

FuSe 11 Loneranism's Crippling Difficulties with Interpretation

Preface

This is the second essay of three connected with the Seminar on Functional Interpretation.

This Seminar, the second in the series of 25 seminars, began on April 27th, and after two weeks - it is now May 11th - is experiencing heavy weather. I did not expect it to be easy going: indeed, I had forecast that this would be the most difficult of the 25 seminars of 2011-2017. But from correspondence with my seminar members I find that it's goal seems to be quite beyond the group.

What was that goal? It is stated in the lengthy essay *Fuse 10*, written in March to give suitable warning. I would hope that the present essay reaches a wider audience and so I write here as if the other essay has not been read. Briefly then: the goal was to merge the two treatments of Interpretation, that of *Method* chapter 7 and that of *Insight* chapter 17, section 3.

I decided this morning that I should spell out in more detail my solution to the key problem of interpretation, one that I had sketched in a previous essay for some members of the seminar. I put that sketch, as it was written, in the second section here. Re-reading it, I was forced to the conclusion that it would take a mighty effort and perhaps two hundred pages of writing and diagrams to put into place a pedagogy of the solution. I do not exaggerate here: think of the number of pages I filled in the 41 *Field Nocturnes* that commented on that single glorious paragraph of *Insight* 489, "study of the organism," or the amount of paper covered by my reflections on *Method* page 250.¹

My audience is wider than the membership of the seminar, indeed my essay has

¹The two relevant series of essays are to be found on the usual website www.philipmcshane.ca. The first series consists of 8 essays, titled *SOFDAWARE*; the second lengthier series has the general title *Quodlibet*.

a global reach, but not in the present times. My hoped for present audience is the community of scholars who are engaged in Lonergan studies, and this poses a problem for me. As a matter of sad fact I have failed to catch the attention of most of that community in the past fifty years. There has been a recent change, manifest in the interest that the projected series of seminars has generated, but there is, among the generation of Lonergan scholars after me, a prevailing opposition to my main concern that blocks a serious communal focus on that concern, a concern for functional collaboration.

But what is more distressing is that the opposition is silent. There is no serious expression claiming that my centering of attention on functional specialization is misguided, that my call for a slow and painful emergence of new differentiations of consciousness is unsound, that my view of its omnidisciplinary implementation as grounding effective global care is wildly impractical. In the face of that dodging of expressed opposition it seemed to me, these few days, that an expressed opposition to the way the Lonergan community goes about the task of interpretation - including the interpretation of Lonergan's documentation of functional specialization - would possibly stir up controversy. It brings to my mind Chesterton. At all events here I am, trying to force some articulate opposition to my views by expressing, in the following section, some of my distaste for the practices of interpretation that have prevailed in the past fifty years.

Why do I turn aside, seemingly, from our seminar on functional interpretation to this broader problem? Because the seminar lives in that Lonergan world, and to different degrees its conventions has a hold on the members views and imaginations. Further, because this most difficult challenge is at the heart of the present global challenge: to invent a science of metaphysics, a full omnidisciplinary cyclic systematics that would spin inwards, in the Tower of Able, the needed elite² and spin off those

²On elitism, see *Method in Theology* 350-1.

called to life outside the Tower, called to making the streets and sites radiant in their own ways.

If I were to sum up my present conviction, or state of illumination, it is as if I am reading now for the first time, what I read first in 1959: the brutal claim of Lonergan that comes after *The Sketch* in *Insight* Chapter 17:

“The foregoing sketch will call forth rather vigorous resistance The introduction into physics of tensor fields and eigen-functions raised a barrier” *The Sketch*, and its cousin canons,³ are still vigorously resisted, and so also is the lift that it might give to *Method in Theology*. What I am summarily rambling round in this first section is aspects of the present operative resistance. In the second section, I simply represent my compact invitation to face the task of that lift.

1. Lonergan’s Dodged Hermeneutics

I have written of this dodging before, in **Cantower 9**, “Position, Poosition, Proto-Possession,” when I drew attention to that comic Conference on the topic of Lonergan’s Hermeneutics where we never arrived at the topic.⁴

Here I must admit to a general puzzledom, calculated of course to annoy. Do my learned colleagues notice that this dodging seems the order of the day in Lonergan studies? Much of present study, when it is not the comparative stuff to which I come shortly, seems to hover round those very light-weight chapters 2, 3, and 4 of *Method*.⁵

³On the usual Website, there is a helpful essay that brings out the connection of *The Sketch* with the Canons of Hermeneutics: *ChrISt in History*, chapter 9: “Interpretation”.

⁴The proceedings of the conference appeared in *Lonergan’s Hermeneutics. Its Development and Application*, edited by Sean E. McEvenue and Ben F. Metee, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C., 1989. See the region of note 60 of Cantower 9.

⁵I have discussed the light-weight nature of the book *Method in Theology* in various places during the past decades. Appendix A, below, by David Oyler, elaborates on Lonergan’s own brief expression of the need to lift that first half of the book towards being a serious explanatory heuristic.

And when interpretation is attempted, as it must be when comparative work is undertaken, one rarely finds mention of even the elementary descriptive pointers of chapter 7. That would seem to be pretty obvious dodging of Lonergan's serious explanatory work, and if it has not been noticed as such till now, well, let this be a giving of notice.

But I wish to be as brief as possible, and so, necessarily blunt. Once again, I appeal to Fred Crowe's pointing in 1964, about there being need for a measure of bluntness.⁶ Can I pack it all into a blunt paragraph? Talk perhaps of the difficulty of reading Lonergan as Lonergan wrote of the difficulty of reading Aquinas? No: the time for such semi-academic talk is long past. The notice I give, even if only brushing across the psyches of Lonergan students, is a notice which thus shifts present performance into the context of unethical behaviour.

To interpret Lonergan and Jones - or whomever - does it not presuppose a perspective? What is that perspective in you? How comfortable are you with the Standard Model Lonergan described in the list of pages 286-7, especially if you add the discomfort of the paragraph in the middle of page 287,⁷ **and** add to the list a number (10), the challenge of functional collaboration?

Most of my Lonergan readers are people that have not taken seriously that great page of *Method*, page 250, but I am asking you now for your own version of the "taking a stand" that is noted there. Could I please have an answer in terms of a clear criticism

⁶F.E.Crowe, "The Exigent Mind", *Spirit as Inquiry*, Herder and Herder, 1964. The book is not to hand but as I recall the discussion is on page 28: he reflects bluntly on the need to reach painfully and slowly for the mind of Lonergan..

⁷See Appendix B below. These appendices originated in the planning of this seminar as including 7 attempts at interpretation. The attempts are both deliberately and necessarily modest: necessarily, because we are struggling towards the beginning of a science, with only the seeds of the Standard Model, FS + UV + GS; deliberately, because the smaller efforts gives us more room as a group for exercising our wits and imagination to see how these seven efforts might be improved by us. That issue of improvement emerges explicitly when, in Fuse 14, on functional history, 3 members tackle the task of sketching the functional history of the past seventy years.

of where I went wrong about Lonergan? Am I wrong in thinking him a genius way beyond us all, the inventor of the effective shift of philosophy from “pseudo-metaphysical myth-making”⁸ to precise global collaboration?

How wrong am I, and how wrong is he? And if he is that wrong why in heavens name are you studying Lonergan instead of Jones?

It seems good to me to halt abruptly here. Why are the present Lonerganesque approaches crippling Lonergan studies, crippling the efforts of seminar members, crippling the emergence of a new effective⁹ metaphysics? That is a question I invite you to puzzle over, but the answer cannot come without a more serious push of the parallels with successful sciences that Lonergan only hints at in the first pages of *Method*. Without pushing seriously there, the same old same mold strategies will continue to seem pleasantly appropriate to Lonergan studies, theses, courses, conferences, journals.

I invite the serious push in **FuSe 12**, “The Future of Functional Interpretation”, but only lightly, and from another angle. Meantime, there is the challenge of making some sense of my hints, below, towards a pedagogy of a single paragraph of chapter 17 of *Insight*.

2. Diagraming the Second Canon of Hermeneutics.

The topic is not in fact the whole canon, but the single paragraph that ends: “fuse into a single explanation.”¹⁰ There were two sections to begin with but now there is just one, with a final paragraph - still titled here, since the title “The Concrete Intelligibility

⁸*Insight*, 528.

⁹“It is quite legitimate to seek in the efficient cause of the science, that is the scientist, the reason why a science forms a unified whole.” (Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, 160, line 16). The discussion of Cosmopolis in *Insight* was an unsuccessful heuristic reach for integral efficiency.

¹⁰*Insight*, 610.

of Space and Time,"¹¹ is illuminating, pointing to *FuSes* 79 and 80, and towards the 25th unending seminar.

The writing below is basically metadoctrinal, as is the writing in *Insight*. Not recognizing that is one of the failures of Lonerganism. Doctrinal writing in any science is "work to be done"; quite different from good teaching-writing, which is illustrative sharing of doing work. So: the generation of the relevant diagrams is a set of quite tough exercises, as those of you who have worked on this question with me know by now!!

2.1. Prelude

I use the word *prelude* deliberately. I was going to begin with a quotation from the beginning of the last paragraph of chapter five of *Insight*: one of those Lonergan jokes or solitudinous self-addressings: "the answer is easily reached."¹² And so, indeed, I do begin now there. The topic in that section is "the concrete intelligibility of space and time" and it comes at the end of that heavy fifth chapter. When I read that chapter first in 1958 I had just finished a master's degree on the topic, and yet had no idea what he was talking about. I was not in the game, his game. If he was playing tennis, I could not hold the racket. There was required some massive pre-lude-ing, or preclusion (a rare variant of prelude), disillusionment by a lush lusioning. And my dictionary helps further here. *Prelude*? "Since the 19th century, any short romantic composition". Now isn't that a nice description of chapter 5 of *Insight*? Indeed, of *Insight*? One might say, "there is a new game in town", a romantic possibility. Polo? But I can't ride a horse!!

I have been speaking of chemicalization, and suggested thinking of a pet cat or dog as a genetically-sequence uber-active- patterning of patterns of patterns of hyper-

¹¹Borrowed from the last section of *Insight*, chapter 5, and extended to problems of the End Times.

¹²The beginning of the last paragraph of *Insight*, chapter 5. See the previous note.

active chemical compounds integrally and successfully and heterarchically operative within the fuller cosmic flow of pattern-seeking dispersedness. Thinking of? Well, I really mean, getting on the horse if you want to play Polo! Getting on, in, with, whatever. Thinking of the pet cat? Thinking of the gorilla in the myst which is your self, your primary pet. You are not, then, the rider on the horse of Plato: you are the horse, eyes turned front, and front hoofs giving you paws.

And indeed I would give you pause over the last word in the first sentence of that previous paragraph: "dispersedness". That last word's referent is, of course, lurking in that first word of *Insight's* first chapter: **In**. Climbing to its explanatory meaning, is, I would suggest, beyond the present second stage of meaning, as is the standard model that would read those first seventeen words of chapter one of *Insight*, to arrive at the chemical complex, **Renaissance**.

This is a hard saying about, round and about, those first few pages of *Method in Theology* that talk of science: we are a long way from serious reaching towards being a successful science. AND the book *Method in Theology* intimates that: the intimation is part of the task of the active interpreters in this seminar.

So, the chemicalization and the diagraming I am talking about is the end of a long road. I appeal to you to hold on to this notioned feeling as best you can, as I move along with something like Lonergan's comment on the concrete intelligibility of space and time, "the answer is easily reached". Furthermore, even if this is going to be true of that paragraph at the end of *Insight* 5 in some later competent community, it is in a much much later community that it is to be true - think of my handy date 9011 A.D. - of "the concrete intelligibility of space and time" that haunts the paragraph of our interest.

Would be easily reached? Indeed, reaching for a glimpse of the reaching for it involves, as we may sniff in the final two seminars, an eschatological lifting of Lonergan's powerful paragraph on words on page 578 of *Insight* into a spiraling circumincessional context, Context.

Of course, this vague pointing lifts our **all round reading** into a discomfoting

clash of our concrete myth with mystery, shifting our reading both of the first part of *Insight*, chapter 17, and our reading of the final term in the spread of words on *Method in Theology*, page 48. What, then, do we mean by *terminal value* in the context of “destiny”¹³? What is the fusion towards which dispersed finitude soars? Can it be that “the development of language fuses with the development of knowledge”¹⁴? Might there be a shockingly larger meaning to the conclusion of our selected paragraph: “fuse into a single explanation”, so that words are made fresh yet always only on the edge of a seamlessness of being? Let us paw over the concluding two sentences of that paragraph on words.¹⁵

“Prior to the explanatory conjugates, defined by their relations to one another, there are the experiential conjugates, that involve a triple correlation of classified experiences, classified contents of experience, and corresponding names. The being to be known as an intelligible unity differentiated by verifiable regularities and frequencies begins by being conceived heuristically, and then its unknown nature is differentiated by experiential conjugates.”¹⁶

Let us skip the difficulties of not being “in the game” and venture naively on diagramming the first sentence. There is a triple correlation and there is the correlater, springing from question and ending in inner word, pirouetteing in the idea’s tentacling of three complex chemical aggregates. The three aggregates are variable in various ways. **Names** are of linguistic groups, include refinements of accents in a multitude of dialects and eccentricities; **senses** are flexibly different, a macrozation of the issue of an amoeba over seconds, or two amoeba, even of a single parent; **sensed** a still more

¹³*Method in Theology*, 292.

¹⁴*Insight*, 578.

¹⁵Paws, pause, paws over, hand over. There are Joycean invitations here regarding the handling of history.

¹⁶*Insight*, 578.

variable pattern of sensing, with variations nudged by naming. Further, there are tentative namings, whether in primitives or infants or neural disturbances like aphasia, and there are problematic namings, such as we might associate with angels or theatrical rote performances. Still, allowing for the looseness and the sets of flexibilities and problems, can one not conceive of the totality of human words, at least so far in history, and indeed on towards the pre-eschatological?

For it is important to think in terms of totalities if we are to reach for control of the descriptive meaning on which we focus in the second canon of hermeneutics. Here it would be as well to paw over *The Sketch*,¹⁷ where Lonergan calls us to recall - if it were ever there - our experience of physics' sharp defining that enables the anticipation of "the general nature of any physical theory."¹⁸

"First then envisage the material. They consist in the totality of documents and monuments"¹⁹ in their various flexible multiplications, and the variety of their offspring. Words can be elements in monument meanings: still let us stick with words, and try the envisaging of that large totality. "Envisage the material", envisage the totality? It is a massive molecular leisured business, like Proust reaching to taste the total of tea. But I am skipping the difficulties. So, there is the totality of human words, and subsets of those words as are suggested earlier in the paragraph of *Insight* page 546.

The trouble with controlling description, of course, was in there already in the dense designation of proportionate metaphysics of *Insight*, chapter 14, and the emergence of prelinguistic humans muddies the heuristics, but likely unnoticed by the naive reader. And even the reader that climbs luminously so that he or she "comes about"²⁰ radically beyond extroversion to a cherishing that is seemingly "an embrace of

¹⁷*Insight*, 602-603.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 602.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 602.

²⁰*Insight*, 537.

the universe in a single view"²¹ may be shocked to think of the 100+ billion humans that emerged - with an indefinite emergence to follow - in a corner of the 200 billion galaxies bringing "into view" the 100 billion universes dancing on pineal lands. And then come words, some definite places in the early daze of that human minding! Should we push our "envisage the material" to envisage some particular place and time of such an emergence? Phyletically there is the aggregate of original leaps, but there is also the helped leaps as each later human leaps, normally in childhood. Might one home in on Helen Keller and broaden the envisaging in one's own neurodynamic grasping of the 5-grasping that is W-A-T-E-R? One might even go on to envisage a different Annie Sullivan in a later stage of meaning, looking luminously "at this hand of mine, head-hand, poised to touch skin-puzzledness" in a manner that escaped Merleau-Ponty.²²

And next, we might move into the dark tracks of initial meanings and semi-serious climbings, a zone faintly sketched by Lonergan.²³ But we are doing little more than skimpy sketchings here of a larger domain: we are at the beginning of new universes within the universes of human minding.

But, however, complex the increasingly complex concomitant diagraming, in principle we are holding descriptive meanings in some Klein bottle of referent symbols. Or are you? Are you diagraming along, patiently and gallantly, with sweaty creativity?

Broaden our strokes, then, to get even skimpier glimpses of serious scientific beginnings and climbings.. Cling to W_1 as I suggest a normal road of descent through levels that lifts descriptions to explanations: so, plants are classified, then there is the

²¹*Ibid.*, 442.

²²Merleau-Ponty's final incomplete work, *The Visible and the Invisible*, focuses on touch as a possible road to genuine objectivity, a brilliant failure. See *Field Nocturne* 24: "Merleau-Ponty and other Mudflesh."

²³See both note 5, *Insight* 567 - reference to Susanne Langer's comments on initial meanings - and Lonergan's text there. There are, too, hints in his sketching of early stages of meaning.

descent to chemistry and then physics. But I warn that the normal is not normal. One can know about sunshine's infolding, and one can weigh plants, while still being on the outskirts of chemistry. One can investigate varieties of drunkenness in dogs, quite out of normally anticipated sequence. The sequencing of irregular investigations does not elude us: though we do lack the genetic logic, especially a layered logic, that would hold standards and structures of sequencing together. One can then envisage both ontic and phyletic sequencings, O_s and P_s , the digenetics of P_s normally correlatable with the digenetics of O_s , with lags and lapses, mergings and convergings, accountable for, within respectable measures of residues.

The symbolization is to move from generic to specific to glocally-varied within the pressure of the balancing act of generalized empirical method: psychodynamics and patterned chemodynamics running less and less ahead or behind as the method is refined. With such a slow empirical development of symbolization *The Sketch* of Lonergan becomes an inner word, fusing the totalities into a single explanation, even when the monuments, documents, word-patterns, "are artistic."²⁴

A long pause here brings me to halt before falling into a silly compacting of the rest of *The Sketch*: the becoming of that inner word will ground much larger treatments of its topics: so, for example, the character of, the character who produces, pure formulations, will be manifest, and indeed the manner in which *The Sketch* flows brilliantly into the set of canons of hermeneutics.²⁵

There are a host of other problems to be faced, beginning with such simple puzzles as [1] the inclusion of oneself in the referent heuristic inner word; [2] that inclusion, and these needed dancing symbols,²⁶ as somehow violating our reach for

²⁴*Insight*, 602.

²⁵The relation of *The Sketch* to the Canons is teased out in chapter 9 of *ChrISt in History*, a Website Book.. See also the fuller context give at note 38 of *FuSe* 10.

²⁶A context here is "A Note on Geometrical Possibility", *Collection*, University of Toronto Press, 1988, 94-96.

explanation beyond description. And one moves into deeper water when one asks, are we tied to the tweezer of description?²⁷

2.2 The Concrete Intelligibility of Space and Time²⁸

Are we to be tied endlessly to a tweezer in the lower ground of loneliness, tied thus, in an upper incarnational ground, to a trinitarian vortex? “The answer is easily reached,” the beginning of the final paragraph of the section in *Insight* with the same title as ours, blossoms now into the strange suggestion that the answer is never reached but that there is infinite contentment in an endless vortex climb.²⁹

We began our rambles about words with the text in *Insight* regarding a triple correlation of name, sense, sensed. Three aggregates were involved, but also the correlating idea and its inner word. Suppose now a larger resonance or occupation of aggregates by the idea, so that name, sense and sensed somehow molecularly merge, and tweezer twists into a new finality of the empirical residue? “Often, as I write some Greek letter, Theta or Omega, I have only to give my pen a twist, and the letter spreads out, to become a fish, and I, in an instant, am set thinking of all the streams and rivers of the world”³⁰ And in a beyond-continuum infinity of instants the thinking is set by an Idea, and ideas and thoughts of the Idea in its Thought Word, and thus the world is

²⁷*Insight* refers to the tweezers of description: here I am nudging us towards considering the much larger issue of the dynamics of the human spirit beyond the pilgrim state,

²⁸See Appendix A, below. Recall note 7 above. I add here that the seven appendices are in an alphabetical order that invites each of us strategically to expanding our viewpoint towards at least a suspicion of the explanatory geohistorical viewpoint that is eventually to gently control the full collaboration. The effort of these appendices is to be lifted forward in FuSe 14, exercises in functional history.

²⁹The reach here gives fresh meaning to the vortex diagram of *Lack in the Beingstalk*, 161, a diagram that originated as the centre page, 78, of the text of *The Shaping of the Foundations*, (1977: a website book now).

³⁰Herman Hesse, *Narziss and Goldmund*, Penguin, 61. A fuller quotation in is the Epilogue to *Wealth of Self*, 105-106.

made fresh, the concrete intelligibility of space and time becomes an “Infinite Surprise”?³¹

Appendix A

Body Bridge and the Concrete Intelligibility of Space and Time: Inner track[1] reflections toward (future) functional interpretation

Terry Quinn

1. Adjusting for positioning

In Section 5.5 of *Insight*, Lonergan raises a question about the Concrete Intelligibility of Space and Time - where “Space” and “Time” are defined as ordered totalities of “concrete extensions” and “concrete durations”[2]. He gives a brief answer in terms of ‘emergent probability’[3]. In a previous article[4], some reasons were given pointing to the need of interpreting these results.

It is of course too soon for us to think of reaching explanatory interpretation [5] of Lonergan’s solution. Within, or being, a (tentative) “universal viewpoint” (or TUV[6]), a future interpreter of the text in question will have some understanding[7] of the object; the words; the author; self [8] - a future possibility within the Tower community.

Now, the dictionary meaning of ‘adjust’ includes “to put (e.g., a musical instrument) in good working order, to bring into a proper state or position”. How then can we add to, ‘ajouter’, adjust, our ‘position’[9] so that we become better self-tuned to the problem? I invite attention to two words that appear in Lonergan’s discussion of Space and Time: extension, duration. These two words are part of the text in question, so textually relevant. But, much more is true. While the context[10] of the Space-Time problem is not yet generally familiar within the academic community[11], the words “extension and duration” do refer to familiar experiences. And an effort to better identify those

³¹The concluding words of the Epilogue of *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations*.

experiences can help us improve our ‘positioning’[12]. Such empirical reflections can then also provide us with clues on “space and time” as “bridge”[13].

2. “All positions invite development”[14]

In Chapter 14 of *Insight* we are invited to what Lonergan calls “a basic position”[15] where, among other things, “the real” is not ‘already out there now’ and ‘objectivity’ is conceived as a consequence of intelligent enquiry. After reading that far in *Insight*, this “position” can seem fairly reasonable.

For example, what is it to see color? In ‘a basic position’ we can look forward to an understanding of light; and recent results would include the science of our bio-sensitivity to light-spectra through photo-receptor cells and various cellular pathways, some of which penetrate deep into the brain.

But, another range of examples can be more puzzling. We each have a body and in one way or another we are aware of an ‘extensiveness’ of our body - our limbs, our hands, our feet. Think of where you may be while you are reading this article. There is the space of a room, a garden perhaps, or a library, or a seat in a place away from the busyness of a town. In some unfortunate cases, a person may be confined to a bed, or a room. But even then, one is confined to the space of the bed or the room, and even that confinement also implies what would otherwise be possible. For, normally, we move about our home, our town, and we can even imagine the volume or space surrounding our planet. The list of course goes on. And, thanks to photographs from modern telescopes we also can imagine extensive volumes of space containing distant planets, stars, astronomical objects and exotic galaxies. The volumes of space that we see and imagine around us seem to go on without any apparent limits. As soon as we imagine some kind of box or volume that might contain these many objects, we find that we can immediately imagine a larger box. But what then could be meant by the first part of the definition of ‘a basic position’, that “the real is not a subdivision of the ‘already out

there now''? Whatever color any of these objects might have, don't our bodies and all of these objects all have lengths, depths, widths, and occupy volumes of space? And so, is there not, perhaps, some sense in which such objects are in fact 'out there' – and for galaxies, 'way out there'? Such then is part of the puzzle: How can we reconcile real experience of extension and duration with the assertion that "the real ... is not 'already out there now''? And these questions invite us to further development.

3. "The enigma of the body"[16]

Reflections of Merleau-Ponty deepen the puzzle, and also draw our attention to data found within the intimacy of one's own experience. His paper "Eye and Mind" [17] begins with a tone-setting quotation: "What I am trying to convey to you is more mysterious: it is entwined in the very roots of being, in the impalpable source of sensations." [18] A few pages into his article he writes: "The enigma derives from the fact that my body simultaneously sees and is seen. ... Visible and mobile, my body is a thing among things; it is one of them. It is caught in the world, and its cohesion is that of a thing. But because it moves itself and sees, it holds things in a circle around itself. ... These reversals, ..., are different ways of saying that vision is caught or comes to be in things ... the visible undertakes to see, becomes visible to itself, ..., like the original solution still present within crystal, the undividedness of the sensing and the sensed." [19] We may look at a tree, its colors and shadows, yes, and we may touch textured lengths of trunk and branch, and see limbs reaching into a spaciousness of foliage – all of this, and we say, "a tree is there". There is "a locality, from which height, width, and depth are abstracted, a voluminosity we express in a word when we say that a thing is there." [20]

Do these reflections not add to the existential puzzle? Merleau-Ponty certainly seems to be getting at something, something that we too can find in our experience. Are we not aware, at times, of objects at hand (or at foot!), that have length, depth, volume, that

occupy space, that in some basic way would seem in fact to be ‘already out there now’. Does there not seem to be some kind of bodily knowledge of “voluminous” or extended things “there”? In some version of (or approximation to) ‘a basic position’, how might we account for these bodily experiences of extension and duration?

4. Primary qualities and secondary qualities[21]

Another approach to the complexities of experience and objectivity is found in a philosophic tradition that includes Descartes (1596-1650), Galileo (1564-1692), Hobbes (1588-1679), Boyle (1627-1691), Locke (1632-1704), Berkeley (1685-1753), Kant (1724 - 1804) - and others up to the present day. This tradition also draws attention to experience, but in a different way with different results. So for our purposes, it can be helpful to recall some of the initial elements of that approach. In the 16th century, Galileo made a radically new discovery, breaking through to an understanding of free-fall using algebraic equations relating measured distances and measured times. But, whether expressed in mathematical symbols or in Latin words, the pattern of ratios of ratios he discovered obviously is nothing like the visible patterns of spheres rolling down inclined planks, nor seen trajectories of cannon balls and other projectiles. Yet, his equations seemed to be verified. Because of this difference between mathematical understanding and visible patterns, Galileo (and others) promoted a “mistaken twist”[22] on scientific method, involving two allegedly complementary notions: “Whereas primary qualities – such as figure, quantity, and motion – are genuine properties of things and are knowable by mathematics, secondary qualities – such as colour, odour, taste, and sound – exist only in human consciousness and are not part of the objects to which they are normally attributed.”[23] From this perspective, imaginable lengths, widths, depths, volumes - matter in motion - are real and objective while other “secondary qualities” are “merely apparent” [24].

How does this fit with your present positioning? In fact, contemporary neuroscience now offers some explanation of these experiences within human consciousness, and

some of these explanations make use of mathematics. A more basic problem though can be seen when we recall that in 'a basic position', "the real is ... not a subdivision of the 'already out there now'". What might be the basis for asserting that dimensions of a mathematical equation represent imaginable "matter in motion"? And, within your present position, how does the notion of "secondary quality" sit with you, a notion that in fact most of our sense experience is to be regarded as "merely apparent"? Obviously, there is something amiss here. But, again, how might we account for these differences? How might we begin to resolve these difficulties?

5. Lonergan's solution to the extension and duration problem

We again can take some help from Merleau-Ponty - who as before draws our attention to experience. Of course, a key part of the exercise here is to reflect on our own experience, but Merleau-Ponty can be a helpful guide. "I must acknowledge that the table before me sustains a singular relation with my eyes and my body: I see it only if it is within their radius of action; ... What is more, my movements and the movements of my eyes make the world vibrate - ... I would express what takes place badly indeed in saying that here a "subjective component" or a "corporeal constituent" comes to cover over the things themselves: it is not a matter of another layer or a veil that would have come to pose itself between them and me." [25]

Taking Merleau-Ponty's example, a table, you might reach out and touch the edge of a table at hand. (Any other similar object will do - a book, an arm of a chair, your own other hand, or the hand of a friend.) You might feel the warmth of wood, or perhaps a somewhat cooler polished table surface. A table may have the color of blonde wood, or be painted bright red. In touch, or sight, or both simultaneously, we find that edges of a table (or the fingers and palm of a hand) have length, depth, volume.

Where though are these lengths and volumes? Are not all of these experiences, experiences in your sense of touch and your sense of sight? There can be the seen

extension of a table; and there can be tactile sense of length, depth, volume. Whether experienced separately or together, all of these are in our sense experience. And might, then, extension and duration eventually be grasped as the same kind experience as color, taste, warmth or sound, or any other experience in the senses, within sensitive consciousness. So, the peculiar status of 'primary qualities' would die. But, the death is best witnessed internally by the geometry of space and time.

This brings us to the edge of Lonergan's solution to the puzzle, which while elegant, is not easy to take on, or get into. He invites us to a slowly acquired series of displacements, of sense experience (in consciousness) and our capacity to understand. Whether colors, extension-duration, or any other sense experience - experienced, remembered or imagined - ALL are within the sensitive psyche, and all provide data for enquiry - hintings then on the relevance of the Canon of Complete Explanation [26]. In gradually increasing ranges of contexts, there will be further adjustments and developments of this initial differentiation of consciousness, where in particular all data are "subjective" and no data are "merely subjective".

6. Looking beyond description - the concrete intelligibility of Space and Time

So far, we've been engaged in an elementary contemplative attention to experience. Our results though are descriptive and of course further questions arise.

What, e.g., are particular extensions and durations? There are 'what-questions'. And if we wish to go beyond description of sense experience within consciousness, we need explanation. Within explanation, there is the possibility of (provisionally) identifying "concrete extensions and durations" - where concrete extension and duration is to be known through an "intellectually patterned experience of the empirical residue". What are their distributions? Are there shifts or changes in distributions? What are the metaphysical equivalences of concrete extensions and durations - in the (aggreformic) objects known, and in the (aggreformic) subjects knowing? What is the significance of concrete extension and duration in human development, in human history, in

proportionate being, in human destiny? Lonergan points to a unified and extremely complex heuristic solution that he named “emergent probability” [27]. Future explanation will of course need rich contact and support from the sciences [28], within a basic controlling context of metaphysics.

There will be a lift of Merleau-Ponty’s subtle descriptions and struggles about “reversal” [29]. For, in fact, in a basic position one begins to luminously subsume extension and duration along with color and other sense experience. And so, within a developed basic position, there is a “reversal of roles, in which the sensible container becomes the intellectually contained. ... So it comes about that the extroverted subject visualizing extensions and experiencing duration gives place to the subject orientated to the objective of the unrestricted desire to know and affirming beings differentiated by certain conjugate potencies, forms, and acts grounding certain laws and frequencies.” [30]

This also points us to the possibility of lifting Marchand’s comments into explanatory theological context: “In a forest, I have felt many times over that it was not I who looked at the forest. Some days I felt that the trees were looking at me, were speaking to me ... I was there, listening ...” [31] In a developed basic position, the listening will of course be dynamic, kataphatic [32].

Extension and duration, color, sense experience, our neural body bridge, not “out there”, but “within, supports of night”, self-presence and presence, with, and of, proportionate being; and a sense of the known unknown, therefore also mystery [33] begins to be revealed as a permanent part of any adequate foundations. For now, though, there is the possibility of positional adjustments and becoming better pointings toward the possibility of a future explanatory interpretation of Lonergan’s solution to the Concrete Intelligibility of Space and Time.

- [1] McShane, P., “the first track is “red”, a rough-neck effort to collaborate that will characterize our early efforts”. See Metagram 5, *Prehumous* 2, p. 9 of pdf file.
- [2] *Insight*, 166, 194.
- [3] *Ibid*, 195, final paragraph.
- [4] Quinn, T., Space and Time: What’s going on? Functional Research Seminar, <http://www.sgeme.org/BlogEngine/archive.aspx>, 2011-02-12.
- [5] Some heuristics of “explanatory explanation” are given in *The Sketch*, Section 17.3.6[5] of *Insight*. See also *Method*, 172: “What is needed is not mere description but explanation.”
- [6] See, .e.g., McShane, P., *Joistings* 8 “Recycling Satisfaction”, note 15, p. 4; <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/joist-08.pdf>; *Bridgepoise* 8, New Beginnings in the Global Reaching of Lonergan, <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/bridgepoise-08.pdf>; and other references to TUV in McShane, <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/>.
- [7] *Method*, 155.
- [8] Interpretation depends on “adequate self-knowledge”. See also *Insight*, Section 17.1.2.
- [9] *Ibid*, 413.
- [10] *Method*, 163.
- [11] *Insight*, 163, first paragraph. The context was, though, familiar to Lonergan - and included contemporary physics, as well as emergence and probabilities within the various higher sciences.
- [12] *Ibid*, 413, ‘a basic position’.
- [13] *Ibid*, 163.
- [14] *Ibid*, 413
- [15] For the convenience of the reader, here is the complete statement from *Insight*, p.

413: "It will be a basic position (1) if the real is the concrete universe of being and not a subdivision of the 'already out there now'; (2) if the subject becomes known when it affirms itself intelligently and reasonably and so is not known yet in any prior 'existential' state; and (3) if objectivity is conceived as a consequence of intelligent inquiry and critical reflection, and not as a property of vital anticipation, extroversion, and satisfaction."

[16] Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, *Eye and Mind*, Section II, par. 10. Original: *L'Œil et l'esprit* (Paris: Gallimard, 1961). Trans. by Carleton Dallery in *The Primacy of Perception*, ed. by James Edie (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 159-190. Revised translation by Michael Smith in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader* (1993), 121-149. For "Eye and Mind", see also

http://www.biologuagem.com/biologuagem_antropologia/merleauponty_1964_eyeandmind.pdf

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] J. Gasquet, early 20th century commentator on the work of Cézanne.

[19] *Ibid*, p. 3.

[20] "Eye and Mind", p. 13. Italics his.

[21] Some references in *Insight*: 107-109, 123, 153, (177-178), 277, 319, 363, 438 (-440). See Index. Some added references are in parentheses.

[22] *Insight*, 107. Such a "twist" occurs in the individual. See also Section 10.3, The Second and Third Stages of Meaning, *Method*, 93: "In the second stage the world mediated by sense splits into the realm of common sense and the realm of theory."

[23] *Encyclopedia Britannica*, epistemology (philosophy): Epistemology and modern science; <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/476194/primary-quality>

[24] Ralph Schumacker, "Locke on the intentionality of Sensory Ideas", *Theory of Perception in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy*. *Studies in the History of*

Philosophy of Mind, 2008, vol. 6, 271-283.

[25] Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, *The Visible and the Invisible*, Northwestern University Press, 1968, Evanston, IL, p. 7.

[26] *Insight*, 107. See also note 32, below: “the enveloping world of sense”, *Insight*, 559.

[27] *Ibid*, Section 5.5.

[28] “the sciences will be mobilized within a higher unity”, *Method*, 23.

[29] See Note 14, above.

[30] *Insight*, 537.

[31] “Eye and Mind”, (quotation: A. Marchand), p. 6.

[32] See, e.g., McShane, P., *FuSe 9 What is Functional Research?*, <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/fuse-09.pdf>, p. 10,

[33] *Insight*, 557.

Appendix B

Interpreting the mid-paragraph of Method 287. David Oyler

Such differentiation vastly enriches the initial nest of terms and relations. From such a broadened basis one can go on to a developed account of the human good, values, beliefs to the carriers, elements, functions, realms, and stages of meaning, to the question of God, of religious experience, its expressions, its dialectical development.

My task is to interpret the above paragraph from the middle of page 287 in Lonergan’s *Method in Theology*. The paragraph is found in Chapter 11, “Foundations” in the section “General Theological Categories”. I will look at each sentence individually in some detail and then put the paragraph in the proximate meaningful context I think was intended by Lonergan. Not only was the paragraph written by Lonergan, it was

written for the reader. But who is the reader? The assumption I made is that it is the “hypothetical reader” introduced in *Insight*. For me, this reader is one who has kept up with Lonergan as he has attained the viewpoint expressed in the paragraph. In contrast to the hypothetical reader is the set of de facto readers, the actual readers. While I cannot address every single viewpoint, I will point out some items I think de facto readers should keep in mind while interpreting this paragraph.

“Such differentiation vastly enriches the initial nest of terms and relations.” The “initial nest of terms and relations” is discussed earlier in the section and is followed by a sketch of various ways of understanding them. The initial nest includes the general conceptualization of the subject as inquiring, understanding, judging and deliberating and the intentional correlates of those activities. This is not an understanding of the subject in general, but the self understanding of the particular concrete person performing the operations. Via the self transcendence in knowing and doing, we can come to know ourselves as self transcending via the basic structure of operations.

The differentiation is effectively the result of working through *Insight* and *Method in Theology* up to the point of the paragraph. There are nine progressive groupings. There is a strategy in the presentation leading to a succinct formulation of where the hypothetical reader would be had he or she kept up with Lonergan to this point. The first is the operations proper, the initial nest of terms and relations. The second is the set of patterns in which they occur, biological, intellectual, etc. The third introduces the different qualities of consciousness to lead to the fourth, which is the differentiations per se, those of common sense, philosophy, interiority, the life of prayer and theology. The fifth is the group of corresponding realms of meaning and worlds. The sixth comprises the four basic methods or heuristic structures, classical, statistical, genetic, and dialectical, and the integral heuristic structure, metaphysics. The seventh is a difference in achievement. The difference is between those who can shift with ease from one or more differentiation of consciousness to another and those who cannot. I

should note here that there also is an achievement implicit in understanding the earlier groupings since it requires self-appropriation. I believe there is an implicit implication that if one has proceeded through the sixth, the seventh should be an achievement or at least within one's horizon. I am not suggesting that the development required proceeds in the order of the groupings but that there is a rough broadening and differentiation of horizon, achievement and capability implied by the ordering, however the current state of affairs is reached. There also is a logical aspect illustrated by the next grouping, which differentiates those who have been converted intellectually, morally or religiously. Being able to distinguish among operations in different modes is different from explicitly following through to completion the actions they lead to. This requires an ongoing commitment. The differences among the converted and not converted entail differences in viewpoints which can be addressed via dialectic. This, not coincidentally, is the last grouping. It is not coincidental if this paragraph is to summarize the stage of the hypothetical reader up to this point in the book. The prior chapter was "Dialectic".

With the next sentence we can understand that the prior achievements can be developed. It is tempting to lump the achievements of the first sentence with Lonergan's work up to *Method* and the achievements in the second sentence with *Method* itself. The fact that the "developed account" he elucidates corresponds to chapter and section headings in *Method* supports this. However, the duplication of some of these in the range of both sentences suggests more of a development of prior achievement than a bifurcation of effort. His use of "...go on to a developed account..." supports this interpretation.

So far I have provided a sparse interpretation of the two sentences aiming more at answering the question "What did the author mean?" in terms of what he was trying to say. In the course of doing so, functional meaning was also provided. Functional meaning, as I mean it here, regards primarily what the author is trying to do and secondarily what the reader needs to do to understand the work. In this case they mesh

because the author is aiming at a self understanding of the reader that will enable the reader to understand him or her self and, ipso facto, the author. The achievements are Lonergan's and the goal is to make them ours also. Why? Answering that question will place the paragraph in its proximate context, which is the role understanding it plays in the implementation of a method in theology.

There are at least three roles. The first role is providing candidates for general theological categories. In the prior section he notes that these will be models formed of interlocking sets of terms and relations. Before that he states that the categories will be transcultural. Since the basic set of operations gives rise to cultures rather than results from them, they provide a transcultural basis. A positional account of them would provide a transcultural model. Thus, the sets of differentiations provide a rich field of candidates. It is interesting that he does not claim that any of these are general theological categories. This move is left for the individual theologian.

The second is providing the basis for understanding world process and various developments. He prefaces this with having a basis for understanding change. In theology we have the challenge of understanding the changes of developing and declining sets of viewpoints.

This leads us to the third role which is pointing towards the context for dealing with problems of interpretation which includes the universal viewpoint. At this the section ends as the topic moves to special theological categories.

If I view this section as a successive broadening of viewpoints via successive enriching differentiations I believe we are left with a basic problematic method is designed to resolve. How do we manage to have a progressive development of theological viewpoints? At this point in the text the prior chapter on dialectic provides the notion of ordering them via dialectic. The notion of a universal viewpoint along with the second canon of hermeneutics, the canon of explanation, provides a model for understanding non-explanatory expression explanatorily. This is a condition for an

adequate dialectics. In fact Lonergan states that dialectic is the universal viewpoint as a functional specialization. (p. 153). So I think the hypothetical reader is left here, poised to move towards the ongoing resolution of this problematic via the selectivity of doctrines and the systemization of systematics.

The de facto reader is somewhere between introductory ignorance and attainment of an adequate grasp of the meaning of the paragraph and its context. If you are reading *Method* and have not read *Insight* the fact that the context Lonergan provides includes achievements in understanding *Insight* is a clear indication that *Method* does not stand on its own. You need to understand Insight to understand *Method* adequately. What is an adequate understanding? Can you do dialectic? If you can, then you have an adequate understanding. In this case an adequate understanding enables the implementation of a specialization. Realistically a thorough understanding of all the specializations is not possible for one person, especially if functional specialization is generalized across all the sciences. However, the grasp of an explanatory model that can be further specified for particular areas is attainable. But the key is the grasp. Is it adequate? Can you apply it to particular areas? To do so you need some mastery of the area. To understand what scientific explanation is you need to understand some scientific explanations. To understand emergent probability you need some mastery of evolutionary theory. To understand the complementarity of statistical and classical investigations the understanding of classical laws needs to be complemented by an understanding of statistics. And so on. Otherwise we run the risk of speaking in nominalistic generalities. Relations are expressed but not concretely apprehended.

Following in this mode, I say that I would have an adequate interpretation of the paragraph when I can do what it says. Can I understand the various differentiations? Can I go on to a "...developed account of the human good, values, beliefs...realms of meaning..." and so on? If so, I may be able to make a contribution to Foundations.