

THE “KARL JASPERS FORUM” UPDATE 35 (SEPT. 25, 2007)—WILLIAM BYERS,
A “BERNARD LONERGAN, S.J., FORUM” SATIRE, PLUS: HERBERT VS. QKD

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1. Introduction: First, Perhaps it needs repeating that I work alone and do not covertly collaborate or collude with others. There is no gang-like mentality attempting to steer events. However, reacting to maneuverings that tend to corral herds can be expected. Second; to make a point about misusing Jaspers, let’s reflect on this: I would consider a blog entitled “The Bernard Lonergan S.J. Forum” to be net-unethical if I used it to foster the *Existenz* philosophy of Karl Jaspers without being fair to Lonergan...et al (i.e., postmodernists). That seems like a normal and considerate position. It also seems normal to protest the use of a “Karl Jaspers Forum”, Herbert’s blog, to promote a uniformed cleric. The promoting can be accomplished by using a uniformed religious personage (priest) to bolster an individualist like Jaspers, bolster him to the point where he is perceived publicly as worthy to be compared to the priesthood and valued because of that elevation by religionists on a mission. The talk about Lonergan here can appear groundless. Let’s look at what appears an apparition, the emergence of Bernard Lonergan out of the blue in this “Karl Jaspers Forum” UPDATE 35.

2. The Byers-Lonergan connection—It is a fact that in Target Article 98 William Byers does not make reference to Bernard Lonergan. My mentioning Lonergan is justified by the fact that Jaspers is not mentioned nor found in his book’s bibliography—according to Herbert. Target Article 98 is a Chapter from Byers’ book. So it is Herbert that introduces that omission factor using the personage of Mr. Byers (William). That is my reason for making a Lonergan connection; it is as fair as William allowing his book to be represented in the name of Jaspers. Without a Jaspers’ relevance as a guidepost on a Jaspers centered blog, one is permitted to predict that an eventual explicit and at least implicit Lonergan/Jaspers connection is within the arena of reason—as the following paragraphs will attempt to show. (See item 6 below too for more on the Byers-Lonergan connection.)

(3. An Aside: Herbert's special effort--For future possible use one Byers' bibliographical reference is noteworthy. That is the reference to Herbert's "Karl Jaspers Forum" via William's Book's reference to Glasersfeld's work in the bibliography. Herbert makes a special effort to include the whole-book bibliography rather than limiting it to the one quoted-chapter's footnote references. That special effort assures recognition for Glasersfeld, but most importantly, via Glaserfeld, assures recognition for Herbert's blog--and the influential name of Jaspers in Herbert's masthead. The blog is included in the bibliography that Herbert posted. In fairness to William, one must wonder whether Herbert added to the bibliography the words "reprinted on the Karl Jaspers Forum" or words to that effect. If that was in William's original bibliography, then that might explain in part why he agreed to the posting of TA 98. He may have felt obligated by coercion, i.e., if he had indeed mentioned the blog, he could hardly refuse the request for posting.

3.1. Of course there is an additional possible reason: William and Publisher, though not needing belated peer critics (unless they plan a revised edition) felt the Chapter had enough pop-academia appeal to increase the book's marketing potential. Pop-appeal means that somewhere in the book an author must be modern enough to assure the readers that if there is openness to metamath and a transparency regarding randomness, the author must also assure that he is still into positivism. That assurance is meant to avoid being associated with intelligent designism. The only way to do that is by the use of the "e" word. It's like using turf-profanity to blend in to avoid being picked on. For example, though Herbert does not use the word "e" word in C3 he identifies with pop-lingo (in <5>) where he refers to "humans" and "non-verbal primates"—sarcasm: unless he meant Church Primates that have taken a vow of silence. What Herbert is saying is that the emergent use of language is the point of the "e" transition and he wants to use language in a new way to display "e" rank and leave bigger constructivist territorial markings. That's why, too, elsewhere markings are left in the theological arena where he challenges "Vatican Bishops" and the "Papacy" to show how, if "evolution" is a given, one is to take an ontological leap of faith—but he puts it more ambiguously.)

4. Byers is very impressive until the mutational "e" word--My main purpose here is not to critique in detail William's Chapter but rather to preclude an easily predicted convergence on the horizon that unless pointed at will surely be unavoidable and overbearing. The medium for the convergence could easily become the misnomered "Karl Jaspers Forum". So only in a secondary sense is a critique offered and then only as a deterrent. Meanwhile watch how the "e" ontology short circuits clear thinking:

4.1. A cursory review of the Chapter (TA98) shows that William seems to encompass mathematical limits and shows a real enough encompassing dependency on metamath-ontology—but without the vertical direction that is inherit in Jaspers' periechontological comprehensiveness (individual inspiration in the historical context). From this encompassing awareness of limits and the encompassing by an admitted mystery too, William makes a case for randomness as an integral process in Being. Out of randomness or chance William makes a fall-in-line argument for whatever is popular through the use

of the “e” word (“evolution”). It includes the use of modernity’s pop-lingo--the profane now made venerable. In-line because getting one’s ducks, plants, and humans in a row assures compliance with Catholic “emergent probability”, i.e., a dogmatism but yet adaptable enough to meet and leap on modern forces.

4.2. A positive critique seems appropriate here; that, even random expressions at the boundary of math-limits is welcomed in view of Francis Collin’s “evolutionary” deism. He leaps to deism off a microscopic trig in the plasma of a presumptuous phylogenetic DNA tree. He finds in DNA mathematically convincing grounds for assuming an “evolutionist” stance because of a 98.4 math equation, while using the 1.6 meta-equation as an apologetic for God. Francis Collins is director of the National Human Genome Research Institute. He has stepped out of bounds in that capacity at taxpayers’ costs.

4.3. William’s essay deteriorates immediately in [83] where “evolution” is justified on “boring” grounds. Life would be boring without it he says. The subjective inclination for a variety of excitable experiences becomes an objective argument in the quest for truth. The intellectual decay continues in [93] where “evolution” is one of several “great scientific theories”. Here less boring and nominalism converge. Here he, in effect, says unless we know where we came from we cannot know who we are and the beauty of the search is the search itself so long as we know our origin. I say, knowing our origin is indeed the greatest theory. The explication is that we must be somebody determinable to be survivors. It is identical to his question “Why then do some mutations survive and others disappear?”[94] The nervy but incorrect answer is: because we know how we came to be, and the transparent answer is: because (a form of been caused). The proneness to revert to forming nominal questions is unworthy of a worthy profession. The question itself amounts to a copout. This is where Jaspers steps in:

4.4. Jaspers position is: “One can no longer investigate hereditary units the absence of which makes life impossible” (512 GP). It can also be said that one cannot investigate mutations that are no longer mutations but of such substance as to be not classifiable as mutations but yet distinguishes humankind taxonomically—my view. In item [97] William is, in effect, saying that it is conceivable that the brain developed first, then the mind, and then the brain’s mind conjures everything; it is conceivable, to William, that the brain’s mind’s creativity is really all there is to the “c” word (creation) or “intelligent design”. I suggest that conceivability here is one of convenience to appease the “e” side of the historical “great” controversy and nominalize the “c” side as one might expect from one now positioned in Concordia rather than Lonergan College (see item 6). In item [98] the deterioration in thought reached skid-row bottom (in-depth certitude) where theory bottoms out and is no longer questionable for there he no longer speaks in terms of theory. Rather, it is presumed that “evolutionary events” are real, and out of complexity he comes to simplistic terms with it. He concludes with an “in fact”, i.e. in fact there is intelligence and “evolution” but “evolution” is given a preeminent ranking in the naming and classifying process. Classical “evolution” is first in sequence and “evolution through intelligence” second and subsequent. Intelligence potential in reality becomes least and last in sequence. That is one thing he must make clear to sell his book for without coming across as an “e” personage his image would suffer--as would Lonergan’s. Of course that

depends on whether I am right that William is caught up in the process of crooning an ersatz-Thomas from the celibacy Thomas helped make doctrinaire—one of those “great ideas” gone bad to the point of Catholicity’s multi-faceted state of bankruptcy.

5. What is unfortunate is William lack of reference to Jaspers, but that can be made intelligible. The omission could be but a prelude to what he is qualified to try. Below let’s see what happens through a little random research. Consider this scenario below:

6. About William Byers—He served as principal of Lonergan College (named in honor of Bernard Lonergan, “S.J”). He had a long association with Lonergan. The Jesuit had great influence on William. Unlike Jaspers’ emphasis on the individual (e.g. Great Philosophers), for Lonergan “it is...the group that transforms culture” (Boston College, Lonergan Institute Home Page quote—note there is also now, not surprisingly, a Lonergan Institute at Boston College—a significant matter for the North American Karl Jaspers Society). The emphasis on group influence is the essence of postmodernity. For the protestant inclined Jaspers the hope for humankind is each individuals’ conversion. The conversion of each individual is emphasized rather than the good standing within a group that is believed to push culture along though being big and big enough to be deserving of “Big Bang” miraculous revelations to the clerically dressed when the group’s force diminishes (even a Catholic priest is now being credited as the in-fact father of the “fact” of the “Big Bang”—see Lemaitre and Labib Kobti on internet.)

7. Bernard Lonergan, the Jesuit neo-Thomist, seems to be an answer to a Catholic felt need for an updated Aquinas. Jaspers has shattered any hope in Heidegger as the Thomistic substitute. Any other candidate for philosophical sainthood must be made equal to Jaspers and then propagated as superior to Jaspers. The goal means shoving Jaspers into the background mainly through omission or crowding him out.

7.1. Target Article 98, William’s excerpted Chapter, could be a part of that process of philosophical deification of Lonergan. The postmodernity influence is obvious in the Lonergan emphasis on groupism and the implication that to think individually and independently is inherently selfish—hence the overuse of the word “hubris” as attributable to the protestant reformation which is propagated as belonging to postmodernist’s less “evolved” modernists. Postmodernity emphasizes that if one is developed one has sacrificed personal identity and appropriated fitting-in attitude—a general consistency principle gone bad. If one has been convinced that one’s god is merely conjured, then loving God and neighbor as self becomes dated and one must yield to an “evolved” system for information dispensed by uniformed and undercover entities.

8. The prediction to avoid the coming emergent event--One can predict, but with only some probability, that William will soon be making a Lonergan/Jaspers comparison. Admittedly that prediction includes some unavoidable paranoia, but it is an informed paranoia, i.e. it is Jesuit-conduct justified, for that Order has a role to play for their Church and play it well with personal Jesuit sacrifice—too. The motto that truth cannot contradict truth amounts to more defense of their Church than truth.

9. Gregory Walters' KJ and The Roll of 'Conversion' in the Nuclear Age has a footnote that is insightful. Here is an interesting bit of randomness. Let me grab a book here: Oh, here is one, now let me allow the book to fall open. Let's see what I've put my random finger on—end of parody. Gregory says “A comparison of Lonergan and Jaspers and the centrality of human change or ‘conversion’ for both thinkers ought to be pursued in another context.” (p. 149) Though it's doubtful that Gregory had Herbert's blog in mind, nevertheless my guess is that Herbert's blog is designed to be part of a “context” Gregory envisioned. It's coming and exploiting Jaspers in the process. The reason for that guess is that Herbert has extraordinary control and enough intelligent-design potential and takes initiatives in arranging contributors. Here is another probability-random guess: Herbert may even have attempted to recruit others like he did William and “judge” David Hodgson. True, Herbert may be influenced without his greater awareness potential engaged. Note: This paragraph is constructed to show there is an informed paranoia, that it can result from covert intellectualizing. Jesuit game playing can result in a paranoiac pandemic (just as a form of schizophrenia can run in families when conceptual-verbal intimate game playing prevails).

9.1. Lonergan's work on emergent probability is what William is or was probably expected to herald through the likes of TA98, and can result in making the way straight for the new Thomas. It being a Chapter from his book, it is not in need of prepublication critiquing, as mentioned in item 3 above. So one purpose of the TA might be to propagate not so much truth as a personage such as Lonergan--and there is a lot of truth and deceptive use of truth in William's posted Chapter. I mean William must certainly be familiar enough with Jaspers (due to 8 years of specializing in teaching the philosophers while at Lonergan College) to respond to ten Commentators and to do so making references to Jaspers via Lonergan. Responses that included a comparison of Lonergan and Jaspers could not easily be criticized for not mentioning Jaspers. After all Jaspers once remarked on how dedicated Jesuits were, thereby opening a window of opportunity for leaping. If there is no such materialization of a Jaspers/Lonergan comparison now or hereafter, i.e., after this prediction, then maybe the prediction will have accomplished what predictive words (informed paranoia) about travesties are meant to avoid.

10. Breaking the Ten Commentators Commandment—It will be interesting to see how Herbert has managed to comply with his own standard for authors of Target Articles. One can wonder if and who the ten commentators are that Herbert and/or William have arranged to be commentators on Target Article 98.

11. Addendum—The HHS (Herbert Hubris Syndrome): Much has been posted in the last several weeks that ought to be addressed but I have to be selective. This general update and critique will have to suffice for now.

11.1. Herbert is manifesting a developing conscientiousness with regard to dating accountability after posting the “Judge's” Target Article 97. Herbert ought to be contrite, for; out of character he does not show a date when he received the article but only the posted date. It is a phenomenon that stands out and says something. In his TA97 Commentary 3 to David Hodgson, Herbert adds to the heading the parenthetical

statement that “(Some later additions are in {brackets}.)” He is referring to adding comments after the two assigned dates he shows for postings, one being the date he received the to-be-posted item (in this case the date he received his construction by himself to himself), and the assigned date of posting.

11.2. Thus, a judge-enhanced need for handling the whole truth and nothing less results in better accounting, for the need is due to Herbert’s advantageous editorial opportunity at selection and making his Comments, Responses, and Target Articles. It comes across as the result of a radical constructivist’s scheme. And he does not have to give credit for his “great ideas” but can stake a hubris sort of claim for authenticity. I mean as editor in chief he has a manipulative advantage over other contributors. Moreover, in seeking out a judge to speak authoritatively about “e” ontology (incidentally including determinism and indeterminism), there might be reluctance for commentators to risk a criticism that might be considered slander if such resulted in a deficit in book sales. Thus, the hazards of blogging on the world wide Internet in this information age.

11.3. Those {}-brackets are used in Herbert’s final section under the C3 heading: NOTES, REFERENCE, QUOTATIONS. His use of “{}” here shows there is some Herbert Müller-Ulrich Mohrhoff mutual sharing of information behind the public blog scene. It also manifests an ingratiating sort of backslapping and reciprocal steering (determining process) under the name of a supposedly outdated Karl Jaspers. Cultivating ground for mutuality and reciprocity is accomplished by beginning and ending his Comment by stating his agreements with the conclusions of “judge” David Hodgson, Ulrich Mohrhoff, and Serge Patlavsky. The extensive body of the Comment though is an effort to regain recognition and talk about his epistemic formulae.

11.4. The Herbert Hubris manifests itself because he has found new contributors; one from Australia and one from India. For example, to propagate Herbert’s epistemological formulae (negative mind-independent reality and zero derivation, i.e., MIR and 0-D) is repeated with the frequency not unlike the effectiveness of using a cascade-transition in calcium atoms. If repeated often enough it’s probable that some will be convinced of something.

11.5. Herbert, to accomplish this didactic maneuver, attempts to show that though he humbly assures (David Hodgson and Ulrich Mohrhoff) that he is not a quantum physicist, he can still be considered an epistemological expert on particle physics, and that his Formulae also fits all classifications of science. He even applies it theologically.

11.6. Herbert’s tenacious nominal-formulae—But, again most importantly, what is at stake is the overview that Jaspers can be ignored now due to modernity’s new quantum discoveries. Herbert seems to be caught up in the effort to portray Jaspers as dated. Herbert’s blog participates, intentionally or not, in that movement and serves to make Jaspers obsolete as a psychopathologist and that justifies posting anything Herbert deems valuable and amenable to propagating his formulae—and delimiting, through omissions, Jaspers’ significance.

12. Herbert's use of EPR in the face of QKD--The attempt to portray Jaspers as dated and the attempt to expound no-reality independent of Herbert's (and his collective's) mind explains his effort to appropriate some new technology. He addresses the Alain Aspect experimentations regarding EPR (Einstein, Podolsky, Rosen) correlations and the quantum key distribution (QKD) and its potential use in the development of quantum information-transfer technology (See Walters' Human Rights in an Information Age, a Philosophical Analysis, about cryptography). Even if QKD can be demonstrated as useful (e.g. cryptography) for deterring terrorism, Herbert will continue to object to both nonlocality and locality if it means a leaning toward a reality independent of his mind and the minds of those involved in the postmodern mindset to distract from great inspirational ideas that have come historically from beyond.