

*Quodlibet 20***Loneragan's Metaphysics: A Functional Interpretation**

It seems best to me now, as I end this Quodlibet series, to aim at clear brevity. I already wrote an elaborate version, titled indeed curiously, "Applying Lonergan: A Christmas Carol", that I can make available if anyone is interested.¹ But brief and blunt is better.

Yet my new title seems to point towards a large and novel task. And that pointing is indeed the point. Perhaps it reminds you of the "far larger work"² that might have wagged the tale of *Insight*. First, then, I wish to deal with the impossibility of the title-project. Secondly, I give a sketch of the impossible task. Thirdly, I add some comments on existential gaps. In the fourth section I ramble a little about schools and followers. Finally I say something about shifting the probabilities. I write without footnotes, though I should add them later to help those few who wish to struggle forward: but this text is best read just as a melody: the chords and discords can be added to suit.

¹My ordinary e-mail is pmcshane@shaw.ca I would also note the offer to collaborate in attempting functional specialization, made a year ago when I terminated the Cantowers for that purpose, still holds. I should add two further comments here. First, there is a context of belief, and its sublation in Faith, that should be included here, but it would complexify this brief article overmuch. Yet while I stay within my own Christian special categories, I hope for a long-term merging and enrichment of both types of categories quite beyond the expectations of Whitson's *Coming Convergence of World Religions*. Secondly, the references I give below are primarily my own, since my presentation here is my taking a foundation stand, not an introduction to ongoing work in the area.

²I am recalling the first page of the Epilogue of *Insight*, and the project that remained beyond Lonergan. But perhaps I should also recall his modest objective in *Insight*. It clears the air of debate about feelings, etc. You will find his simple statement in the Florida interview, *A Second Collection*, the paragraph beginning at the last line of page 221.

20.1 The Possibility of the Functional Interpretation³

The project could take a shape that parallels my effort, and others', in volume 4(2005) of *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis*,⁴ where I interpreted the word "complete" in Lonergan's fifth canon of empirical inquiry. But pause with me over the key feature of a functional interpretation: it is *per se* directed, within the best categorial perspective meshed with the most up-to-date systematics,⁵ at a renewal of the cycle through history and onwards. And history is just not ready for the functional interpretation that I have

³I have in mind here a parallel with the chapter titled "The Possibility of Ethics" in *Insight*. Cantower 18 parallels that chapter, but drives to the conclusion - which indeed is the conclusion, the central stand, of this essay: the we are facing the possibility and probability of a new functional and global ethics of culture in the face of the cumulative evil of the present disorders.

⁴Available at <http://www.mun.ca/jmda/vol4>

⁵This raises the issue of the shift from axiomatic systems, like Euclid or the *Summa*, to a genetically- structured system of system, one that would include systems that reverse historical counter-systems.

in mind.⁶ There is, then, “The Problem “ of this “Truth of Interpretation.”⁷ and if you wish to add a touch of humour to this grim and gloomy view, then read with satirical glint “the description of the Wise Man”⁸ and his audience given in the sixth paragraph of the section to which I have just referred.⁹ “A grasp of the audience’s habitual grasp of its own intellectual development.”¹⁰ Yes, indeed!

In a century or a millennium - the time-delay depends on you - that grasp will be an operative reality, supported perhaps by a decent global minority.¹¹ But the present

⁶I have been lucky in my 50-year climb to the minding. The objective of this writing is to contribute to the genesis of a global community of founders, mediating both the fantasy and the beautiful cyclic efficiency of a culture of adequate minding that would include the range of satisfactions from the economic to the ecstatic. I am, in a sense, as desperate about this as General Romeo Dallaire is on another level, and there seems no harm in calling attention to the concrete global intention that I am appealing to in you. It requires a flexing of imagination to self-molecularize in you that intention, such a flexing as Dallaire writes about: “At the Canadian Forces Peace Support Training Centre, teachers use a slide to explain to Canadian soldiers the nature of our world. If the entire population of the planet is represented by one hundred people, fifty seven live in Asia, twenty-one in Europe, fourteen in North and South America, and eight in Africa. The numbers of Asians and Africans are increasing every year while the number of Europeans and North Americans is decreasing. Fifty percent of the wealth of the world is in the hands of six people, all of whom are American. Seventy people are unable to read or write. Fifty suffer from malnutrition due to insufficient nutrition. Thirty five do not have access to safe drinking water. Eighty live in sub-standard housing. Only one has a university or college education. Most of the population of the globe live in substantially different circumstances that those we in the First World take for granted” (Lieutenant-General Romeo Dallaire, with Major Brent Beardsley, *Shake Hands with the Devil. The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, Random House, Canada, 2003, 520-521).

⁷*Insight*, 562[585]: the beginning of that third impossible section of chapter 17.

⁸*Insight*, 626[649].

⁹See note 7 above.

¹⁰*Insight*, 563[586]. A good reaching here would be to note the manner in which the question of this grasp becomes existential for persons in community through the challenge of page 250 of *Method in Theology*.

¹¹One needs concrete fantasy, reaching from analogies in history of slow achievement. This is especially true in these desiccated-tadpole times so committed molecularly to steer the

situation is one in which the prospective audience, functional historians, is non-existent, or in so far as it exists in some slim potentiality, it is caught in the present cultural ethos.¹²

So, who am I writing to now? This is a *haute vulgarization* of foundational pointing.¹³ What is desperately needed is a popular flexing of imagination that is a poor imitation of foundational fantasy.¹⁴ The take-off zone could well be chapter 4 of *Lack in*

future towards a larger misery-tadpole. We need fresh Proustian reading of the concluding section of chapter 7 of *Insight*, or the early chapters of *Topics in Education*. The third stage of meaning, the second time of the temporal subject, is quite beyond present fantasy.

¹²There are too many aspects to this, as the previous note indicates. The hybris-rejection of mystery (see the conclusion of section 1 of Chapter 17 of *Insight*) through the multiplication of atrophied present myths (“which make life unlivable”, *Topics in Education*, 232) includes, I would suggest, the rejection by Lonerganism of the humility of functional specialization. See *Joistings 8*, (see the conclusion to the next note) where I relate the challenge to a participation in the satisfaction of Christ. On the particular issue of functional history, I would draw attention to a successful but unsuccessful effort: Fr.Fred Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word. A Study in History*, Paulist Press, 1978. It is a brilliant pastoral and inspirational book But it just doesn’t make the grade as functional history. For details comments on Crowe’s book, see section 4 of Cantower 38: “Functional History”.

¹³Lonergan comments (121, 155) on *haute vulgarization* in Volume 6 of his *Collected Works* seem sadly ironic. Most of his lecturing and teaching and writing were done under the Fontenellian pressure towards popularization. Perhaps it was not true of his lectures in Rome? I recall him talking to me about teaching there, and how his aim was to speak to the bright ones, then something would “trickle down”, whereas if you pitched it low, no one would listen! A vast amount of his published writings is amenable to popular reading, and at times he geared it thus. This presents a massive challenge to our culture: luckily the challenge is to be institutionalized in the normative cyclic functional heuristic. This relates to a key metadoctrine: the remoteness of serious meaning from standard theological teaching. I think of my own days, daze, in theology, when the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th years of theological students were in the same class, a three year cycle of decadence. Imagine this in contemporary physics! Certainly, an unwelcome analogy for many. “Doctrines that are embarrassing will not be mentioned in polite company” (*Method in Theology*, 299). *Joistings 1-8* is a series of website essays one function of which is to lift interested in the Latin works - emerging now in translation in their inevitable Latin ‘tone’ - to a level of ontic self-attention. The series is a pointer towards a fuller kataphatic spirituality.

¹⁴Foundation fantasy is a very precise neurochemical exercise grounded in the effort to ferment forward from a dialectically-mediated perspective, on track as it were, towards a larger future of remote metadoctrines, non-popular metasystematics, scientifically-structured

the Beingstalk. There I draw a parallel between “The Calculus of Variation” of mathematics and the Calculus of Variation that is to be the mature operation of functional specialization.¹⁵ It is to be a control of the variation that is a modest, or occasionally a paradigmatic, advance in the cycle of “cumulative and progressive results.”¹⁶ But this is massively hard to fantasize in the present ethos of philosophy and theology. We have to appeal, like Lonergan, to parallels with successful science: but what if my audience knows little science?

I have appealed regularly to the parallel with the simplest of the sciences, physics. It seems to be reaching for some maturity in the past 80 years, but at all events there is a Standard Model in control of progress at present.¹⁷ If someone interprets cosmic data of physics, the up-to-date historians will pick up on it and point it towards

projections of communication, and so, to a freshening in meaning and mystery of our daily lives, and so on round the cycle.

¹⁵The parallel, developed in chapter four of *Lack in the Beingstalk* (Axial Press, Halifax, 2005) by considering Husserl’s work in the area, helps to focus the point being made in previous footnotes.

¹⁶*Method in Theology*, 4.

¹⁷The ‘Standard Model’ is still very much in control in physics, even in the face of a challenge from string theory. “The next step in creating a more unified theory of the basic interactions will probably be much more difficult. All the major theoretical developments of the last twenty years, such as grand unification, supergravity, and supersymmetric string theory, are almost completely separated from experience. There is a great danger that theoreticians may get lost in pure speculation” (L.O’Raifeartaigh and N.Straumann, “Group Theory: Origins and Modern Development,” *Review of Modern Physics* 72 (2000), 15. Popular literature tends to focus on string theory: see, for instance Brian Greene, *The Elegant Universe*, Vintage, 2000. Greene’s latest work, give a good illustration of muddles broadly shared by both serious and popular physics: compare the precision of Lonergan’s comments, in *Insight*, Newton’s bucket with the confusion on the topic that pervades (see the index under *bucket of spinning water*) Greene, *The Fabric of the Cosmos. Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality*, Alfred A Knopf, New York, 2004. There are still, of course, elementary confusions in quantum theory that Lonergan’s aggregiform heuristic can cut through, e.g by developing a clear heuristic of the indeterminacy of secondary determinations of physical conjugates of identical chemical things, but that is a topic for another day. See further note 31 below.

a freshening of details of the cycling. In a few centuries there will be a developed genetic systematics (the *per se* fruit of the seventh specialty) permanently operative in controlling the meaning of Communications, Research, Interpretation, It will be the common mind-set of global collaborators, creatively tracking and lifting street-meaning.

20.2 The Sketch

Why, then, attempt a sketch? Indeed, contrarywise, why not attempt the “far larger” work? “The Sketch” reminded you immediately, I hope, of that section of chapter 17 of *Insight*.¹⁸ And that very parallel should stop me short: indeed, certainly stop short the dreaded possibility of tackling the far larger work at my tottering age of 73. How large would the larger work have to be, to freshen present cycles of philosophy and theology? *Insight* is a very big book: and it is now, so to speak, history. Method never meant anything globally, and its central message never even got the chance of being passe among Lonergan scholars.

But let us bravely rummage forward. “The Sketch,” of course, could be helpful here, if only we understood it and its spread of canons.¹⁹

Obviously, if I attempted the interpretation named in my title, I would be operating from a luminosity with regard to my present categorial and metasystematic perspective, focused on the *Opera Omnia* of Lonergan.²⁰ The aim would be to do what

¹⁸*Insight*, 579-81[602-3].

¹⁹Consider *Lonergan's Hermeneutics. Its Development and Application*, edited by Sean E. McEvenue and Ben F. Meyer, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1989. I commented on the failure of that conference and volume in Cantower 9. In Quodlibet 21, “Recycling Ancient Meaning” McEvenue and I re-visit the problem area in the context of his very suggestive presentation at the Toronto Conference of August, 2004: “‘Truth’ and ‘Dialectic’ in Interpreting Scripture”.

²⁰See the comments in note 13 above about the *Opera Omnia*. I had the luck of being forced quite beyond popular culture by the task of editing two of his ventures into serious theory:

“the Sketch” says, and indeed I might well repeat the strategy of that article on “complete”: I might allow Lonergan to “speak for himself”. Since we are talking summary and sketch, we are back to pages 286-291 of *Method*. But let us think about going the way of “hypothetical expression” of “pure formulation.”²¹ Then I would note one definite trouble. *Insight* aimed, to a fair extent, at shifting its learning reader towards a fully explanatory heuristic.²² *Method* made no such attempt, but quietly pointed out its trickiness just where it hurt most: at the end of his incomplete summary statement of his perspective, where he makes the point, “one can go on”²³: could he? Oh yes, but not on to the complexity of the present perspective and fantasy of a global multi-disciplinary with slopes of converging functional work leading towards a

Economics (vol. 21, *CW*) and Logic (vol 18, *CW*). As those who have shred my struggle will know, this involves prolonged and grim climbing. It is as well to note here that, as of 2004, the collection of Lonergan’s unpublished Roman notes are being made assessable. Again, luck was with me here: I had the privilege of sorting these out into Batches and Folders in 1973-4, when Lonergan first donated them to the Regis College archives, and indeed have had since then a personal copy. There is heavy theory in these notes, but there is always the danger of under-reading them that consists in not being self-luminous about not sharing Lonergan’s inner word of metaphysics, generated especially by his work on the *Verbum* articles, “five years work for anyone who disagrees with me”. These reflections bring us right back to the impossible task of the title.

²¹*Insight*, 580[60].

²²This involves the extremely difficult challenge of going beyond all imaginative syntheses (see *Insight* chapter 3, section 6.4) to rest and move in a purely symbolic framework in which the book *Insight* does not “appear” but is replaced by symbolic structures that incarnate the organic human come-about reality described by Lonergan: “so it comes about that the extroverted subject visualizing extension and experiencing duration gives place to the subject orientated to the objective of the unrestricted desire to know and affirming beings differentiated by certain conjugates potencies, forms and acts grounding certain laws and frequencies. This life-climb is described, at least in its initial stages, in Cantower 9, “Position, Poosition, Protopossession”. I would say that the dominant need here is a sustained focus on chemical imagery as a flexible circling scheme of psychic crutches.

²³*Method in Theology*, 287. It is not difficult to grasp that what he invites is a re-writing, in explanatory heuristic terms, of the first part of the book One is thrown back into the challenge indicated in the previous note.

common global concern with dialectic that enlightens systematically the foundational sub-population bent on “remembering the future,”²⁴ an enlightenment reaching in asymmetric but regularized slopes towards our streets and towns, our seas and lands.²⁵

Still, you wish for some clues: what might Lonergan’s Metapoise be, have been?

20.3 Some Key Existential Gaps

There are some of my colleagues and readers with me, but not many who have been as lucky as me in my sixty year searching, fifty of which were on the sweaty steps carved by Lonergan. So, my early days 1945-1956, oriented me towards adequate symbolizations: how else could Chopin or Einstein attempt to share their remote meanings? That, I would say, is both a major stumbling block and a major stepping stone to be faced in these coming generations.²⁶ Does not $f(p_i ; c_j ; b_k ; z_l ; u_m ; r_n)$ remind

²⁴“Remembering the Future” was the title of Cantower 1, and it expresses a need to shift towards what some would call *Praxis*, best symbolized for Lonergan students by a fantasy about a second chapter 12 of *Insight* entitled “The Notion of Becoming”. Functional specialization has to operate under that dynamic right round the eight specialties, but the problem of the feebleness of forward specialization is at present the most evident one. Understandably, Lonergan folded in this area as he struggled to finish *Method*. Visit the Websites on “Futurology” and fantasize about the future of futurology and the large task of battling out of the long cycles of decline of these past millennia, boosted by a cyclic functional dynamic of contrafactual history. Such a dynamic would fatten up the needed metastystematics way beyond an integral retrieval of past axiomatic systems. Reflection on this challenge helps to make sense of and sublimate Lonergan’s claim: “he will be presenting an idealized version of the past, something better than was the reality”(*Method in Theology*, 251).

²⁵One needs complex imagery here to differentiate the two slopings mentioned, the manner in which disciplinary specialties converge towards a common dialectic, though insights be random; the manner in which foundational control points effectively towards local and continental slopings in various time-schemes of emergence.

²⁶I have quoted regularly in these Quodlibets Lonergan’s view on the need for symbolic control, but why not once more with feeling? “The comprehension of everything in 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 turning to phantasm; but in larger and more complex questions it is impossible to have a suitable phantasm unless the

you that someone needs to understand your blood flow, even if its not you understanding, and someone needs to understand the neurodynamics of your phantasm, and it better be you if you don't want to remain breathless.²⁷

But I have written enough regarding this else where. Within what I call " the first word of metaphysics"²⁸ lurks the invitation to detect a range of other ills.²⁹ What, for instance, is the meaning of " ; " in the symbolic word? It points to a meta-explanatory grasp of aggreformism, Lonergan's sublation of Aristotle's hylemorphism.³⁰ Of course, the pointing of Aristotle is a lost causeway in the general culture and pretty much the same in the Lonerganesque culture: it is difficult work that cannot be pursued non-self-luminously nor counterpositionally.³¹

imagination is aided by some sort of diagram. Thus if we want to comprehensive grasp of everything in a unified whole, we shall have to construct a diagram in which are symbolically represented all the various elements on the question along with all the connections between them"(The *Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, University of Toronto Press, 2002, 151).

²⁷Recall Insight 733[755] and link it to the problem "one can go on" of *Method*, 287.

²⁸My introduction of this first word of metaphysics, $f(p_i ; c_j ; b_k ; z_l ; u_m ; r_n)$, occurred in a lecture at Cork University in 1970, published later as the Epilogue to *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations*. See there, p.108.

²⁹Various ills are touched on briefly below, especially in the notes. I would draw attention here, however, to one particular hold-up in Lonergan studies that benefits from the control of meaning given by metaphysical words. That manner is which such control can shift debate is illustrated by Quodlibet 20: "The Solution to the Problem of Feelings in Lonergan Studies".

³⁰Some hints on moving towards an adequate explanatory heuristic of aggreformism are given in Cantower 29.

³¹The present solidly truncated culture can give the semblance of subtlety and achievement, and so invite dialogue. The failure of such dialogue can be illustrated with most precision in physics: see note 17 above and add the futility of talking with the contributors of *Science and Ultimate Reality. Quantum Theory, Cosmology and Complexity*, J.D.Barrow, P.C.W.Davies and C.L.Harper, Cambridge University Press, 2004. I invite especially a perusal of the final section on emergence and complexity, in the main a wasteland of sophistications. Certainly, the dialectic subtask of *Comparison*(Method, 250) can bring forth fruit here, but comparison and dialogue in their usual senses are general effete academic pursuits. Here I would

The last thing you need here, in this fare-thee-well address, is a catalogue of missing links. But perhaps I might stress how Lonergan's pre-functional metaphysics - something that can be refined into his foundational reality - was never written up.³² The single footnote early in chapter 15 of *Insight* tells a serious piece of the story: can you imagine what $f(p_i ; c_j ; b_k ; z_l ; u_m ; r_n)$, and aggreformism might do for the *Summa* of Thomas?³³ Not to speak of what an adequate view of growth and genesis, would do.³⁴ But for a full explanatory worldview³⁵ one has to get a grip on energy's relation to the lower ground of loneliness and its levels of infolding through billions of years up to the filling of the cosmic existential gap in the Galilean organism that IS, a pinnacle of

appeal, as I do at the end of this essays, for those in other fields to brood over just what goes on in their own comparative dialogue. The image of tracking to which I draw attention regularly is key here: the cycling is to be the front runners moving round and forward: comparative and persuasive dialogue is an outreach from a complexly-structured specialty of communications. It is regularly an outreach of subtle skirmishing with entrenched institutions, such as the economic establishment of town and gown. The issue is detrunction, not deconstruction. The issue in a longer run is pre- high-school education. "When teaching children geometry one is teaching children children" has to cunningly become a future norm.

³²This is one aspect of the crisis that emerged very early in Lonergan studies. Certainly the appointment to Rome hurried him to the end of *Insight* - and his correspondence shows that he wished for a year's delay - but it would in any case have been enormously difficult for him, within the pedagogic strategy of the book, to push explicitly into the metaphysics that he had developed through his work on *Verbum*.

³³Think, for instance, of the explanatory heuristics that would hold together the flexible schemes of recurrence named virtues. See *Quodlibet* 3.

³⁴This is a huge complex of topics: of genetic method and its roots in the moving analytic system of *Insight* 464[489]; of the inner words of possibility that lift the neurodynamics of feeling into an obediencial intentionality; of the underpinning of all such topics by an open suggestive aggreformic symbolization; of these topics' feedback of language that would keep the focus ontic (See *Phenomenology and Logic*, 311-13). All this gives fresh meaning to that task of metaphysics, so compactly named by Lonergan, which "would consist in a symbolic indication of the total range of possible experience"(*Insight*, 396[421])

³⁵Recall note 22 above, which concludes to the need for chemical imaging - quite different from reductionist DNA etc imaging, as note 34 helps to show, and abundantly supported by the complex symbolization of a sequence of complementing metaphysical words.

finitude identically uni-conscious of the triplicity of Ultimates.³⁶

What is the explanatory heuristic of such a story?³⁷ What is the symbolically-expressed metaphysical equivalent of the natural resultances of the Teller's Tale,³⁸ the

³⁶The two previous footnotes push us towards the need for symbolization, a need that becomes deeper as we struggle to contemplate the two ultimates of being, what I have called the lower and the upper grounds of loneliness. Those two ultimates are to mesh, and mesh being, in final unity, in the Galilean organism named Jesus. A massive shift in Lonergan's reach for an explanatory heuristic was his word, clasp, embrace, of the meaning of energy as an empirical residence of dispersion and desire. Word, clasp, embrace? Might there be an echo here, in the word of this triplicity, of that ultimate triplicity that is Speak, Spoke, Clasp? And might there be a contemplative embracing in the third stage of meaning that would make that echo global, "a psychic force that sweeps living human bodies, linked together in charity" (*Insight*, 723[745])? On the initial patterning of that kataphatic stance, see the series of 8 essays, *Joistings*, on the website. On the meaning of energy, see Cantower 30.

³⁷Notice that we are back with, or forward to, the impossible challenge of the title. It has the fuller context of a foundational perspective on history and system. But here we are interested in the heuristics of interpretation as cyclically refreshed by enlargements of genetic metasystems, an interest that is neatly focused by noting two possible meanings of *What* in the above question. What is Lonergan's heuristic? What might the heuristic of an adequate later interpreter of his heuristic be? We are back with Lonergan's pointers to the universal viewpoint and to its sublation into functional specialist work. The diagram on p.124 of *A Brief History of Tongue* helps here: it is what I call the third metaphysical word.

³⁸I am climbing, or pointing cloudwise, to the end of the impossible project, footnoting the *exigence* (see the index, *Phenomenology and Logic*) that constitutes each of us and all the cosmic crying. (De v.i). Special categories of the human quest can only emerge in their explanatory power through the slow global cyclic listening to the Teller's Tale. So, the third stage of meaning involves a fresh pragmatism that gives Hegel's insight a new context."As the labour of introspection proceeds, one stumbles on Hegel's insight that the full objectification of the human spirit is the history of the human race. It is in the sum of the products of common sense and common nonsense, of the sciences and the philosophies, of moralities and religions, of social orders and cultural achievements, that there is mediated, set before us in a mirror in which we can behold, the originating principle of human aspiration and human attainment and failure. Still, if that vast panorama is to be explored methodically, there is the prior need of method "(I quote from p. 14 of a Lonergan archival fragment labeled A697).

passive and the active potencies that are obediential to that calling, cauling?³⁹

And what are the metaphysical equivalents of the mind-setting that could be so grasped as to give dramatic and grammatical control within the linguistic feedback of a microautonomic and mesoeconomic ecology that would remain open to an ever-fresher efficiency of obediential openness?

Such an objectification of mind-setting-out will eventually locate that twentieth century Canadian solitary in an unfinished operative spiraling heuristic, a galaxy of suffering glory.⁴⁰

20.4 Schools and Scandals

Yesterday, February 13th, 2005, my wife and I were in Vancouver's Chinatown, watching the wonders of a multicultural parade, dominated of course by Dragons and Lions and Drums and Flags: but there were also the solemn march of a Firefighter band, the Jazziness of our local Carnival band, the twists and turns of Punjabi melodies and bodies. What, one might ask, as I did in a presence of the parade echoing in me, has metaphysics to do with these pilgrims?

Metaphysics as Lonergan conceived it in his end-view, and as I conceive it now with more concrete reach, has everything to do with the pilgrimage. That is to say,

³⁹I would draw attention here only to one problematic zone lurking in this sentence. It is the need for precision on the meaning of *potentia activa* (see *Verbum*, chapter 3) and for the recognition of that precision within the clumsy terminology of Insight: *capacity-for-performance*. Add this precision to the sublation of Thomas' notion of "natural resultance" mentioned in the previous note, and one can climb to Lonergan's perspective on natural potency: "we may ask whether this neglect of natural potency has not some bearing on unsatisfactory conceptions of obediential potency" (*Verbum*, 149)

⁴⁰In *Joistings 8*, "Recycling Satisfaction", I develop a thesis regarding the relation of our humble turning to the idea, Circumincensing In The Idea, as our participation in the satisfaction of Jesus, a tadpole maturing of the differentiation of talk in the body's unity written of by Paul. "Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be babes, but in your thinking be mature" (*I Cor.* 14:20).

normatively: not in its present sinful disorder of effeteness.⁴¹ Part of that sinful disorder is the elevation of comparative reflections into a position of centrality and dignity which is grossly undeserved. Lonergan's metapoetics fits into the genetic structuring of heuristic worldviews only as a radical deviation that has much to do with Plato's aspirations and Aquinas' axiomatics and little to do with the descriptive and mythic writings foisted on us in these past centuries, posturing - sometimes piously - in a self-neglecting deconstructing of poet and peasant.

There are varieties of Lonergan schools now that have little or no inkling of, or even inklink to, the fully explanatory perspective that emerged in the Canadian Stranger. They join the conventional posturing by elevating dialogues of comparison into an academic trading that stands haughtily against the emergent global ethics of humble functional cultural reflection.

20.5 Shifting the Probabilities⁴²

⁴¹We are glimpsing the heart of Lonergan's general metaphysics of redemptive progress. The glimpse is to grow in a fresh towering academy and flow into the streets, changing the brightness of eyes and ayes. I recall, from those first lectures of Lonergan in the Spring of 1978, his remark that seeking perfection means struggling to remove the biggest obstacle in oneself. The biggest obstacle in the cultural global persona is the hubris of undivided labor in minding. Nor is it inevident in Lonergan studies, which are so sadly "effete" (*Method in Theology*, 99) in its present gatherings and writings. One must place the present history of fragmented academic studies within the context of Lonergan's sketch, in *Insight* 7.8, of decline. One must think there too of the slim vision of cosmopolis that emerged in Lonergan's minding fourteen years after he agonized that description. The thinking is, in a later culture, to be identified in all disciplines as kataphatic contemplation, reverent, repentant. But we are called to be homely, home-turned: replacing the beam in our eye with the gleam of repentance and hope. Poor potsherd can become immortal diamond. The fragmented Christian global puttering can give efficient beauty back to God when Christian "science forms a unified whole" (*Topics in Education*, 160, line 17).

⁴²It seems fitting to make the point of this late Quodlibet in these three concluding footnotes. Probabilities can shift, through cyclic functional unification, from products to sums (*Insight*, 121[144]) so that "the antecedent willingness of hope advances from a generic reinforcement to a specialized auxiliary, ever ready to offset every interference with intellect's unrestricted finality" (*Insight*, 726[747]), spoken in "God's concept" (*ibid.*), the Adopter's Caul.

Why should I try another summary of hope? But I must if only in the form of a closing appeal, not to the few, but to you. Please turn to, turn over, page 250 of *Method in Theology* with some seriousness. It asks you to take a stand, and to do so luminously. You may well turn to the page and, after a swift read, consider that McShane is fussing about some late Lonergan ramble on the topic of dialectic, but dialectic is really something else, something old as Plato, something glorious like Marxism, something obscure like Derrida, postmodernism, whatever. Well, that would be a stand: be luminous about it and your removal of it and you from the yearnings of the cosmos. Take it to heart, noise it abroad, if only to your bathroom mirror. Listen to your narrow minding.

The stand is necessarily narrative, reaching out into your future and towards the next millions of human years. At the core of that stand is your stand on serious understanding and serious self-understanding. Serious understanding? It is tough enough in the simplest science; what then of psychology and poetry? Serious self-understanding? Take a stand, then, on another page of the *Collected Works: Insight* 464[489]. "Study of the organism begins....," and the organism is you: do you take a stand on some naive reading of "insight into phantasy," or do you sense, with Punjabi dancers and Chinese children, that the fantasy of the pilgrim parade is somehow the real world of energy's spirits, the world of 15-billion-year-old molecules lonely in the finality of their flags and flaggings?

An astute reader may notice the manner in which these three notes hiddenly place the problem of creative human collaboration in a Trinitarian Circumincessional context of the Incarnate Spoken, the Clasp of salvific grace, hope in the Eternal Adopter.