range of areas the demands of *Insight* 755 that we are consistently and arrogantly being “late” and out of date. Feelings, dreams, phantasms, etc. etc.: they all have their physics and chemistry. The neuroscientists know this. It is high time that Lonergan students cut out the glib mythic chit-chat about feelings, etc.

⁹ I refer, once again, to that marvelous contextualization from the film *Wit*. See note 1 of Q/A 45 (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/ga-36.pdf>).

¹⁰ Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, CWL 7, 151.

‘without tears,’ a whole series of questions right up to the last ‘why?’ Formal comprehension, however, cannot take place without a construct of some sort. In this life we are able to understand something only by turning to phantasm; but in larger and more complex questions it is impossible to have a suitable phantasm unless the imagination is aided by some sort of diagram. Thus, if we want to have a comprehensive grasp of everything in a unified whole, we shall have to construct a diagram in which are symbolically represented all the various elements of the question along with all the connections between them.¹¹

Perhaps I need say no more? Or at least, as time goes on and functionally collaborative metaphysics goes from seed to sapling, there will be no need of more talk. Can one really ride to Canterbury without a horse?: well, watch out for the iron horse.

W_3 emerged from Lonergan’s “discovery page”¹² of February 1965. The problem was to represent symbolically “all the various elements of the question” that is metaphysics’ heuristics. The first word, W_1 , emergent from a lecture on “Being and Loneliness”¹³ in the early 1970s, was an obvious inclusion, but it was a long road to conceiving the meaningful inclusion of the semi-colon, e.g. between c_j and b_k ”; “ has the meaning there that emerges in initial fashion from doing the work suggested by Lonergan. “To this end, there have to be invented appropriate symbolic images of the relevant chemical and physical events.”¹⁴ I would have you note how incomplete this W is: I symbolize conjugates, but not acts much less recurrence-patterns of acts. Some creative ladies of the future will, no doubt, add further detailed words. Symbolizations do not stand still: compare *Journal of Symbolic Logic* and 2013 to the volume of the year 1953.

I referred to Lonergan’s “discovery page”: it illustrates Lonergan working free from his typewriter. Think, in amazement, of Lonergan typing away relentlessly from 1949 to 1953 on a little manual typewriter. If there were pauses for diagrams the scribbles did not survive, but certainly the old machine did not allow him to compute images. Still, he leaves you in need, not only of diagramming, but of intussuscepting subtleties of your positional meaning: how else are you to understand and control the stuff in chapter 8, like E_{ij} ¹⁵ as it is lifted by the position of

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Reproduced on page 160 of *Bernard Lonergan. His Life and Leading Ideas*, Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2010.

¹³ The lecture is included as an Appendix in my *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations* (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/wealth.pdf>).

¹⁴ *Insight*, 489. My series of 41 essays, *Field Nocturnes*, hovers over this single paragraph of *Insight* (these essays are available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/fieldnocturnes.html>)

¹⁵ “... an aggregate of events E_{ij} that is merely coincidental.” *Insight*, 281.

page 413 – as **you** lift it in the genetics of your positioning – into the metaphysical context – think of A_{ij} ¹⁶ – of potency, form, act?

Do my suggestions give you a jolt? The relevant jolt is the climb needed to give symbols meaning and to grow in the meaning of symbols: like the symbol G_{jk}^i , whether you take it as referring to general relativity or to divine relativity. G_{jk}^i , in matters divine, draws discomforting attention to the task of upgrading one’s view of God. Tower people are not to worship the God of Moses or the God of Paul but the God conceived – in decency to conversations with God and to the task of Global Care – “on the level of one’s times”¹⁷ and “at the level of one’s age,”¹⁸ where I nudge you to think of ontic age.

“The Deity ain’t no nickel dime bumshow. I put it to you that he’s on the square and a corking fine business proposition. He’s the grandest thing yet and don’t you forget it. Shout salvation in king Jesus. You’ll need to rise precious early, you sinner there, if you want to diddle the Almighty God, Plfaaaap! Not half. He’s got a coughmixture with a punch in it for you, my friend, in his backpocket. Just try it on.”¹⁹

¹⁶ *Insight 465*: “For the coincidental manifolds of lower conjugate acts, say A_{ij} , can be imagined symbolically.”

¹⁷ *Method in Theology*, 350.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 351.

¹⁹ The conclusion of “Oxen of the Sun” in Joyce’s *Ulysses*. Q/A 51, “You Make My Skin Caul” will enlarge on the challenge of refining the religious dimension of method.