

Q. 51 “You Make My Skin Caul”

Q.51 You repeat five words frequently in the later *Posthumous* Essays and in recent Q/As: Claspings, Cherishing, Calling, Craving, Christing, and associate them with a new turn of spirituality. Could you comment further on them please?

A. 51 The question opens up the minding field trip that is our calling, cauling. I recall now the years in the 1960s when I was teaching the post-graduate course called theodicy to Jesuits. The focus of the course was chapter 19 of *Insight*, with a lecture devoted to each of the 26 places of the ninth section.<sup>1</sup> But I think especially here of an exercise I invited the students to do that now weaves in fresh meaning for me of “the corking fine business proposition” of “king Jesus” and His Mates.<sup>2</sup> I would bring together, so so slowly, as I sat on the table at the top of the class, the first finger and thumb of one hand, and invite the class to make the same slow delicate approach to themselves. Was I asking them to hear the sound of one hand touching?

Recently I came across the expression of communications despair: “it’s like trying to explain the sound of the colour three.” But perhaps at this stage in our Q/A efforts you have a glimpse, a smell, of the gap between a route-map and a mountain-climb?

My lengthiest comment on the five Cs that you ask about was in notes 10 and 12 of Q/A 45, which I repeat here shortly. Note 12 especially is a very compact indication of later stages of expressions of the sublation of Lonergan’s treatment of the Divine Missions in *The Triune God: Systematics*. The slim lead-in is to be followed by the mountain trail of special categorical development that is described on *Method* 291. I do not wish here to elucidate further that trailing: it is, after all an elucidation that is to follow in its occurrences in groups of searching subjects. It seems to me better for this sacramental moment just to lead you wandering round trail-maps: the wandering my help you find where you are poised, where you might pause.

Obviously, before going back further, we could pause, as no doubt you have paused when fermenting your question, over those footnotes. So here we go: a re-read, a fresh larger-print neuromolecular entry into the loneliness of your cranial heart-quest. Next page please!

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<sup>1</sup> *Cantower* 19 – the same number as the *Insight* chapter, would be a helpful read here (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/cantower19.pdf>). There is a nice paralleling – throwing light on the structure of the chapter – of reaching for the meaning of God and reaching for the meaning of the neutrino. Also there is included an elementary paralleling of Thomas’ five ways with the reach of the five cause-quests. I wrote it while a student of philosophy in the spring of 1959.

<sup>2</sup> I concluded Q/A 49 with the quotation from Joyce’s *Ulysses* from which the quotes above were taken. Why not repeat the passage here, part of our contemplative challenge: “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.” My use of the word ‘Mates’ should, I hope, drive you towards contemplating the entry into Mystery that proper use of the triplicity of analogical thinking gives, a topic I have raised in the QQ and in the *Posthumous* Essays.

10. It seems as well, to aid in the contemplation seeded by the five Cs, to quote from that key paragraph (beginning at the end of *CWL* 12, 471) here, adding in the five Cs: “There are four real divine relations, really identical with the divine substance, and therefore there are four very special modes that ground the external imitation of the divine substance. Next, there are four absolutely supernatural realities ... the secondary act of existence of the incarnation, sanctifying grace, the habit of charity, and the light of glory. It would not be inappropriate, therefore, to say that the secondary act of existence of the incarnation is a created participation of paternity [C<sub>2</sub>], and so has a special relation to the Son, that sanctifying grace is a participation of active spiration [C<sub>3</sub>], and so has a special relation to the Holy Spirit, that the habit of charity is a participation of passive spiration [C<sub>1</sub> and C<sub>4</sub>] and so has a special relation to the Father and the Son, and that the light of glory is a participation of sonship [C<sub>5</sub>].”

12. Back then to note 10. These five Cs express an effort of decades – my first shot of appreciation the Triune Subjects was expressed in *Theological Studies* of 1962, “The Hypothesis of Intelligible Emanations in God.” The climb to a radiant meaning of C<sub>2</sub> began seriously, nearly twenty years ago, in the seventh chapter of *The Redress of Poise*, “Grace : The Final Frontier,” but the five Cs are a result of a very focused contemplative drive of the past four years. Note 10’s correlations present you with strange puzzles. C<sub>2</sub> places each of us in the cherishing radiance of the human conception of the second Person. C<sub>5</sub> names that leap beyond the muffled pilgrim symphony of our molecular Christ-identity to the luminosity of everlastingly growing circumincession. C<sub>3</sub> is that subtle absent-presence of the whisper that is the caul of Father-Son. With C<sub>4</sub> it grounds a molecular living-intension that breaths and breeds the patterned ontic and phyletic story-polyphoning (see 3<sup>rd</sup> *Collection*, 132) of history and His Story. C<sub>4</sub> is the emergent human psychosomatic achievement (See my *Quodlibet* 3 on the need to reconceive the habit of charity, and add to it the need, noted in *Verbum* 145, to re-conceive, in relation to a causality of presences, Thomas’s “natural resultance”) of a big-bang haunting, C<sub>1</sub>, of the first cosmic second’s chemicals.

One has, of course, to lift into the new context the struggle of Thomas and Augustine with vestiges of the Trinity (see *Summa Theologica*, q. 45, a. 7).

Where might I begin useful pointing? I can recall, for the nudging of your patience, the patience of my contemplative struggle with Crowe's *Theology of the Christian Word* as I summarized it in Q/A 48. And indeed I can dare repeat the key statement of the concluding paragraph there:

"I dare repeat the key statement that sublates Crowe's search. 'C<sub>3</sub> is that subtle absent-presence of the whisper that is the caul of Father-Son. With C<sub>4</sub> it grounds a molecular living-intension that breaths and breeds the patterned ontic and phyletic story-polyphoning (see 3<sup>rd</sup> *Collection*, 132) of history and His Story.' (I am repeating here from note 12 of my answer in Q/A 45)."

What to do next? Push on in details of the trail? It strikes me that I can usefully borrow a feather from Lonergan's cap, from the paragraph that followed his listing of general categories on *Method* 286-7. The borrowing illuminates both contexts. Should there have been a similar paragraph at the end of his "fifth set of categories" on page 291, where he ends writing "of overcoming evil with good not only in the world but also in the church."<sup>3</sup> This is not a rhetorical question: it is a puzzle I would wish to share with my questioner and others who struggle with this strange messy book of the tired genius, *Method in Theology*. I will only note that the two listings are quite different: for one thing, there was no obvious descriptive stuff to point to at the end of 291 as needing re-writing. For another, the climbing gear for the re-writing climb through chapters 2-4 of *Method* was there, doctrinally, in *Insight*. But I have omitted to mention the key pointing of the paragraph on *Method* 287 to that doctrinal writing: "one can go on." They are the funniest saddest words of *Method*. So what of my position here? Can even I be the one to go on?

I think of one of my most recent ventures where I **touched** – there, I have mentioned in **bold print**<sup>4</sup> the strange reaching! – where I touched on dance.<sup>5</sup> What do you think, might you think, of the skin of the dancer weaving round the topological possibilities of your neuromolecules, your psychic skin, cosmic bent, the dancing a pattern of secondary determinations of the nature

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<sup>3</sup> Note how this finds enlargement in the final two sections of *Method* chapter 14, and add some musings on my suggestions in Q/A 46 about building the content of those sections into a follow-up to the first four paragraphs of chapter one of *Method*.

<sup>4</sup> Bold-printing was a strategy I used in the 41 Field Nocturnes to startle the reader into the realism of seen print being behind the eyeballs.

<sup>5</sup> *Bridgepoise* 10, "The Liberal Arts as the Core of Future Science: Part Two" (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/bridgepoise-10.pdf>). Parts One and Two are now a single article "Aesthetic Loneliness and the Heart of Science," *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis*, 6 (2011): 51-84.

of “nature’s priest, and nature God’s silent communing with man.”<sup>6</sup> Might it not make your skin caul?

It calls all the more if you have heard the sound of your own touching, heard it in the strain of your unrealistic position, reaching in protopossession beyond the genuine reaching of the dying Merleau-Ponty with the freshness of Helen’s hand in the water.<sup>7</sup> It calls all the more if we are in bold-print intimacy, more still if luminous in the cosmic Clasp Cherishing Calling Craving that carries our psychic skin’s molecules, story-touched,<sup>8</sup> to their destiny in Christing. The self-luminousness is the increasing growing possibility through teens to totterings that desperately needs a fresh Upanishadic<sup>9</sup> morality for its lonesome dive and skinsome weave. It swings to the “Song of the Adorable,”<sup>10</sup> in simple thinking honesty, beyond Vatican cruelty, in the presence of Friends.

It “is a distant probability,<sup>11</sup> needing painfilled solitary reaching towards a hearing of hearing,<sup>12</sup> a touching of touching, ‘in the far ear,’<sup>13</sup> ‘sanscree,’<sup>14</sup> making luminously present – in focal darkness – our bloodwashed bloodstream. It is a new audacity, a new hapticity, to which we must aspire, for which we must pray.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, CWL 10, 225, top line.

<sup>7</sup> The context of all this is the brutal difficult of positioning oneself in being and in signing. One may venture into it by availing of some of the 41 *Field Nocturnes* that hover over these topics, e.g. no. 24, “Merleau-Ponty and Other Mudflesh”; no. 26 Helen Keller and I; no. 28, “A Touching of Touching: Getting on your Nerves” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/fieldnocturnes.html>).

<sup>8</sup> Here we are, neatly touched by the fullest question raised by Crowe’s *Theology of the Christian Word*. Previously, in Q/A 48, I commented on the problem of his seventh chapter on “The Inner Word of the Spirit.” But the problem is to reconceive the whole book in terms of the ontic tension between active spiration and passive spiration, Personal Presences interlocking with the neuromolecular dynamics of subject and subjects in the genesis of the patterned chemicals that name and live the growing story, the Symphony of the Incarnate God. I have successfully dodged further pointers on the matter in this essay.

<sup>9</sup> *Upa* (near) *ni* (devotedly) *shad* (sit). One needs an arresting restless resting in Clapsed desire.

<sup>10</sup> The heading of section 4 of Chapter 5 of the book cited in note 15 below.

<sup>11</sup> The title of the Preface to McShane (ed.), *Searching for Cultural Foundations*, University Press of America, 1985, is “Distant Probabilities of Persons Presently Going Home Together in Transcendental Process,” pp. i-xxii.

<sup>12</sup> “Merced Mulde” “Yasal that the limmat?” (*Finnegans Wake*, p. 212, line 26; p. 198, line 13). See Bishop, op. cit. in the next note, p. 342. This transposition of Joyce, of course, demands precision of, and ‘boning up’ on, the notion of the notion of a thing, pushing on from Aquinas, Ia q. 76, a. 8, on the soul’s bodipresence.

<sup>13</sup> See John Bishop, *Joyce’s Book of the Dark: Finnegans Wake*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1986, pp. 343-46.

<sup>14</sup> *Finnegans Wake*, p. 215, line 26.

<sup>15</sup> The second-last paragraph of chapter 6, “Eternal Process,” of *Process. Introducing Themselves to Young (Christian) Minders* (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/process.pdf>). The notes within the quotation are from the original text.

But pray in merely honest thinking ... no mystic mansions here, but being eye-wide with the man or woman in the mirror, skinning the *moi intime* and flailing the persona. Yet tolerant, as They are, of the hidden in-themes and the silly personae that, pressed and primmed, leave the bathroom mirror to enter “the drama we do not think out and then execute; the drama that spontaneously arises already charged with image emotion appetite”<sup>16</sup> in the present global warped molecules of stupidity and greed.

The honest thinking weaves gradually away from conventional piety – or should I call it piousity? – and the Tower Person reaches luminously towards becoming a strange positional infoldness of cos-mi-c-all identifying the quadriplicity of the atman-Brahman team playing out the drama of dishes and driving and dull or distressing deeds.

I have deliberately rambled here, avoiding an ordering of effort in time, avoiding some nominal listing of properties weaved round the Being of notional acts that coddle our cosmos. Our culture, even of theology, is not ready for a contemplation that leans towards “understanding what it is to understand” in its full self- and stranger-coddling. The notes 10 and 12 are cited on page 2 above, but there between them there lurks a gap, a Beethoven pause, the silent sound of the print-touch of note 11: “The global maturing is a distant business – and business is to walk then on streets of mystery – talked of both in “Arriving in Cosmopolis” and in *The Road to Religious Reality* as to be thought of creatively in terms of 9011 A.D.”

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<sup>16</sup>Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic*, University of Toronto, 2001, CWL 18, 207. I quote from the lecture notes there, which, as I mention there in note 8 of page 288, can nudge better than the lectures. But that whole context is relevant to the contemplative effort.