

Q. 53 McShane's Low-Class Functional Research: What about you?

Q. 53 (May 27th) You invited a collaboration in terms of writing an Abstract or Summary of a proposed effort to functionally specialize. You have made the whole challenge of Lonergan so plausible and undeniable, and you make me wonder why it has not taken off among the other Lonergan people. But then, as I have been doing these past days, I try to follow your guidelines and still feel at a loss in trying to see what I could do with my background in theology.

A. 53. Perhaps the Q/A 48-51, going up before June 1st, may help, but, yes, the jump into functional collaboration is going to be a really tough one.¹ When I finished Q/A 52 today I began musing over something I said there about my decades pushing for attention [a] to Lonergan's economics, [b] to his suggested functional collaboration. Indeed, now it strikes me that this musing could help us stumble forward, so: you have my title for this answer: "McShane's Low-class Functional Research: What about you?"

There is a sense in which my career has been a stumbling bumbling around the suggested slogan for functional research: **this is worth recycling**. My title above adds "Low-class" and I would have you pause over Q/A 48, "Beyond Crowe's *Theology of the Christian Word*" and muse over both my proposal regarding my own body of work and your possibilities. "Beyond" is the key word in the title and here. I don't want to get into its meaning in relation to Crowe since that search goes beyond – ho ho – my present interest. What I want to do is point to a way of beginning functional collaboration that is to be an effort in relation to the phrase "this deserves recycling." The principle way, with its marvelous illustrative instance in Charles Boyer's pointer for Lonergan,² is the way of functional research.

Now think realistically of your own position, as fully as you can. You are having a simple personal shot at what I call the "1833 Overture,"³ one that you can initially keep private if you wish: such privacy helps towards honest self-discovery.⁴ In functional collaboration this effort is

¹ When I began this answer I had little idea that it would, in fact, turn out to be a brooding over the possibilities of us making the necessary startling stumbling towards "some third way" (*Method*, 4) at the Vancouver Conference of July 2014, but the flow emerged out of the concern of the Committee for that conference and various other inquiries about it. But of course it reaches beyond that. You, encouraged or enraged by what I write, might well speak up this summer of 2013 at a Lonergan Conference and sow seeds of the third way, or ask disturbing questions of colleagues or, more surely, of yourself.

² See page two of the answer to Q. 48 (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/qa-39.pdf>).

³ Lines 18 to 33 of page 250 of *Method in Theology*.

⁴ What might I say about this task here, **this** walkabout skin task here and now? You might look down to note 9 and come back, resolved to try an honest walkabout. It is the walkabout that matches the walkabout before the bathroom mirror that is a center of *The Road to Religious Reality*. This essay is a strange walkabout, but for you it is only an invitation that can fail, just as Lonergan's *Verbum* articles' invitation, on the whole, failed (see *CWL* 2, 223, and 238). Line one of 238 neatly claims that "the more intelligent grasp the whole from a hint." I hint about a week stolen from convention: are you intelligent

to be presupposed, getting as best beyond “*voraussetzunglos*” as you can.⁵ Give it a day – or better a week’s walkabout – of your musings. For instance, you are already taking a stand on functional collaboration, even if it is – as it is at this stage for most people – mainly a stand of belief. That is the ethos of our question. Indeed, I would emphasize that it is the only pre-required stand.⁶ The stand grounds a willingness to collaborate, or perhaps, humbly, only to encourage others to collaborate.⁷

But you can push on, even if it is a fairly commonsense push. You have, say, read *Insight* or part of it, *Method* or part of it. Has it left you in, or with, a larger world view, and can you express that view in some package of expression? Heavens, you might even be able to claim having a grip on, and being gripped by, **W₃**: in some shabby or sophisticated way.⁸

With that view in minding – and notice that it is your view, not Kant’s or Lonergan’s or whoever’s – you pause over the flow of life around you: home, friends, street, cosmos. You may remember my previous suggested question: “Who is running this street?”⁹ You pick out of

enough to risk such a week that you might better grasp yourself and your town as holes of loneliness? Add my hint regarding rehab in note 47.

⁵ *Insight*, 600. The word occurs in the lead up to *The Sketch*, The Counterpositions, The Canons, of *Insight* 17, that amazingly neglected zone of Lonergan’s invitation in *Insight* to a serious becoming of luminous presuppositioning.

⁶ This emphasis is backed up by the first chapter of my Website book, *Method in Theology: Revisions and Implementations* (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/method.html>), where I point towards a possibility of what might be called a naïve functional division that is not grounded (see *Method in Theology*, chapter 5, section 3, “Grounds for the Division”) on the self-discovered elements of meaning, but on “The Need for Division” (see *ibid.*, section 4). I suspect, with serious methodological suspicion, that the naïve venture will be a new and sounder historical source of the grounds in elementary self-appreciation. This is part of a much larger discussion that would bring out the concrete dynamics of the cycling in relation both to global scientific maturing and to the old question of the nature of Christian philosophy.

⁷ I make this point regularly and it is important for you, the questioner and the reader, to add to the honest self-searching mentioned at note 4 above the possible road of backing off from seriousness about Tower Work – even while holding down a good teaching job in theology – and simply encouraging the emergence of the ethos required for supporting the impossible dream, the grand slamming. Most of those at Wimbledon are in the cheering crowd.

⁸ Part of the minimum required in joining in our task, cheering or climbing, is taking seriously the suggestions lurking in **W₃**. I think especially of the pointing towards “**c_j**” and its surrounds of presuppositions, acts, schemes of recurrence: the molecularity of the cosmic loneliness.

⁹ Rather than repeating previous references it seems better to point you to two of my Walkabouts, each taking one week. The walkabout in New York of section 3 of *Cantower* 14, “Communications and Ever Ready Founders” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/cantower14.pdf>) and the walkabout in Dublin on which I reflected in *Quodlibet* 8, “The Dialectic of My Town, *Ma Vlast*” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/quod-08.pdf>). Walkabout, of course, includes public transport, or a bicycle. I don’t think city zen-wise motor-cycling would do the trick, and certainly not a limo. On one of my days in New York I travelled by subway from the Bronx to Coney Island in solitary searching. One’s

the “one hundred and one”¹⁰ damnations something that you think needs fixing. The picking out obviously involves a cycling through your mind, even though you may not be luminous about it. So you have it, an X that is worth recycling. Here is where your stand on functional collaboration comes in. Your stand makes you think, hold, say “this is worth seriously recycling.” The stand is a stand in functional research. Now is that not an easy move? You have done what I might call a “Boyer move.” Let me suppose that you are the mayor of Vancouver, and you notice the difficulty of a cyclist getting through the car-flow. A quick mind-cycle leads to the claim, “This deserves – [ho ho] – recycling” and after some messing with City Council, behold, Bike Lanes!¹¹

Now we are already, strangely, in deep water. The Mayor of Vancouver, Gregor Robinson, isn’t into 8-fold functional collaboration. The City Council already has a tradition, and historical presuppositions of that tradition, of policy-making, planning, and executive reflection. Such a tradition allows shortcutting: the mayor isn’t into FS₁, or into FS₈, nor even C₉.¹² So too with our street-picking: you don’t need a functional cycling to call 911 for a street emergency.

But say there is a larger emergency on the street. So, for our Mayor, Gregor Robertson, a problem emerges when a spot in town is taken over for the Wall Street movement. The crowd is saying “**this** deserves recycling.” The tradition grounds, in various circumstances, the right to

focus can shift enormously, from drunks in the Bowery to pretentious corporation citadels. Always the quest is to become more self-luminous in one’s metaphysical **regard**, or to step up one’s self-grip in an ever-extending **W**₃, even perhaps street dancing in the prayer Double You Three. Those walkabouts of mine were, of course, way before my psychic dance into that strange company-prayer.

¹⁰ Bring in, if you so wish the enlargement, the context in which these words occur on page 250 of *Method in Theology*.

¹¹ This has been an actual achievement in Vancouver. In the earlier Q/A 46, “Making Operative Fruitful Ideas” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/ga-37.pdf>), at note 8, I mentioned my wife, Reverend Sally, being involved in the strange oldest Church of Vancouver, a shelter for addicts and the poor. The blocks round the area are under commercial pressure, a topic for City Council. Will an intelligent solution emerge, or are the people living in this area to be nudged away for the sake of gentrification? And what, think you, is the normative context of such a local issue? Muse over it before you venture into note 12.

¹² “isn’t into”: ‘is not into’ three simple words that beg a question, beg for a cultural shift that would leave the mayor ‘into’, ‘in with’, “the implementation of the integral heuristic structure of proportionate being” (*Insight*, 416, end). The problem of metaphysics is the problem of Cosmopolis, of the weaving of collaborative global care into decisions about our streets, the diverse flows of people and traffic and finance. Part of the honest musing asked for at note 4 is pausing over what you meant, up till now, by “integral heuristic structure of proportionate being.” Did your thinking include your street, your town, bankers and bums, songsters and shopkeepers, widows and orphans? In the wake of the disastrous 2004 Lonergan Conference in Toronto I went walkabout for a week in “my town,” Dublin, aided, of course, by the one-day walkabout that is Joyce’s *Ulysses* and the one-knight’s HolleSeamus whirlabout of *Finnegans Wake*. My eventually musings may help you here: Quodlibet 8: “The Dialectic of My Town, *Ma Vlast*” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/quod-08.pdf>).

assemble or police rights to disperse.¹³ But one can pause and ask what is meant by **this** here. The mayor can pause; the council can pause; but is the pause sufficient to tackle adequately the **this**? Are the bankers going to pause, or the forty economists in UBC's department of economics?

Such a musing helps you to figure out the **this** of your own pick. But, as well, it should help you to get a better sense of your stand for functional collaboration. My efforts to nudge UBC's department of economics to a minding pause was no more successful than my efforts with the Korean economics department mentioned in the previous Q/A. Some larger persuasive control of glocal meaning is needed: but here we both know, in our different ways, that this is just a mention of the massive pointing of section 8, "General Bias" of chapter 7 of *Insight*. So let us pause over your pick. Your pick may involve just the C₉ of calling 911, or it may need a call to the City Council about zoning. But your pick may be something like a Wall Street protest. What, then, are you to do?

I am keeping you, us, 'in' the first functional specialty for the moment. And what you, we, find is that the "Boyer Move" is not enough. Your pick is an instance in a spread of types.¹⁴ If you wish to be persuasive then your **this** requires correlating, perhaps even global reaching. You are not Boyer dealing with Lonergan: you are Tom, Dick or Mary noticing, say, financial madness. Or you are noticing, in some particular way, that your community on this particular street is "always arriving on the scene a little breathless and a little late,"¹⁵ indeed helpless and helplessly out of date. So, for instance, the community talks of problems of feelings, but the pharmacy at the corner, a subsidiary of the pharmaceutical industries, has feelings surrounded and invaded by chemical solutions. Then you begin to see the seriousness of your commitment to functional collaboration. You need a bigger identification of your pick if your pick is to be picked up and to go effectively through an effective cycling. You have picked a spoke of the wheel of longer decline and the issue is a global "Reversal of the Longer Cycle." Can you step

¹³ What lead to the end of the Vancouver sit-in was, in fact, a death in the camp. The City Council was split on the matter and this led to a heated election in which Robinson came through for another term. Why do I ramble thus, locally, anecdotally? Because the conventional thinker seems to find it difficult to get – or "isn't into" – the pointing of metaphysics which "always is concrete." (The first sentence of chapter 2 of *Method in Theology*). The community of thinkers is the human group caring for being, and the discovery of the axial period is that the longer cycle of incline requires a global concrete collaboration reaching each town and each gown.

¹⁴ This is a very complex issue that emerges in the *FuSe* Essays, zero to nine, dealing with Functional Research. They are available in *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis* 8 (2013). It is a very tricky business detecting the spread: think of the ecology of building a dam on the Nile, or the present Canadian interest in pipe-lining oil from Alberta. Think of a time-table restructuring in a school or university.

¹⁵ *Insight*, 755.

out of convention, step out of totalitarian ambition,¹⁶ go beyond NGOs or whatever, and line up with the Great Wheel, the slow whirl, of a crazy “specialized auxiliary”¹⁷ to human interest strangled by general bias? Then you go for a picking that is thorough, an achievement that will save the next leg of the human race, the community of FS₂, hunting round for missed instances.

The whole concrete business of doing FS₂ and handing over something adequate to the next community is, of course, massively more complex than FS₁, but I wish to get on through other specialties that you, the questioner, or you the reader, might be interested in entering. Still, a paragraph pause can help, especially as it relates directly to the Vancouver Conference of July 2014, when we hope to have a decent shot at the “sentence by sentence”¹⁸ accuracy of thinking and talking in a particular specialty.

So my instance is my making the “Boyer Move” on Bob Henman regarding the elements of meaning. I wrote “A Commentary on Inside” last year.¹⁹ It pointed to the need for tackling the neurochemistry of the usual elements of meaning. My nudge to Bob was, not towards FS in general, but to replace my “Low-class Functional Research” with a serious FS₁ venture in the area. It is a year’s tough work. Here a general point is worth making. The work is carried on within Henman’s world view, as yours is to be. Will the world view change? Of course: and it is the final world view that will control the expression of the results. Concretely, the changing will be movements towards a more adequate grip on Lonergan’s paradigm, with small non-paradigm shifts.²⁰ Concretely, too, in this period of initiating functional collaboration, it will

¹⁶ “That’s a fundamental concern for method, eliminating totalitarian ambitions” (“An interview with Bernard Lonergan,” edited by Philip McShane, *A Second Collection*, Westminster Press, 1974, 213.)

¹⁷ “The antecedent willingness of hope has to advance from a generic reinforcement of the pure desire to an adapted and specialized auxiliary ever ready to offset every interference” *Insight*, 747. My emphasis throughout this essay is on our fostering a concrete sense of the ever-readiness that is meshed with and mediated by incarnate metaphysics. See notes 4 and 5 above. A further help could be *Cantower 14*, “Communications and Ever-ready Founders” which includes aspects of my walkabout in New York City (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/cantower14.pdf>).

¹⁸ This is a tall and rigorous order, giving a practical nudge to our efforts to focus on the cultivation of the new differentiations of consciousness needed for controlled and effective collaboration.

¹⁹ *Posthumous 2*, “The Riverrun to God: Probability, Statistics and Emergence” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/posthumous-02.pdf>).

²⁰ It is necessary to pause here over the procedures of successful sciences, especially as they stumble forward, perhaps for centuries or even millennia, to some relatively stable state. We might optimistically expect such a relative stability of Lonergan’s paradigm to emerge “in a hundred years or so.” This is a line from the song-poem of Patrick Kavanagh that dominated my searching in *Lonergan’s Standard Model of Effective Global Inquiry* (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/lonergansmodel.html>). The final chapter 14 there, “Communications: An Outreach to Lonergan Students” adds to the mood of stumbling through my weaving of its 13 sections round the 13 song-poems of Sinead O’Connor on her CD *Faith And Courage*. “Out of history we have come / With great hate and a little room”: a quotation from her 10th song at the beginning of chapter

involve for most of us large shiftings. Henman's work illustrates this. Muse over the fact that most Lonergan students move happily along with no clue about the neurochemical context of the elements of meaning. What, for instance, does "phantasm" mean for you? Is it a word referring vaguely to images and diagrams? Or has $f(p_i; c_j; b_k; z_l; u_m; r_n)$ – a component of \mathbf{W}_3 – got a grip on you, so that the chemistry of symbols is heuristically incarnate in you, part of your character?²¹ Or at least has that component of \mathbf{W}_3 made you self-suspicious when you talk of symbols and dreams and the like?

That latter self-suspicion is highly important at this stage in functional collaboration: it generates a psychic openness regarding "understanding the object,"²² be the object the cosmos or your neighbor. And it is of broader significance at this stage in that the Lonergan community beginning functional collaboration in this decade has to rely heavily on this self-suspicion rather than on the serious sharing of the world view of \mathbf{W}_3 .

On now to the concrete business of a communal push into FS_2 . In the light of the realistic view of \mathbf{W}_3 just mentioned, it might be as well to add T to the name of the view, so " \mathbf{TW}_3 ".²³ It will take a decade or five to get T into a decent tentativity: we are wading through and beyond the molasses of millennia of general bias. So, I would note here something that perhaps you

fourteen's section 10, "Phenomenology Again and A Gain." That short section brings us back, or forward, to my paralleling, in *Lack in the Beingstalk* (Axial, 2006), our stumbling science with the climb towards and beyond "Husserl's contribution to the story of the Calculus of Variation as related to shifts in the deeper calculus of variation that, in spite of local hates, is to springtime its way into a global sisterhood and fellowship of history, into a larger *Lebensraum*, a healing room" (end of section 10, *op cit*).

²¹ My comments on character and its meaning in the first section of chapter 14 of *Method in Theology* are quite familiar. In this essay the topic is the concrete moves, especially towards the transition conference of Vancouver 2014, the rugged struggle towards character formation that is required in this year between. It can be a mighty and courageous move, a dread-filled (see note 29 below) twist, to get one's bones to take seriously the deep demands of a beginning to Lonergan's paradigm shift. See note 47 below. The previous note here, 20, talked of relative maturity, and I mean this for theology and philosophy. But perhaps the move forward to collaborative structures are to come elsewhere? Full maturity requires an effective recognition of an omnidisciplinary futurology that gulliverises the lilly put-ons of global banking, military aspirations, political idiocy, and so on. Then we are looking at some date between 2114 and 9011.

²² The title of the second section of chapter 7 "Interpretation," *Method in Theology*, 156.

²³ I have used the letter "T" previously, e.g. in writing about a TUV, a tentative universal viewpoint, and it is worth sometimes nudging ourselves regarding the tentative nature of the original \mathbf{W}_3 by writing \mathbf{TW}_3 . Especially of note is the lift of the meaning of the "bottom Trinitarian line" in that diagram by my past four years of work on the notional acts in God in various articles but more focused in the final eight *Posthumous* essays (available at: <http://www.philipmcschane.ca/posthumous.html>). There are, of course, other growths of meaning that would eventually find their way into a standard model, but I only note now that "UV" in the diagram or in its Tower equivalent (*Lonergan Biography*, 161) could well be replaced (see note 43 below) by "FS + UV + GS", with or without an initial or distributed "T".

already noticed when I talked of picking. The picking was of bicycling and banking problems, not of philosophic texts or theological opinions. This odd twist requires a pause. What, then of suggestions of, say, Freud or Frye or Feuerback or Fromm or Finnis or Foucault or Fuller or Fiorenza,²⁴ regarding “understanding the object”? Notice that these suggestions and their suggesters are, too, objects. They are associated with huge problems of interpretation, and the interpretation of interpretations etc. Eventually this plethora of problems is to be faced through a maturing of the canons of hermeneutics, and particularly the piece in that text that I have named 60910.²⁵ But here I wish you to come with me towards a simpler yet more challenging focus, focused by a focus on the last two words of the first page of *Method* chapter one, “academic disciplines.” The problem of method is to get us out of these messings and namings and this inferior status, which “do little to advance the less successful subjects”²⁶ of philosophy, theology, method, and futurology. We are heading for a “third way.... difficult and laborious.”²⁷ So, for the moment, I would suggest that we hold back on specialized work on this or that author. If Freud or Frye etc. have some good points that you can pick, then pick them with what precision you can muster – recall the Boyer Move and its possible blossomings – and, yes, then take your stand on **their** being worth recycling: I mean the identification of characteristics of the object that you have picked out not the people who picked the characteristics.²⁸ Preferably these are characteristics of the flow of town rather than the weaves of gown. We are interested in progress in the town, not in continued futile debates best carried on in gowns far from Academus’ home.

On again with FS₂. My suggested strategy gets us out of a mess in present methodology, and it is further lifted forward by taking seriously Lonergan’s late precise description of the job of

²⁴ Why these 8 “F”s? My selection of folks is generally of no particular significance, though I liked putting Fuller and Fiorenza together as symbolizing scripture’s male and female interpreters. Fiorenza is the only lady in the list and one can perhaps think of the 8 named male writers of the *New Testament* and think of how one might replace my eight by them. Do the *New Testament* authors have a privileged position in “understanding the object”? And how do their names fare when we shift to the direct speech of the forward specialties? No lady in that *New Testament* list of course: what happened to the ladies around Jesus in that muscular age? Notice, while we ramble, that there is direct speech in the first four specialties: the baton-exchanges are direct speech, and can serve to sift out namings of opinions.

²⁵ The problem that is named 60910 is the central problem of the two functional specialties, Interpretation and History. It has occupied me for a decade, and perhaps I should leave it at that, except to point to the context for getting into it: Fuses 10 – 15 (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/fuse.html>).

²⁶ *Method in Theology* 4, line 2.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, line 9.

²⁸ This is part of the huge problem mentioned in note 25. The analogy here is with the development of physics where some names remain as convenient labels. But there are subtle problems that you can amusingly suspect from the fact that objects of physics do not label each other. Take another look now at note 24.

methodological attention: you have to balance your attention to the object with attention to how you are approaching the object. Here you glimpse a new twist on the notion that as you work you will improve your world view: you also improve your view on your view. But when we now pause to think of the work of FS₂ in this new context, we can enter some zone of dread.²⁹ What object was my doctorate thesis about, or my research of the past thirty years?

All is not lost! Your study was surely of someone's view of a science or an art, a view that related that view to progress in the reality of history? Then that is your focus, literally the possible **form** of your **this**. In FS₂ you are working with your version of **W**₃ on some aggregated **this** baton-ed on to you in your community of interpreters. You were specialized, say, in the subject called Freud but now **this** nudges you to think of Freud's possible **form** for **this**. But it is **your** suggestion in this cycling, not Freud's. So, you suspect that there is a neglected "timely and fruitful idea"³⁰ that could be the **form** of **this**. Freud's name can slip into history, just like Faraday's does.

You must recognize that I am skimming along here in a poor version of a revised *Method in Theology*, better perhaps called *Method in Futurology*. The main point re FS₂ is that you are adding in a suggested 'pre-empted' form to the mess that is progress/decline. The form may have matured in the mind of Freud or his disciples and that has to be taken into account by this specialty's work; the preemption may be in yesterday's failed doctorate thesis. But what this specialty does not handle is the possible and probable and actual stories of how this form could flow, could have flowed, might flow in the future. That handling lifts the effort, baton-handled to history and its focus on ongoing meanings, its tadpole twists towards frogswim. I need hardly remind you of Lonergan's nudge, spread by me over the entire leaning tower, "history in the style of Burckhardt rather than Ranke."³¹ From FS₁ on, we are bent on improving the human lot.

Now I wish to add another twist to our effort. There is a statistical – and of course human! – value in focusing on Lonergan's Works, *LCW*, in FS₁ and so, by handing on, in FS₂. But even without team-work handing on, one can do a Boyer Move oneself for F₂, especially if interpretation is your bent.³² And certainly one can take a Boyer-lead from, say, pointings in the first 11 *FuSe* Essays. Or, thinking ahead to September 2013, there are to be Abstracts relating to the July 2014 Conference that can surely be shared. I mentioned already Henman's early start and I would hope for other summer ventures.

²⁹ See *Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18, the index under *Dread*.

³⁰ *Insight*, 254 and 264.

³¹ *Method in Theology*, 250.

³² There is the large topic of temperamental bents towards particular specialties which we skim over here.

So, we can shift our present skimming to the third functional specialty. The historians of theology – and theology was a focus in the question – have leads in this specialty of history, curiously, from Lonergan’s chapter 12 on “Doctrines.”³³ Here there is need and scope for significant efforts of creativity. For one thing, there is a creative communal effort of historians to take seriously the pointers regarding pure formulations in *The Sketch of Insight* 17. Such efforts would give a great boost to the cycle in lifting the Church Council Doctrines towards a grounding remote Policy-meaning in the sixth specialty. But now I am wandering trickily ahead. The main thing to have in mind, as well as a slightly-more-than-nominal bow to **W₃**, is the bent towards story, redemptive story, getting the sick tadpole through the mole-asses in its swimming frailly towards froghood. The concern is for on-going meaning in that meaning’s core **sense of loneliness**.³⁴

With a little or a lot of luck, some free-spirit will come up with some such piece of new history in the next 12 months. Heavens, we already have more than the Boyer Move from Fred Crowe’s *Theology of the Christian Word. A Study in History* and from my musings on that book!³⁵

What the members of the committee that planned the Vancouver meeting hope for is that there would be grist for the mill of FS₄ forthcoming during the next 12 months. Still, attempts at the tasks of *Method* 250, can be made almost out of sync with the cycle, especially if there are people who would take the risk of plunging into the ice-water of *The 1833 Overture*. But I think here of the tasks of the top part of that page 250. There could well be significant stumbling shots at doing that in any zone. What we really need, and wonderfully have now in

³³ This chapter 12 may strike you as odd in that it homes in on a heuristic for dealing with early Church doctrines. Still, you can recognize that it is a pragmatics for future historical work. Like the other end-chapters, this is a tired effort of Lonergan gasping for the end. I have often written of his “gasping” and grasping for the beginning in 1966. Getting into chapter one baffled him. And I recall here the story of him finishing the text in 1971, going to the Regis College recreation room and talking to Sean McEvenue about the burden of having now to tackle an Introduction. Sean’s advice: “Just write a page, Bernie!” Relieved by this nudge, Lonergan returned to his room down the top-floor corridor and wrote the two pages xi–xx. I worked on the galleys of the book later that year and advised Lonergan about loosenesses. One neat response was his replacing “unconsciously” in places by the same-length word “inadvertently.” You may find my little book *The Road to Religious Reality* useful here. But we all face a massive creative effort here in inventing dicey slices of futurology on the basis of his slim heuristic suggestions. So, in this text of mine you are finding, perhaps, more discouragement than encouragement when you think of writing into the future about future global care.

³⁴ This is a nudge towards a deepening of the shift from Ranke to Burckhardt. The facts of history include the molecular gasping for circumincessional patterning: the gasping leaps with the emergence of the human spirit, a spirit that is within a cling-on cloaking device.

³⁵ See note 38 below.

one person's offer,³⁶ is people interested in doing an *Assembly* etc. of the story of Lonergan's ongoing meaning, say, for the past forty or fifty or sixty years. This is a risky venture, but what I would like to see emerging by July 25th of 2014 is a happy twist at the end of the tale, a story to be told in future decades and centuries of the emergence of an effective paradigm shift in actual global caring.

So we think of the thematic turn to the future represented by the forward specialties. But first there is an important point to be made, or repeated,³⁷ in this enlightening context. It is that the thematic turn to the future is a component in "The Structure of Dialectic": one of Lonergan's really brilliant moves. The move is there in the project I call *The 1833 Overture*. So, if you are having your humble shot at positioning yourself, bear that task in mind.

A heuristic of the future emerges from the runners in Dialectic, a baton to hand on to FS₅ runners who face forward and move forward. But, you may muse, what do these folk add to the hand-on? They add [a] fantasy and [b] acceleration of the cycling. Fantasy is the more difficult task, but at this stage of our struggle it is made easier by having and cherishing that focus as it is fermenting through this entire present project of leaning towards July 2014. Whether we go large scale or home in on 2014, **THIS** is worth recycling, but now THIS 'Cauls', in the hearts of those who aspire to be foundational futurologists, for the thematic word.³⁸ Here, summary is impossible: we are in the zone of the summary already presented in the little book *The Road to Religious Reality*.³⁹ The thematic word summarily expressed in that little book is gradually found within one's minding to be a fuller **W₃**,⁴⁰ "a fresh front view, the quite new telling of the old story."⁴¹ It is "integrated in the sublated genetic systematics of all such theses through the ages."⁴²

But, as my note 40 (or really note 23!) to **W₃** points out, this is way too heavy for a beginning. Still, as with the simple **W₃**, one reaches as a beginner for the broad hints given by symbols and

³⁶ James Duffy has kindly undertaken to bring forth his view of the story for the Vancouver Conference. He has the wonderfully discomfoting context of *FuSe* 14B, written by Patrick Brown, "Some Notes on the Development of *Method*, Page 250" (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/fuse-14b.pdf>).

³⁷ I made the point significantly in section [1], page 3, of Q/A 30, "The Trinity in History" (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/qa-21.pdf>) where the topic is Robert Doran's suggestion, in his book of that title, of a ninth functional specialty.

³⁸ This is the enormously complex quest raised by Fred Crowe's book, *Theology of the Christian Word*: see Q/A 48, "Beyond Crowe's Theology of the Christian Word" (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/qa-39.pdf>).

³⁹ The driving force of the effort there was solving simultaneously the problem of the meaning of *Comparison on Method in Theology* page 250, and finding the place for the treatise on the Mystical Body that Lonergan puzzled over in *Insight* 763-4.

⁴⁰ See note 23 above.

⁴¹ *The Road to Religious Reality*, 38.

⁴² *Ibid.*

by simple analogies, like the growth of sunflower seed, tadpole, or pup. So, the foundational view that we are all reaching for is summarily and heuristically expressed as FS + UV + GS.⁴³ Let's leave that, not discouraged but expectant, like a first-year physics student can be thrilled with the unknowns of quantum field theory, the equations of Einstein or Schrödinger.

The previous paragraph expresses the vital heart of our enterprise, the core of the ethos that must emerge if we are to climb beyond the present commonsense messing. I am throwing you back to a fresh read of the first four paragraphs of the first chapter of *Method*. Yes, the "third wayis difficult and laborious,"⁴⁴ it "is elitist."⁴⁵ No serious student of first year physics thinks otherwise of the stuff ahead in the undergraduate and graduate years. Is it not obvious? No: it is not, to a theology settled in an "academic discipline" that sophisticates its content by the abundance of opinions. In physics opinions occur only at the front edge or in pop-talk. And, alas, we bring, in our bones and nerves, that low-grade view of talk of God and Their world to our gatherings, to our readings. Can we rise, in Vancouver, to the humility of a Faraday pattering with currents and magnets, with Maxwell's equations still in the future? But we have had our Maxwell, with his positional equations, and he has been brutally ignored.

Before we go on to the possibility of you, questioner and present reader, doing something towards seeding elements in the last three specialties, it is as well to read on from the text to which I leaped in my present text and notes from page 3 to page 351, the text of *Method* at that page. Here is what our Maxwell goes on to say to an audience that was not listening then, is not listening now.

If one does not attain, on the level of one's age, an understanding of the religious realities in which one believes, one will be simply at the mercy of the psychologists, the sociologists, the philosophers, that will not hesitate to tell believers what it really is in which they believe. Finally, systematic theology is irrelevant if it does not provide the basis for the eighth functional specialty, communications. But to communicate one must understand what one has to communicate. No repetition of formulas can take the place of understanding. For it is understanding alone that can say what it grasps in any of the manners demanded by the almost endless series of different audiences.⁴⁶

So, what might you do if you are interested in having a shot at a forward specialty?

⁴³ Recall note 23 above. The topic is discussed in a centrally relevant context in *FuSe* 10, "Contexts of Functional Interpretation" (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/fuse-10.pdf>). The title of Section 3 there is "FS + UV + GS".

⁴⁴ *Method in Theology*, 3.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 351.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* An echo of what he wrote 28 years earlier, *Insight* 755, about breathlessness. You may find it useful to venture into my mid-1980s effort to come to grips with the relation of Genetic Systematics and local communications: "Systematics, Communications, Actual Contexts," available now as Chapter 7 of *ChRiSt in History* (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/christinhistory.html>).

While the task is discouraging, it seems to me that shots at the four forward specialties would help us find our way. I already mentioned the two tasks of the fifth specialty: fantasy and acceleration of the dynamic and mentioned that fantasy was the more difficult task. It is a matter of a molecular battle against our being possessed by an axial superego,⁴⁷ a possession that weaves theology firmly into the plausibility patterns of the neuromolecular staleness of general bias. Yet, is not this fantasy-sentence a main believable element in this drive? And should some people, with such a bent, not antigravitate into such fantasy in and for themselves? A risky business, that carries forwards personally from “the view that would result from developing”⁴⁸ to one’s own pilgrim practice of that view. I am not going to talk here of the patterns of dynamic acceleration, but you can see, can you not, that the suggested fantasy here is a leaning forward psychically into expectations of discomforting changes of pace and of face?

What of the last three specialties?

My helpful analogy here is of the pet-lover taking the dog – pick your favorite dog-image and go along with me in fantasy – to the vet. It is a very realistic analogy, especially if we think of a seriously competent vet. That is why I found the show *House*⁴⁹ useful here: there are a group of experts around a sick patient. I won’t develop that parallel further in this essay, but it is not beyond useful fancy regarding our efforts here or in Vancouver, July 2014. We definitely have a sick puppy to care for: and there are no competent vets! Recall my question in previous Q/As “who’s running this street?”⁵⁰ Try out the frightening question, “who’s running **this** Church?” **This**, put in boldface, reminds you of talk of **this** in “**this** deserves recycling” and gives a startling basis of fantasy regarding Jesus’s project of two thousand years ago. Obviously the Blessed Trinity are running the Christian Church, but the human tending of the mustard plant over past millennia leaves “some third way difficult and laborious”⁵¹ to be desired. Have I given you now a freshening nudge regarding lifting talk of the churches from chapter 14 to Chapter 1 of

⁴⁷ I discussed this first in *Humus* 2, “*Vis Cogitativa*: Contemporary Defective Patterns of Anticipation” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/humus-02.pdf>). I would ask you, as I wind down winding you up, to recall note 4 above. In note 20 I pointed to the psychic lift possible through song-poems. Here I think of Amy Winehouse’s great tragic performances of her song “Rehab”: “They tried to make me go to rehab: I said ‘no, no, no.’” Part of your problem may be the one expressed in that song, “My daddy thinks I’m fine.” Are you being guided neurochemically by some old-style theological daddy comfy in the chemistry of an alchemical “academic discipline”? *Method in Theology*, 3: last line.

⁴⁸ *Method in Theology*, 250, line 26.

⁴⁹ “I think myself here of the television program *House* in which the crazy doctor and his team have a shared mastery of e.g. cranial neurochemical dynamics, and they push for a new twist.” *The Road to Religious Reality*, 32.

⁵⁰ The question is the mood of the walkabout essay, *Quodlibet* 8, “The Dialectic of My Town, *Ma Vlast*” (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/quod-08.pdf>).

⁵¹ *Method in Theology*, 4.

*Method?*⁵² Or a nudge towards a renewed puzzling about Pope Francis's talk of economics and finance?⁵³ You might, then, skip attempting a contribution to FS₆ or FS₇ for the present and home in on what I call backfiring:⁵⁴ you are only a pet owner, but you can sniff out veterinary stupidity. I won't enlarge on this here: best leave it to your imaginations and your further questions. I will only note that, from what I have been saying, effective contributions to FS₈ or indeed to its effective output C₉ are part of the "difficult and laborious."

I conclude by going back to the title I gave this question," McShane's Low-class Functional Research," and the puzzling that relates to it. Whatever about the strange broad claim of the title, you may puzzle over the question, "Does this Answer 53 qualify for any of the functional specialties?" Does it fit in even with a C₉ effort? It was difficult and laborious but is it effective?

⁵² Q/A 44, "An Added Context for Method chapter 1" (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/qa-35.pdf>).

⁵³ Quoted on pages 3-5 of the previous Q/A 52 "Focus on concrete results" (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/qa-43.pdf>).

⁵⁴ Best just repeat note 15 of the previous Q/A 52 "Focus on concrete results" at page 6: "'Backfire' is a word used previously with a broader meaning than gun-response. I used it in introducing the possibilities opened up by SGEME. See Fusion 9 "Functional Marketeers in Economics" (available at <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/fusion-09.pdf>). Serious practicality, even raised as a commonsense issue, should backfire into the need for larger zones of thinking. How large? Eventually to seven other functionally collaborating groups. You get a sniff of the whole dynamic from my Archival essay, 'Arriving in Cosmopolis' (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/archive8.pdf>)."