

QQ.17, 18, 19.

17: "A Basis of Moving Forward"; 18: A new context for "obediential potency"; 19: "the future ethos of doing theses".

Q.17 (February 8<sup>th</sup>: anonymous). Viewing this Q/A effort from an interested but uninformed position (I don't then claim that my position is Lonergan's position!) I really don't see much difference, beyond the mention of functional talk as a topic, between this site and other Lonergan discussion sites. Of course, there is the problem of functional specialization being, well, a nice inoperable idea, or, as some of my colleagues consider it, a useful filing system. Can you say, in some way, where this is going? Yes, I know you said in Q/A 13 that you **cannot** say. But are there not some simple leads-in for the interested outsider?

A.17. This is a good question, even for those who have been actively interested in functional collaboration for some years e.g. the seminar members, who venturing along parallel to the FuSe Essays. Functional collaboration is very hard to figure out: it involves a new set of differentiations, and an old differentiation that is foreign to theology. A first "conversion" required here is the conversion to effectively admitting that it "is very hard to figure out". The hardness brings in the old differentiation foreign to theology: the lift, climb, battle, to theory. Being "bitten by theory" (CWL, 6: 155; see also 121) Lonergan is quite harsh here and in other places e.g. that Questionnaire on Philosophy, CWL 17, 358: "one just drifts through life – that is just does and says and thinks what everyone else is doing and saying and thinking, and everyone else is drifting too." The lack of theoretic bite, and the drifting a reality of Lonergan studies – conferences, theses, publication, and yes, the other discussion sites. In this it is no different from the theology in general who "have to be content if their subject is included in a list not of sciences but of academic disciplines" (this from the bottom of the first page of *Method*). Lonergan envisaged a global science giving gradually a global control of meaning even in the reality of the absolutely supernatural. He viewed a move to "cumulative and progressive results" (the next page). One is led to wonder whether Lonergan disciples have seriously read these two pages. The answer, I suggest, is NO: because serious reading is a matter of having been bitten by theory. Still I suggest it worthwhile to pause, even in semi-seriousness, over the empirical data of the past fifty years of Lonergan studies: search for the cumulative and progressive results. The results to hand certainly are not results worthy of the suffering climb of Lonergan towards the redemption of theology. Your colleagues who talk of filing systems are drifters and dodgers. It would be nice, though, if they made such claims non-anonymously on this or any site.

But I go on too long. YET not long enough. I see no way of being serious about this business of functional collaboration without tackling the ten essays, FuSes 0 – 9, on the website. The essays are on functional research but they open up quite precise strategies of breaking away from drifting. Our efforts on this site too are varieties of driftings, but with the drift of struggling beginnings. Those ten FuSe essays could give us a solid initial focus. They represent a way of breaking from the drifting. But the way has to have the bite of theory, of serious puzzling. And the way has to become outspoken, communally admitted: this is where there is bound to be discomfort and indeed resentment. The admission into fact, weaving into an admission into drifter-consciousness, may take a decade, or five hundred years. Anyway, there you have it: my simple lead in!!

Q. 18 (February 8<sup>th</sup>: Bill Zanardi) Your references to Aquinas' "obediential potency" got me thinking about both neural demands and the inner norms (Be attentive....) that, I think, are Lonergan's transposed meaning of "natural law." By extension is the medieval discussion of the "natural desire to 'see' God" transposable to a sequence of demands that specify how finality is to be understood in

chemical, organic, psychological (etc.) forms constitutive of our existing? If so, "obediential" is a far less puzzling term -- a potential to cooperate with finality or with our spontaneous reachings that are preconscious, conscious and reflective responses to spontaneous demands. Am I anywhere near Aquinas' meaning?

...a potential to cooperate with finality or with our spontaneous reachings that are preconscious, conscious and reflective responses to spontaneous demands.

A. 18. This is magnificently suggestive stuff. And the final question raises marvelous further questions. Before I head into the stuff, I wish us to pause over what we are doing.

Note, therefore, that this pause is one of our pre-third stage theology. In a developed GEM 141 theology there is a concomitance of pause, paws on, subject and object. Realistically, on the front line this is regularly staggered and indeed staggering: as we may see in our rambles here.

Next note that Bill identifies himself - at least vaguely - in the final question, as an interpreter, as venturing into the relatively un-trod zone of functional interpretation. And I claim now that he is addressing me as working in FS5: so our conversation is  $C_{25}$ , in the usual matrix heuristic of the cycle (See the diagram of  $C_{ij}$  in *A Brief History of Tongue*). I use the word *usual* here very deliberately and I suppose humorously. It will be **usual** at a later stage of functional collaboration, just as the named heuristic (see *Fuse 10*, section 4), "FS + UV + GS" will be usual to even undergraduate theologians -- indeed to undergraduate thinkers in general.

Now let us think of Bill's thoughts here as a sort of parallel with John Damascene's thinking out post-Aristotelian ethics (see *Lack in the Beingstalk*, chapter one, on this). Bill is grappling with Thomas' meaning, but in a creative fashion that might be called an over-reach. Aquinas, for all his creativity regarding obediential potency, was focused on intellect. (The classic stuff on this is in CWL 19, 131-163: Lonergan, "On Supernatural Being"). I'm skimming past into this stuff here, except to draw attention to the clear meaning of obediential as involving the extrinsic divine cause, "a mystery" (CWL 19, 153, line 2), open to musings re "appropriateness" (Ibid., line 9).

Now Bill, who is influenced by his previous work and his heuristics, e.g.  $W_3$ , especially enlarged by  $W_{3T}$ , and thus by his contemporary thinking of the "object" (MIT, 156) is pushing Aquinas' meaning. "Am I anywhere near Aquinas' meaning?" Yes, but not in a way that starts putting together the genetically structured hold on Aquinas' meaning that we need for good empirical cumulative results, including the potency of the last functional specialty, first for students, and then for the faithful. (Chapters 11-14 of *The Road to Religious Reality* are a help here).

I am raising a host of methodological questions here, that lurk in the question, What is functional collaboration, especially when it is focused (yes, in the decades ahead!) on the sublation of the second paragraph of the second canon of hermeneutics.

But now I risk -- that is literally my function -- foundational reaching on the lines pushed by Bill: "got me thinking about both neural demands and...." And now throw in "Finality Love Marriage" as another begetting of thinking. How far does obediential reach? Think of humble oxygen (FLM, ) promoted to enter the lungs of Jesus or the water of the river Jordan. Think of the last lines of *Insight 722*, and the Clasp that is ....??? the Spirit hovering over finitude in the genesis of -- do pause here -- a thoroughly absolute supernatural finitude. Think more deeply of energy's calling in the big bang, cauling towards, not the big crunch of some cosmologists, but the Big Clasp, the Big Embrace. So, alas, Bill you are .... reaching beyond Aquinas. But yes, you knew that.... your questions are related to the more complex issue of transposability. There are lots of other points to consider but I'll hold to two. [1] careful re 'cooperate': check CWL 19: we are dealing with absolutely supernatural goings-on, something which requires unlimited contemplative ingestion. [2] which unlimited challenge leads me to a more general point for the broader audience: following up this is not easy... even if you were right up to scratch, elite (Method, 351) it is still as if as if Faraday were given stray clues to Maxwell's equations. In a later

luminous culture, the difference between having a heuristic possibility named and getting to grips with it will be personally effective, especially in the Tower community.

Q.19 (February 10<sup>th</sup>: Agnes GoWoon Kim, Author of M.A.Thesis, *A Critical Discourse Analysis of Energy-related Contents in National Textbooks of China, Japan, and Korea*.) I am interested in your view of the locating of my work in the perspective of functional talk and collaboration.

A. 19. Obviously, I cannot go into details here: I keep those for leisured private conversation with Agnes.

First, therefore, I would note that the thesis is a paradigm for transitions to functional talk, Fitting in with the new heuristic bent, “this is worth cycling and recycling” (See Posthumous 1, the concluding pointers from Halifax Conference 2012, or Q/A 7 above, “X deserves Passing on”) or more simply – in so far as one does not want to draw the attention of an ignorant or opposed director – “this is a worthwhile interest”. When one is faced with thesis-writing etc, one needs to shuffle round – think of Lonergan chatting with Boyer - to find some topic “of progress”. Agnes has a winner here. She moves, in the Abstract, from concern for ecology to “questions that arise of how energy-related texts are written” and concludes (see the Abstract), “the present study will hopefully contribute to the process of questioning the role of current education systems.” This brings us to the key paradigmatic ethos that would echo and slowly establish Lonergan’s concerns: [a] a realistic rowdy negation of the hopefulness, a negation spelled out in the end of chapter 7 of *Insight*, with its insistence of the need for a new culture called Cosmopolis; [b] the lift of hope expressed in *Insight* chapter 20, (747), lifted realistically through a shift in the statistics of success (*Insight*, 144), and the hope later specified in *Method* as functional talk. Agnes cannot enter into that zone in her academic context, but it is surely not beyond the reach of a Lonergan inspired thesis?

The point I am making is the need for the bubbling up in Lonergan studies of a coupled ethic/ ethos: [1] we cannot go on realistically with effete theses, essays, conferences; [2] the way forward is to be rooted in the hard-won discovery of Lonergan that we are all dodging. Like Agnes’ thesis, but without her excuse, Lonergan meetings and theses must be considered way off the mark if they claim open-eyedly, “the present study will hopefully contribute to the process of questioning the role of current education systems.” Present Lonerganism contributes little to either change or hope. So, the ethos must be laboriously cultivated that “hope has to advance from a generic reinforcement .... to an adapted and specialized auxiliary ever ready to offset” (*Insight*, 747) e.g. in Agnes’ case, (see thesis, pp. 90-95) the control of interested powers of education regarding energy. Obviously, I am on my old track re these-bents, but more broadly I am interested in raising consciousness in Lonerganism and in the broader culture of “the need for establishing a separate educational discipline of energy.” (Quoted by Agnes on p.4, from T.C.Kandal and H.P. Garg, *Applied Energy*, 1999). This need, and indeed its countering by the powers, will generate functional talk. When are the Lonergan people going to notice their buried treasure? [Please tell them of my annoying appeal! And even remind them that energy is prime potency primed for eschatological negentropy through the layered infoldings lurking in **W<sub>3</sub>**!]