

Lonergan 1

Questions I Friday, August 6

1. (Michael Paul Gallagher) I would appreciate a few more comments on the relevance of Method in Theology, as you see it. In particular - 1) what is the contemporary question to which this model points an answer? Or in other words - 2) Insight demanded conversions of its reader; what new conversion would you like this book to cause?

2. (Anon) Yesterday in the question period you said that even in the supernatural level there is a sense in which knowledge precedes love. In recent writings, however, you say that love need not always follow upon, but may precede, knowledge. Could you explain the apparent contradiction?

3. (anon.) As a philosopher of religion I was troubled by your stress on the need to in some way reduce natural theology to systematic theology. Must not a certain distinction between philosophy and theology be maintained? In a state university one must discuss God apart from Christian revelation. In this context do you see a natural theology as autonomous and distinct from theology?

4. (Anon) What, in your view, is the meaning of a Christian philosophy? Do you consider your work in Insight as Christian and - more importantly - would you speak of a Christian methodology?

5. (Anon) There seems to be in your account of method no ~~serious~~ mention of apologetical theology in its more usual sense. Is this simply an outmoded 'thought form'? Or is there still a need for a reasoned propaedeutic to conversion which would precede and prepare for it?

6. (Giovanni Sala) This morning you said that the 'problem of hermeneutics arises from the nature of common sense'

Would it not be more exact to say: the problem of hermeneutics arises from the historicity of human meaning? - whether it is a question of common sense meaning or scientific or philosophic meaning. As a matter of fact there is a problem of the ~~scientific or philosophic meaning~~ (see below)

I agree that scientific meaning in so far as it is a question of natural sciences does not need, strictly speaking, interpretation. But human sciences of the past need interpretation no less than common senses of the past or of another culture.

In general we are involved in a problem of hermeneutics whenever we are to meet meaning as constitutive of human life, human reality, no matter whether it is a common sense, or a philosophic or a scientific meaning (or a mixture of these).

(Replace scored out line: interpreting of philosophers and scientists of the past.

Questions II.

Lonergan 2

1. Is it possible at one and the same time to hold that God is meaning and God is mystery. In what sense is it proper to speak of God as meaning and in what sense of God as mystery? Is the God of meaning the God of philosophy and the God of mystery the God of theology?
2. Do you think that it is true to say that while knowledge is relatively easily transmitted from generation to generation, authenticity or sanctity is something that has to be achieved anew by each individual, and is inherited in a much more limited sense. E.g. It is one thing to understand the conclusions of Kepler or Augustine and quite another to become the same kind of men.
3. Do you think that Teilhard's notion of progress involves something like the "socratic error" --progress in authenticity and sanctity going in parallel to progress in knowledge?
4. In your articles on "The Form of Inference" and the "Isomorphism of Thomist and Scientific Thought" you make the point that Newman worked out the "permanent structure of method..... The same general process of experience, of hypothesis, and of verification, (because) the structure of scientific knowledge is a constant and that constant squares with the Thomist metaphysical constant of potency, form and act"

- Please (a) comment on this statement ;
(b) indicate its similarity or (and) difference between your view of method and that of Newman;
(c) state if your "consciousness" is the same as Newman's "conscience"

(Fr. Tom Norris

5. "Insight" is concerned mostly with the process by which correct affirmations are made at the rational level of consciousness. I feel the significance of that book would be greatly broadened if this activity of rational affirmation could be related back to its roots in man's primary experiential presence --to-- Being.

Thus correct judgments could be seen as what they are: the explicit, incremental carrying-out of that implicit, total judgment which is man's presence--to--being as authentically lived.

A philosophy, however, valid, which does not constantly refer itself back to its roots in primary consciousness and thus reveal itself as that consciousness's reflexive, immanent self-illumination, cannot satisfy the demands for comprehensiveness and integration which Hegel and Heidegger teach us to make on philosophy.

Such a philosophy can be a source of consciousness's alienation from itself and of "Seinsvergessenheit", since it is

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Questions III

1. In Marxism you have an orthodoxy, a left, a right, and a dialectic between these. It would seem that a marxist could employ your eight functional specialities in studying his past with a concern for the future. In what sense is your method in theology specifically christian and theological, and in what sense is it ideologically neutral?
2. Do you assign any theoretic importance to the sequence in which you develop the first four chapters in Method in Theology? In the light of Insight it would seem that the chapter on meaning should precede rather than follow the chapter on the human good.
3. Thomas Daly: The 8 functional specialities seem justified as an a posterior account of how theologians work. But do they genuinely come from the heuristic structure of consciousness in the way suggested? Specifically, Dialectics is the field of judgments, not of values - it asks which views are true. History does not enter into judgment any more than interpretation does - it just aims at an understanding in a wider field, whose correctness will later be ascertained through dialectics. And while doctrines fits judgment well, it so does foundations. Would not a more appropriate scheme be:

	Decision	-	Values, Conversion
Dialectics	-	Judgment	- Foundations, Doctrines
History,	↔	Understand.	- Systematics
interpretation		Experience	- Communications
Research			

That is, Foundations put on the level of judgment along with Dialectics and Doctrines, while History is put on the level of Understanding along with interpretation and systematics.

4. In your treatment of hermeneutics and interpretations in Insight, the universal viewpoint is a key concept, while in relation to ~~the~~ functional speciality of interpretation it goes unmentioned. Why is this?
5. Matthew Lamb: In the philosophical discussions on the apriori anthropological constants of structuralism and on the social structures of meaning in Luhmann's sociology there ~~is~~ are objections raised in Germany that such an ~~apriori~~ apriori approach sublates the particularity of history. Do you regard the methodological thematization of the related and recurrent operations of experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding as being meta-historical or as revealing the ~~conditions of the possibility of concrete historical processes~~ concrete conditions of the possibility of historicity?