

*Quodlibet 18*  
As IV Leaguers

To Alessandra

November 15, 2004.

**18.1 Riverrun past I've and atom ....**

I know that you dislike puns like "IV League" or even my twist of title here, echoing "riverrun past eve and adam" of the beginning of *Finnegans Wake*. My stumbling warps of language relate to the necessary riddles, patterns of allegory, anastomotic reachings, the "what is lacking is most of all a knowledge of all that is lacking"<sup>1</sup> in these axial-ending centuries.<sup>2</sup> We are caught in a massive lagging of language.<sup>3</sup>

Yet I can give *IV Leaguer* definite meaning. There is the meaning of *Leaguer* as a siege, a besiege army, or its camp, to supplement the normal meaning of the member of a league. There is "The League of Nations" that lasted 26 years: I would have a besieged League of Nations, the creative minority of the Tower of Able, lasting beyond 26 centuries. IV? I would have the members of that Towering concern for humanity's light and life to be incarnately lightsome with an intervenous glow, bright-eyed masterful falcon-flying.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Insight*, 536[559].

<sup>2</sup>Recall "the wise man speaks his riddles" (*Insight*, 546[569]). This first section of chapter 17 is relevant here. In the next six months we will struggle with Thomas' "quaedam participatio luminis Dei", which irreverently I translate as "some damned sharing of divine light". But, what is that reality in us, beyond metaphor, beyond 'quaedam'?

<sup>3</sup>See *A Brief History of Tongue*, chapter 2. The key point is mad in note 34, page 88 of *Method in Theology*.

<sup>4</sup>I am referring here to Hopkins *Windhover*, and "the mastery of the thing".

But there is the principal sense of IV that relates to the *riverrun*, the re-run past Alessandra and atom's mating in water, a Poise of AS in Time. It is the poise which humbly leans on a growing metaphysical control of meaning and expression that finds, its beginning in *Verbum*. Finds? I hardly need to recall the finding or non-finding described by Lonergan in that sad Epilogue to those articles. There comes to mind, from some conversation or tape-heard, Lonergan remarking "Well, they are five years work for anyone who disagrees with me". As I, AS I, began them again last week, 48 years after my first November beginning, a supplementing remark struck me: "they are fifty years work for anyone who agrees with me".

I am not going to attempt some further doctrinal pointers about this control. Especially important to us, to IV leaguers, will be the development of controlling expression.<sup>5</sup> And we need especially imagings that would have us cling to a "world invisible", images of a dot cos, where the dot is divine being and the seen-spread cosmos takes its little place on a spirited edge.<sup>6</sup> So one might weave towards that anastomotic point, dot, by a global reach for the emergence, after 14 billion years, of lights here and there - like a valley-city emerging after a black out: the light of what Aristotle called agent intellect, intra-Venus, intra-animals, capable of naming: but not in genesis yet.

And one sees and seizes the globe differently when the naming turns on, turns on, the Helen Keller leap, so that used language makes the globe radiant. Chemical things and the solutions to a problem of holding-together that are hunting panthers and mating rabbits are now companioned by light-walkers that, with millennial slowness, give their habitat the new glow of inner words noised abroad. And leap to a luminous

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<sup>5</sup>I first began to push this as a theorem in the concluding section of Cantower 33.

<sup>6</sup>Recall Ia q.3 of the *Summa*, where Thomas starts his reflections on God by asking whether God is a body. Recall also my discussion of "The Bridge of Size" in "Features of Generalized Empirical Method", *Creativity and Method*, edited by M.Lamb, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee, 1984.

presence of Helen's leap, from a beginning in a startled few. And so the universe's groaning for unity is given, more and more in these coming millions of years, the radiance of its intraveining bodying of "a single intelligent view."<sup>7</sup> But, you may say, even though the sun will shine beyond such millions of years, might earth not end quite soon in some idiot weapons' blast? So I am led to respond with a conclusion that I came towards just twenty years ago, in a Preface that was a reaching darkly for my present meaning of it:

"Part of the glory of history is man's envisagement of its schedules of probabilities and possibilities. If the sapling of history is cut down from within, still it can have, within, a vision of the temporal noosphere that, paradoxically, redeems God. The envisagement is the core of future academic growth: its opposite is an elderhood that is the fraud of being in reality 'not old folk but young people of eighteen, very much faded.'<sup>8</sup> Our molecules, 'our arms and legs filled with sleeping memories,'<sup>9</sup> passionately demand that we fly after the butterfly.

'There the butterfly flew away over the bright water, and the boy flew after it, hovering brightly and easily, flew happily through the blue space. The sun shone on his wings. He flew after the yellow and flew over the lake and over the high mountain, where God stood on a cloud and sang.'<sup>10</sup>

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That Preface, and the chapter that follows it "Middle Kingdom, Middle Man

<sup>7</sup>*Insight*, 520[544].

<sup>8</sup>Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Times Past*, Random House, New York, Vol. 2, 1042.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, Vol.2, 874.

<sup>10</sup>Herman Hesse, *Wandering*, translated by James Wright, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1972, 89.

<sup>11</sup>I quote the conclusion of the Preface to *Searching for Cultural Foundations* edited by P. McShane, University Press of America, 1984. The Preface title is "Distant Probabilities of Persons Presently Going Home Together in Transcendental Process."

(T'ien-hsia: I jen),"<sup>12</sup> add, as you well know, climbing contexts. But it seems as well to add, in section 2, a briefer invitation to the search for blood-control. This section 2 also gives initial nudges towards the task of reading page 464[489] of insight metaphysically, as Lonergan intended.

So: you will have my half of Quodlibet 18. A half-year - not 5 or 50 - of our Ven interchanging should leave you capable of a beginner's second half. To work then, together, in this winter of our IV leaguing: and might I not expect a decent reply after seven months, beyond Bloomsday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2005, some version of Molly's one-sentence Yes!?

## 18.2 Obstacles to Metaphysical Control

The title is peculiar, and I prefer to leave comments on it to the end. Best for now to take my topic to mean difficulties in understanding Lonergan's contributions to metaphysics. Indeed, I am talking about difficulties that I have had to overcome very slowly, and so I write in the hope that my few pointers may be both a help and an encouragement to others. The first difficulty that I write about, for instance, has been a trouble to me for decades but I did not identify it with accuracy until the turn of the millennium, and broke through on it only in Autumn of 2001. The last difficulty that I write about, the largest, was strangely one that troubled me least.<sup>13</sup> Others held me up in different ways in my struggle of 45 years to understand Lonergan's achievements.<sup>14</sup> I

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<sup>12</sup> *I jen*: the one man; *tien-hsia*: below heaven.

<sup>13</sup>I had the advantage of sharing with Lonergan the problems of method and fragmentation through the late 1950s and the early sixties. Then, to Lonergan's sketching to me of the solution in 1966 I brought the context of problems in musicology, etc. Functional specialization was evidently a global cultural need.

<sup>14</sup>People find it difficult to accept my claim that I was stuck with the problem of Lonergan's identification of energy and the empirical residue until two years ago, and am now only beginning to see the larger possibilities of it. So, for example, Brian Greene writes "According to string theory, there is only one fundamental ingredient - the string - and the wealth of particle species simply reflects the different vibrational patterns that a string can

would be interested in readers' views of any of these and in conversations about the overcoming of them.

### 18.2.1 Capacity-for-performance

The title doesn't really name the difficulty as it emerged for me. The difficulty as it emerged was the challenge of understanding the third chapter of *Verbum*, in particular the meaning of *potentia activa*.<sup>15</sup> The break-through of 2001 was my comprehending identification of *potentia activa* with the capacity-for-performance so casually introduced in chapter 15 of *Insight*.<sup>16</sup>

One good reason for starting with this difficulty is that it is associated with the larger difficulty that has been raised by serious Lonergan scholars over the years: what is the place of metaphysics? There is Lonergan's talk of faculty psychology being 'out': does the same apply to metaphysics? Certainly that would not jive with the drive of *Insight*. Still, as one top Lonergan scholar said to me, there is something quite vague and elusive about chapter 16 of *Insight*: what is it all about?

But the present difficulty is with elements of chapter 15. Let me focus my difficulty by attending to that single footnote of the chapter, at the end of section 1.<sup>17</sup> Lonergan writes with massive assurance, beginning with "In brief I should say ...." and sweeping through to the sweep of the *Prima Secundae*. One gets the focus by homing in on the second type of potency, the potency to *operatio*. One can home in better by

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execute" (*The Fabric of the Cosmos. Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality*, Knopf, New York, 2004, 346). String theory, of course, is multiply muddled: but might one not recognize the "different vibrational patterns" as forms of energy, and indeed, the higher patterns that concern us below as negentropic infoldings of actual aggregates on different levels of infolding?

<sup>15</sup>Section 4 of Chapter 3 of *Verbum, Word and Idea In Aquinas*. But one has to work with the whole chapter.

<sup>16</sup>*Insight*, 464[489].

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 434[459].

thinking of the potency to seeing, the informed organic structure that has the familiar external appearance of the eye. That complex neurochemical structure is a receptor, but an active receptor. Decades ago I wrote about it as an autonomic form in contrast to the synnomic form of chemical and physical things: what I was getting at was that the eye receives light in a way that is “selfish and creative” as compared to the reception of light by a physico-chemical surface.<sup>18</sup> It is, then, identifiable as *potentia activa* where that confused term is to be understood - no small task, as I found in the Autumn struggle - in a precise sense that was at the outer limit of Thomas’ understanding.<sup>19</sup>

It seems such a small step, then, to identify *potentia activa* with capacity-for-performance as it turns up on that “famous page” 464[489] of *Insight*. So, what blocked the identification for me? It was my failure to read the chapter towards and within the control of the emergent metaphysics that was, after all, the topic there.

### 18.2.2 Experience

That failure shows up very startlingly when one considers the problem of the

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<sup>18</sup>This was a topic in “Insight and Emergence: Towards an Adequate *Weltanschauung*” (1970). The paper was published as chapter 1 in *The Shaping of the Foundations*, available on [www.philipmcshane.ca](http://www.philipmcshane.ca)

<sup>19</sup>See note 3 above. The relevant section on this topic is section 8, “Nature and Efficiency”. A transposed thematic here would ground an enriched view of the natural resultance of the zoological conjugates from spirit’s fourfold infolding of energy (see note 2 above). There are, of course, larger resultances of this transposition related to the present obstacles. First, one must carry forward this transposition into Lonergan’s handling of another edginess in Thomas’ understanding, one that dominates *Insight* chapter 16: a precise thematic of quantity. (Add, to the transpositions of chapter 16, Lonergan’s consideration of Thomas’s view of relations in Appendix 3 of *De Deo Trino II. Pars Systematica*, Gregorian Press, Rome, 1964) Then, lurking in the drive of chapter 20, there is the need for a larger heuristic of “the solution” that would lift Thomas’ struggle for an eschatology out of the imaginative synthesis of a Ptolemaic culture into a Eucharistic eschatology of past-modern physics. A context for reflection here is Charles Hefling Jr., “On Understanding Salvation History”, *Lonergan’s Hermeneutic. Its Development and Application*, edited by Sean E. McEvenue and Ben Meyer, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, 1989. Hefling’s reflections on the heuristics of chapter 20 include pointers regarding the “Turns Around” of section 5 below.

metaphysical equivalents<sup>20</sup> of experience, where the word *experience* is taken in the ordinary sense of empirical experience - for example, the first five in the list of the basic pattern of operations in *Method in Theology*: seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting<sup>21</sup> - and then placed in the context of that same challenging page 464[489]. The organism that is us is “exhibited to our senses” and we move forward from the time-honored five names that are associated with “a triple correlation of classified experiences, classified contents of experience and classified names.”<sup>22</sup> But we can fail to move forward, fail to move down that page. Then “correctly understanding experience” can get bogged down in a nominalism that leaves us “in the unenviable position of always arriving on the scene a little breathless and a little late.”<sup>23</sup> Our re-reading of the book *Insight* then remains in the descriptive mode tolerated by *Method* right up to those discomfoting pages that list *Insight*’s challenge of “embracing ... a metaphysics.”<sup>24</sup> “From such a broadened basis one can go on,”<sup>25</sup> but there is no broadened basis, so one is left in the unenviable position of not being able to go on, or more particularly to go into dialogue with the contemporary world of interest in sensibility. We do not really share Rita Carter’s question, posed as the first sentence of the book *Exploring Consciousness*: “How does the feeling of this book in your hands, the perception of these words, the thoughts they provide - the whole, private inner world you are experiencing right now - arise in a universe that is made of molecules? What is this thing we call

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<sup>20</sup> *Insight*, 502-507[526-530].

<sup>21</sup> *Method in Theology*, 6. See the comments below, in note 21, on the pedagogical style of *Method in Theology*.

<sup>22</sup> *Insight*, 555[578].

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 733[755].

<sup>24</sup> *Method in Theology*, 287.

<sup>25</sup> *Method in Theology*, 287.

consciousness?"<sup>26</sup> What, to come back to our problem in an equivalent word, is that consciousness that we name attention? What Carter and company are doing are struggling unbeknownst down that page 464[489]: should we not join them? Then the metaphysical equivalents of seeing hearing tasting touching smelling will emerge in the *ethos* of the later definition of generalized empirical method.<sup>27</sup> We will be able to talk to contemporaries about such failures of sensibility as attention deficit syndrome. Without that dialogue and that effort we can too easily get trapped into pacing along - but hardly forward - in a phenomenology of sensibility rich with Heideggerian feeling but deeply vulnerable.

### 18.2.3 Fright of Symbolism

What would protect us from the vulnerability and lift us towards richer open existential dialogue is - and it does seem paradoxical - an adequate symbolization of the basis of the metaphysical equivalents needed by Carter and company. This is an unpleasant fact of the post- Renaissance complexifications, whether one thinks of the symphonies of Mahler or the advances of mathematics or the analysis of mind. And it is the metaphysician's task to push for an expression of explicit metaphysics: "it would consist in a symbolic indication of the total range of possible experience"<sup>28</sup> (that word *experience* again, but now in its largest sense). But, one asks, is it really necessary? Well, is metaphysics, a reach for an integral heuristic structure of being, an easy task? It has

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<sup>26</sup>Rita Carter (editor), *Exploring Consciousness*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 2002.

<sup>27</sup>*A Third Collection*, 141. "Generalized empirical method operates on a combination of both the data of sense and the data of consciousness: it does not treat of objects without taking into account the corresponding operations of the subject; it does not treat of the subject's operations without taking into account the corresponding objects". This is a profoundly significant revision of the thematic of generalized empirical method in *Insight*, but it thematizes his own practice in the book. See note 24 below.

<sup>28</sup>*Insight*, 396[421].



to reach out, surely, to the work of both Mahler and Carter. “This comprehension of everything is a unified whole can be either formal or virtual. It is virtual when one is habitually able to answer readily and without difficulty, or at least ‘without tears,’ a whole series of questions right up to the last ‘why?’ Formal comprehension, however, cannot take place without a construct of some sort. In this life we are able to understand something only by turning to phantasm; but in larger and more complex questions it is impossible to have a suitable phantasm unless the imagination is aided by some sort of diagram. Thus, if we want to have a comprehensive grasp of everything in a unified whole, we shall have to construct a diagram in which are symbolically represented all the various elements of the question along with all the connections between them.”<sup>29</sup> Indeed, in the largest and most complex question one needs a relatively integral series of such constructs, what I have called in these past years ‘metaphysical words’,  $W_i$ .<sup>30</sup>

#### 18.2.4 Wording the “Basic Position”<sup>31</sup>

The key transition page of *Insight*, on which one receives the invitation to take a

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<sup>29</sup>Loneragan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 151. Here I take the opportunity to suggest a related exercise in the control of reading. The word *phantasm* occurs twice in Loneragan’s claim above. What do you mean by *phantasm*? In so far as you have been pushed towards a developed symbolism of metaphysics you are “tuned” in your reading to the hierarchic complexity of the reality, thus, for example, in possession of an explanatory heuristic of the passionateness of being’s energy that Loneragan wrote of in terms of quasi-operations: “Its [the passionateness of being’s] underpinning is the quasi-operator that presides over the transition from the neural to the psychic.” (“Mission and Spirit”, *A Third Collection*, edited by F.E.Crowe, Paulist Press, 1985, 29).

<sup>30</sup>My first successful indication of such words was in the Epilogue of *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations: Self-Axis of the Great Ascent*, 1973. This work is available on the website [www.philipmcshane.ca](http://www.philipmcshane.ca). An initial listing is given in Cantower 24.

<sup>31</sup>*Insight*, 388[413].

stand regarding that odd line in the introduction,<sup>32</sup> is of necessity trapped in the limitations of the moving viewpoint, a pedagogical device.<sup>33</sup> This becomes pretty obvious if one broods seriously over one's meaning of the 'already out there now', a phrase in the statement of the basic position on that page. One gets a lift toward a thematic of that unpretty obviousness by becoming luminous about the previous three sections: What is this capacity-for-performance " - the whole private world that you are experiencing right now - in a universe that is made of molecules?" that we name knowing, or name "correctly understanding experience"? One needs to move down that page 464[489] with Carter and company if one is to lift the 'already out there now' into an explanatory heuristic context. The lift requires a massive subtlety of imaging that is existentially unwelcome. "No man is born in that pattern; no one reaches it easily."<sup>34</sup> "There arises a demand for a metaphysics that is grounded, not in the impalpable potentiality of explanation, but in the manifest truth of description."<sup>35</sup> The move to the lift requires an ontic struggle of the

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<sup>32</sup>*Insight*, xxviii[22] "There is an incoherent realism .... that poses as a halfway house between materialism and idealism, and on the other hand there is an intelligent and reasonable realism between which and materialism the halfway house is idealism".

<sup>33</sup>There are other limitations of the presentation which are beyond the present article. A full thematic of the basic position requires a thematic both of intentionality and of ultimacy.

It is important to notice the dominant pedagogical devices in *Insight* and *Method* inadvertence to which underpins the obstacles I treat of in this short essay. First, *Method*: I know from talking with Lonergan in the late sixties that he agonized about "leaving out *Insight*" in writing the book. He settled for a rich descriptiveness. But the problem of *Insight's* writing is more subtle, and missing his strategy has led to a tradition of misinterpretation. He is quite clear about that strategy when answering questions about feeling in the Florida Conference Interview: "There is in *Insight* a footnote to the effect that we're not attempting to solve anything about such a thing as personal relations. I was dealing in *Insight* fundamentally with the intellectual side - a study of human understanding - in which I did my study of human understanding and got human intelligence in there, not just a sausage machine turning out abstract concepts. That was my fundamental thrust" (*A Second Collection*, 221-2).

<sup>34</sup>*Insight*, 385[408].

<sup>35</sup>*Insight*, 505[529].

subject as subject, not in the world of Husserl or Heidegger, but in the world of neurochemical explanation.<sup>36</sup>

That self-“study of the organism begins from the thing-for-us” that is ourselves, reaching perhaps in a second or third reading of *Insight* for an existential liberation from the Cave of an imagined positioning into a systematic unification, and “there is no evidence that such a systematic unification ensures the possibility of any imaginative synthesis.”<sup>37</sup>

### 18.2.5 Comes About, Turns Around

“So it comes about that the extroverted subject visualizing extension and experiencing duration gives place to the subject oriented to the objective or the unrestricted desire to know and affirming beings differentiated by certain conjugate potencies, forms, and acts grounding certain laws and frequencies. It is this shift that gives rise to the antithesis of positions and counterpositions.”<sup>38</sup>

I have been writing briefly, doctrinally, about a few obstacles to metaphysics. I have just mentioned a second or third reading of *Insight*, and certainly one may take

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<sup>36</sup>Symbolic of the challenge to overcome the obstacles I write of is the fantasy of a foundational integration and transposition of the two sets of lectures in volume 18 of Lonergan’s *Complete Works, Phenomenology and Logic*. One must prevision the emergence, in slow cycles of the turns-around of section 5, of subjects ontically luminous in both aesthetics and science, “the whole thing in his [her] intellectual paws, so to speak” (op.cit., 357), repossessing in an operative explanatory mode the finalistic lift of “the given” (*Insight*, 15.3.4). Recall note 15 above and place the merging into the perspective of a new “conceptualization of understanding”(see *Verbum*, 238) within the lift noted in section 5. Within that context fantasy itself must be defined as a component of the thematic transposition of qq. 7-17 of the *Prima Secundae*. But prior to that is the quasi-operational stretching of present fantasy: “Without fantasy, all philosophic knowledge remains in the grip of the present or the past and severed from the future, which is the only link between philosophy and the real history of mankind.” (Herbert Marcuse, *Negation. Essays in Critical Thinking*, translated by Jeremy L.Shapiro, Boston, 1968, 155)

<sup>37</sup>*Insight*, 93[117].

<sup>38</sup>*Insight*, 514[537].

that existentially, biographically. But the obstacles to metaphysics are phylogenetic and a deeper solution must be of the same histogenetic character. A Bell-curve statistics of positioning requires the shift of probabilities<sup>39</sup> associated with subtle schemings of recycling and in particular the subtle schemes of recurrence identified by Lonergan forty years ago. What would ground that higher range of probabilities is the recycling of global functional collaboration that would mesh the struggle of Carter and sincere company with searchers for fundamental enlightenment that are equally sincere. That functional collaboration, to which all cultural domains point in their fragmented helplessness, is “a new and higher collaboration of men in the pursuit of truth,”<sup>40</sup> “a specialized auxiliary ever ready to offset every interference with intellect’s unrestricted finality.”<sup>41</sup> It is destined to spiral round and within global “institutions, roles, task”<sup>42</sup> to lift the street-talk of “personal relations”<sup>43</sup> into a fresh neurodynamics of “terminal value.”<sup>44</sup> The major obstacle to metaphysical control of progress is the failure to implement Lonergan’s auxiliary strategy of functional re-cycling.

That control is not some centralized institution, possibly at the mercy of sociopathic corporations, eating their way into education, at the mercy of the necrophilia of descendants of present economics, eating their way through the resources of the third world and the whole world. But I have written of that at length elsewhere over the past decades: it is the collaborative functional control of

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<sup>39</sup>*Insight*, 121[144]

<sup>40</sup>*Insight*, 719[740].

<sup>41</sup>*Insight*, 726[747].

<sup>42</sup>*Method in Theology*, 48.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.* Recall note 21 above. Also note that personal relations are, in the diagram, placed beyond the good of order: the last line of the display belongs to the dynamic exigence for the field. (On *field* and *exigence*, see these words in the index of *Phenomenology and Logic*).

<sup>44</sup>*Method in Theology*, 48.

microautonomy that would ground a new mesoeconomic subtlety.<sup>45</sup> At its heart it would cherish Lonergan's cyclic revamping of Aristotle's regard for sensibility. "The rational expectation of an Aristotle is the aliveness of sense-ability in its reach for global mindmating, an inner neural luminousness that in the post-axial period would be a democratic nervepoise. Meantime, we have to live with axial arrogance, our nerves massaged with its colonialisms, for centuries or millennia."<sup>46</sup>

August 6<sup>th</sup> 2005

### Quodlibet 18 - A Reply

It has been slightly more than eight months since you wrote Quodlibet 18, and my answer is overdue. In recent months, there has been the unexpected project of writing *Introducing Critical Thinking*. Though it has delayed my response, it has also helped me to leap forward in my understanding of this Quodlibet. When I came back to it now and read it again after three months of *ICT* book-work, it was a different reading for me - in fact, surprisingly different!

One of my leaps of understanding, perhaps the most central - or even *the* central - leap, revolves around the word *integral*. This word, especially in Lonergan's definition of metaphysics in *Insight*, has for many years been a source of puzzlement to me. Somehow the work of editing *ICT*, and the challenge of writing my chapters on 'critical thinking about female and male thinking,' lifted me into a new understanding of this

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<sup>45</sup>One might think of the shifts in perspective towards the beauty of smallness and the possibilities of nano-technology that would ground a culture of local creativities. This is in continuity with the remarkable fantasy of Lonergan, writing in 1942 "Nor is it impossible that further developments in science should make small units self-sufficient on the ultramodern standard of living to eliminate commerce and industry, to transform agriculture into a superchemistry, to clear away finance and even money, to make economic solidarity a memory, and power over nature the only difference between high civilization and primitive gardening" (Lonergan, *For A New Political Economy*, University of Toronto Press, 1999, 20).

<sup>46</sup>P.McShane, *Pastkeynes Pastmodern Economics: A Fresh Pragmatism*, Axial Press, Halifax, 2002, 155.

word, *integral*. As I walked the other morning, musing over my newfound understanding, I found myself thinking of the boy who flew after the butterfly, and thinking of my own startlingly strange experience, fourteen years ago now, in which I might say I too flew after the butterfly, hovered brightly and easily, flew over lake and high mountain, met a silently singing God on a cloud. It is only now that I can better articulate the meaning of that strange insight, tied up as it is in the meaning of this word, *integral*.

So what is my new meaning of *integral*? I would say that it is encompassed in the second definition of generalized empirical method (*A Third Collection*, 141). *Integral* for me now is a word that expresses my (luminous) being in the universe. It (integrality) is grounded in my native desire to embrace the universe, my desire to fly after the butterfly and stand 'with God' on a cloud; but a luminous meaning of *integral* goes beyond the spontaneity of my desire to take in and include my conception and affirmation of my desire, along with the critical implications it brings to my being in the universe. My meaning of *integral* resonates, in a way, with your joke about the Zen master buying a hot dog - 'what would you like on it?' and his answer 'make me one with everything.'

This new leap of understanding, so long and slow in coming, puts me, I believe, on a new road, a beginning road of an ever-growing metaphysical control of meaning. The final section of Quodlibet 18 ends with the title "Comes About, Turns Around" and takes its opening quote from *Insight*: "So it comes about that the extroverted subject visualizing extension and experiencing duration gives place to the subject oriented 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. It is this shift that gives rise to the antithesis of positions and counter-positions." For me, there is a recognition that the necessary *shift in me*, of which Lonergan speaks above, is the goal of my climb toward metaphysical control of meaning. I've made some small steps towards it in the few short winter months of struggle and sweat with *Verbum*.

(And some other small steps in my year and a half of math work).

These struggles began with my existential exercising around the diagram of water molecules, straining to say what I saw in that diagram while also wrestling with the meaning of objective abstraction (and apprehensive and formative abstraction). Very gradually, with much struggle and what seemed like idiotic reflections on the diagram of water molecules, I came to a meaning of objective abstraction. My meaning of it leaves me in a position of stark realization (much clearer than ever before) that the diagram is nothing more than symbol, or sign if you prefer. Understanding what water molecules are, is an activity that is quite distinct from and goes beyond my looking at the diagram. *Objective abstraction* means, then, my (luminous) realization that *there is something 'here' to be understood*. What that 'something' is, is not 'seen' in the 'here' of the diagram of water molecules. And so the diagram is limited, has a restricted, very precise use as symbol of what is yet to be understood (or for some, perhaps, what is already understood) – and that understanding is the work of apprehensive abstraction.

When I was walking the other morning (the same walk as mentioned above), it struck me that this meaning of objective abstraction gives new light to Wordsworth's youthful perspective, where 'the earth and every common sight took on the glory and freshness of a dream.' In other words, the 'earth and every common sight,' when I'm luminous about objective abstraction (and keeping in mind that the world of my walk is a world of nature: trees, sky, birds, fields, flowers, scented aromas...) becomes wholly an aesthetic symbol of the real, freshly glorified, a sort of dream world unknown, to be known...

Now does the meaning of AS fit in here? This was a second struggle accompanying the water molecules – to try to fathom the meaning of this little word. And it's only with my new glimmer of meaning regarding *integral* that what I thought might be a possible meaning of AS began to make some sense. Let's say that 'as' when used in commonsense conversation, seems most often to spontaneously express a 'link:' think of clouds *as* various figures or shapes, for instance, a sheep or dog etc. Or then

there's the diagram of water molecules – the seen shapes of the diagram *as* water molecules. Luminously, then, I can realize that the word 'as' in this case seems to express a relation, a grasping of one thing *as* another. The word then seems to be part of a formulation that is spontaneously expressing insight, relation, connection. In a luminous twist of language, then, I could speak of (*as* you do) as as as. Or to write it another way: 'as' as as! So I'm using the word *as* in luminous fashion to point to its own meaning that lurks in our non-luminous language use. Yes? (There's another use of the word *as*, like so: "as I was about to start playing the guitar..." Then what does the word mean? Is it in this case expressing the link, the relation, connection between 'I' and 'what I am about to do, to be'... ?)

As (!) I write this, I wonder just why it is that the meaning of the word *integral* had any influence on my struggle with these puzzles? I guess because it clarified for me and placed in a new, more luminous 'context,' the meaning of my central turn-around 14 years ago with that startlingly strange insight. My growth in meaning over the years since then has been so, so slow yet 'somehow' it has become a deep orientation, a deep commitment to the 'objective of the unrestricted desire to know,' enveloping me, if you will, in an ever-clearer recognition of a calling that was present to me in my teenage years but as yet un-objectified. Now, for me, it is a deeply tuned (to use your word) breathing in of the cosmos, doing what I can to bring about (or 'come about,' where those last two words make me think of sailing and their meaning there: to turn the boat around) the Law, the Human Right, the Global Way.... God's universe and our passionate longing to fly after the butterfly...

But this 'deep orientation' needs to be filled out with the precision that is alluded to in the **shift** Lonergan speaks of in that earlier quote: the shift not only of an orientation to the objective of the pure desire to know, but much more fully, to myself as "...affirming beings differentiated by certain conjugate potencies, forms and acts grounding certain laws and frequencies." To take that quote a little further, "it is through the acknowledgment of the fact of this shift that a philosophy or metaphysics



is critical." Now, this shift is a very tall order in these times and it takes me squarely back to *Verbum*, to the existential puzzling over water molecules and the meaning of AS, to the wrestling with 'what is this *lumen animae nostrae*,' with going over and over again the words and hints and clues of *Verbum* and of *Insight* and particularly of the latter book's two central chapters (at least in this respect), 15 and 16.

It also takes me, and *all* who are concerned about and with metaphysics, into a region of honesty, humility, struggle, openness. We need to begin examining what we are each doing toward this shift. Are we making some positive growth toward it, or are we not? (And if not, what then is our role?) I believe I am now at the last half of page 250 of *Method* where each person, dialectician, is asked to take a personal stand. *Where am I as regards this shift to a critical metaphysics?* There are all the necessary 'conversions' (or displacements and differentiations) to think of aspiring to here - but perhaps most especially the two 'conversions' to extreme realism and to theory. I would now add a third essential conversion: a necessary conversion to 'feminism,' or the better term would be 'The Human Right,' without which we as a human group will not move forward out of patriarchy and its crucial axial biases (I believe the two - patriarchy and axial biases - are intimately connected, as I am just now beginning to see). Also in answer to the significant personal question posed on p. 250, there are the guiding categories of pp 286-7 of *Method*, the 'general categories' (those words leave me cold!) to which we also must stumblingly aspire. Added to that list is the missing 10<sup>th</sup> category of functional specialization that you have so often pointed out. With this 10<sup>th</sup> category, the personal question of *what am I doing toward a shift to critical metaphysics* now includes the task of identifying, according to each person's answer, where I might fit in the functional scheme of things.

Now, globally, our human turn-around pivots on the implementation of Lonergan's functional cycling scheme. But here I enter into layers of meaning that are freshly uncertain to me. Slowly, gradually, we must attract some few (or many!) to the turn-around that is functional cycling. But who will do the attracting and where do

they stand in regard to the shift to a critical metaphysics? It is clear that the initial attempts at functional cycling will be meager, trapped in commonsense meaning that has been the rule of human studies and human sciences for centuries. Yet these initial attempts must yield ever-so-slowly to a growing metaphysical control of meaning, to human studies as science (here the universal viewpoint makes its entrance ...).

Now, while all those involved in these initial efforts must take on new roles and tasks (p. 48 Method) of the functional specialties, creating a new institution as they go - or roll - forward, they must also take on new roles and tasks of 'thinking,' shall we say. That is, the present state of education, of learning, is such that our native wonder is unrecognized and so brutally truncated. Hence the centuries of commonsense meaning in human studies has been caught in a tangled mess of 'trying to be scientific' by imitating 'objective scientific methods' which are themselves truncated. (So we end up with the joke about social studies being 'the science that counts.')

Instead, there need to be new roles and tasks of teaching and learning that gradually will develop into an educational turn-round. And the new roles and tasks I'm thinking of connect up with the kind of puzzling-problems I've been struggling with this winter: messing with diagrams of water molecules, but primarily *messing, puzzling*, going over and over a thing and allowing native wonder its (our) free reign - like Lonergan's epilogue comments in *Verbum*. How this educational turn-around 'fits in with' the growth and development of functional cycling is still very vague but at least as scholars of pedagogy begin to ask (within the functional cycling scheme) about theories of learning and teaching, the need for the educational turn-around will become ever-so-slowly apparent. One can hope that *Insight*, and *Verbum*, and these *Quodlibets*, and your own numerous other works, and many other such off-shoots will enter the cycle and have their influence on the educational messes and tangles; and not just education! All areas!

Further, within that cycling scheme, there will be those who explicitly take on the task of foundational climbing - the "...implementation of the integral heuristic

structure of proportionate being.” Such foundational climbing, I am discovering, – and as the opening statement of this *Quodlibet* makes clear – has its beginnings in the findings of *Verbum* on which *Insight* so deeply rests. So again I’m back to my struggles with *Verbum* and the water molecules, to the importance of puzzling and struggling with little seemingly silly problems, back to the first page of *Insight*, and back also to my struggle with the meaning of AS and that strange ‘entry problem’ in *Verbum* of “what, then, is this *lumen animae nostrae*?” (*Verbum* Chapter 3 and *Insight* Chapter 15 – + *potentia activa*: a climb in my future). In other words, those who are foundationally oriented are entering upon a climb that eventually cannot *but* be luminous about learning and thinking, about truncation, about *integral*, about *metaphysics*, about metaphysical control of meaning, about the need for an educational, cultural turn-around...

This foundational climbing will lead, gradually, to (among others) the slow struggle with *Verbum*, with *Insight*’s key chapters 15 and 16, with the second and third (and more) readings of *Insight* that you mention in your closing section here, and to a necessary clarity on metaphysics and metaphysical equivalents. So we can now look to your section 2.4: Metaphysical Equivalents of Experience, where experience in the first place means seeing, hearing, sensing, etc. (within which is the meaning of image, of phantasm), and in the second place indicates the ‘full and complete capacity’ of knowing, doing. The conjugate potencies, forms and acts that define that full capacity-for-performance need the spelling out in these next centuries of metaphysical equivalents, that is, of a climbing neuroscience: the underpinning of the underlying lower conjugate acts of physics and chemistry, botany and zoology, that yield to (?) the higher integrations of conjugate forms of understanding, of knowing, of planning, of deciding, of doing... More than that, there is needed the symbolism of, and for, such climbs-in-understanding and so we need our own strange relevant diagrams of ‘water molecules’ with which to wrestle: our ‘words of metaphysics.’

But all of this climbing begins with each *individual* as we enter seriously into the

functional cycling scheme of the future: if we are serious about this scheme, if we are serious about the implementation of an explicit metaphysics, then what are we doing to bring about *in ourselves*, in each other, in our intellectual communities, in our global culture, that shift to a critical metaphysics upon which our future hangs? Lonergan's words about this shift make a good concluding quote: "It is through its acknowledgment of the fact of this shift that philosophy or metaphysics is critical. It is only by [this shift] that this basic enterprise of human intelligence can free itself from the morass of pseudo-problems that otherwise beset it" (Lonergan, *Insight*, 514 [537]).

Reading and re-reading these pages now, I find it difficult to believe my reflections have come out of a seemingly small new leap surrounding the word *integral*; and yet they have - all fourteen years of them. Are we each of us prepared to climb further, to keep climbing, to daily go over and over the data seeking a little light?