

2475CD0E050

Questions on ACPA paper '*Insight: Preface to a Discussion*,' with BL's responses

In his editorial notes to the paper '*Insight: Preface to a Discussion*' Frederick Crowe indicates that he had had some correspondence with Bernard Lonergan prior to the 1958 convention of the American Catholic Philosophical Association in 1958. Crowe had been asked to read the paper '*Insight: Preface to a Discussion*,' in Lonergan's stead. This correspondence 'dealt with questions I thought might be raised at the convention' (CWL 4: 285).

At least some of the correspondence to which Crowe refers and related materials have been found in the Crowe's papers and are reproduced in this item and several others that will follow.

The first document 2475AD0E050 is a 4-page set of handwritten 'Questions for Fr. Lonergan on *Insight*.'

The second document 2475BD0E050 consists in questions sent to BL by FEC, who had solicited questions from Peter Nash and Dr. Lynch.

The present item is a transcription of the second document, done by RD. BL's handwritten responses are reproduced here in bold print and preceded by 'BL.'

Questions on ACPA paper:

P. Nash.

In general: 1. The judgment of existence. It will be asked if there could not be a sensitiveo-intellectual grasp of material existents. **BL: There is, but it is prior to knowledge of existence.** It will be asked on the ground that the typical set of *human* knowing is a conjoint operation of sense and intellect. It will also be urged that the first real thing we know is a sensible. 2. The notion of being. Why is it called a notion? How does notion differ from concept? **BL: Q&A.** What does the phrase "the desire is a notion" mean? **BL: get behind words to intellectual realities – appropriation.** 3. The equation of intelligibility with being. It would seem that Fr. Lonergan equates intelligibility with being. Isn't that to fall into

essentialism? [These qq. “sure to be raised.”] **BL: If existence assumed to be unintelligible.**

In particular (according to the pages of the typescript):

P. 1. What does INSIGHT mean? Why this term? **BL: cf. chap I. It expresses the fact.**

P. 3. How is the judgment of existence a cognitional reason? **BL: It is prius quoad nos.**

P. 4. Why does *Insight* start with mathematics if one is ‘to acknowledge in man’s developed understanding of the material universe a principle that yields a developed understanding of understanding itself?’ **BL: Begin w simple & move to more complex – pedagogy.**

P. 6. ‘Its knowing is process.’ Is process the whole of knowledge, its term?

P. 7. Why does it take the totality of true judgments to know the objective universe? **BL: to know all.** Doesn’t this mean that we can never know the objective universe? **BL: Not all of it.**

P. 8. Why is the real defined as what is to be known by the totality of true judgments? Are there not true judgments about *entia rationis*? about non-realities? **BL: One also knows real by excluding.**

P. 9. What is it to intellectualize the sensible by schemes, sequences, processes, etc.? This sounds Kantian. **BL: Especially to empiricists & naive realists.**

P. 10. How does a matter-of-fact judgment differ from a judgment of existence? **BL: Includes occurrence.** What is meant by metaphysics being ‘just factual?’ **BL: Not mistaken assumptions of old Euclidean, rationalists.**

P. 11. Is it so evident that ‘the only possible answer is that, prior to the judgment, there occurs a grasp of the unconditioned?’ **BL: If judgment is absolutely true.**

How ask the question ‘Does it exist’ if the first search for quidditative knowledge is already within a context of the existence of the supposit? (this supposes the Gilsonian point of view.) **BL: Existing is prior to knowing existence.**

P. 12. This is the page which will really bother them. Isn’t there already an organization of sensible presentations at the sensible level? **BL: Sensitive but not intelligent.** How verify that they cannot be illusory or hallucinatory? **BL: define terms & check.** How can even the question of illusion or hallucination come up if there is not immediate judgmental knowledge of the existence of sensible things? **BL: ? act of hallucination** (first word not clear)

P. 13. You say ‘to suppose that these activities yield more than an object of thought is simply essentialism.’ Would you say then that the sensitivo-intellectual

[grasp?] of the material existent, as claimed by some (Gilson, et alii), is really a disguised essentialism? **BL: YES.**

How do you know that through the posited syntheses we know what exists or occurs? **BL: Because affirmed rationally, absolutely.**

It seems to be a play on words to lump the problem of the knowledge of existence with the pseudo-problem of the existence of knowledge? And why is the problem of knowledge of existence a false issue?

P. 14. How does common sense suffice to make judgments of concrete, actual existence?

Dr. Lynch (from jottings which he allowed me to have):

How has man's underst. of nature, seen in history of thought, deepened man's underst. of his own understanding? **BL: By offering evidence of what understanding does.B**

1. Is soul's knowledge of self really 'turning things upside down'. **BL: soul is conclusion, intelligere is preceding.**

2. Is 'intelligere' considered psychologically or metaphysically? **BL: psychol.**

3. If such problems as #1 arose, is it not because purpose is not clearly set forth?

Not – Phenomenology: consciousness → thing

But – purely descriptive phenom.: consciousness → nature of consc. [FEC: He evidently thinks the second line gives your purpose, or thought so.]

4. Yet p. 4: wants to go beyond knowl. of underst. to knowl. of reality!

Does this not take you beyond what Aq. intended in soul's knowl. of self?

Then suggests it is only to integrate new sciences!

5. Abstraction of being – horse, stone, etc. Cannot get being from things?

BL: Essence of being.

Is the case not overstated – that we cannot know being in things? **BL: No.**

6. Being and the concrete are 'identical terms'? Notion of being is our desire to know. Est of id quod est.

7. Is knowledge of intellect through models a philosophic method? **BL: Preliminary.**

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[FEC]:

My discussion with Dr. Lynch:

1. He thought at first your philosophy was phenomenological On lines of Van Steenberghe, who agrees with Husserl on starting point, but, where latter went on to idealism, goes on to ontology, to find *being* in consciousness.

2. He thinks principles of metaphysics must be in things. Agrees with the study of cognitional structure; does not agree that this structure is enough for metaphysics. If it imposes order on things, determines things, is it not Kantian?

3. A man is a being, a horse is a being, etc. Why cannot I form a general concept of being from this, know what being essentially is? If I have no understanding of being, what becomes of analogy of being? And how do I get to God from material things?

4. Is your metaphysics an abstract set of principles? or actual knowledge of universe?

5. What do you add to Aq.? on cognitional side? on ontological side?

6. Is your metaphysics just an explanation of what is?

7. Can we not escape the changing opinions of science and study things as presented but under other aspects than those of science? Their substantial change, etc.? We do not have to understand substance as scientists do.

8. Do we just know spatio-temporal beings? How do we get to God?

(The above are the qq. he put during our talk, as far as I remember them. The word explanation in #6 seemed to have some special significance for him – perhaps with reference to phenomenology, essentialism? Also the word model – page 1, his q. #7.)

At ACPA meeting:

Burke [RD: Bourke, Vernon?] wanted to know your relation to Maréchal (under whom he studied): talked of judgment as *quies in bono possesso*, etc. Also your relations to Rousselot, to Husserl.

Idem: What is meaning of phrase, the primacy of the ontological? Why is it a title of sub-section? Meaning of phrase, “intellectualized by schemes ...”, etc.

Lauer thought you were distinguishing fra ontological and ontic in phrase, the primacy of the ontological.

Hart talked of intellectus and wisdom as proper to philosopher. Sciences do not reach insight.

Daues wanted grasp of unconditioned explained.

Mother ? of Brescia Hall wanted to know what object of intellect was for you. She always thought it was quidditas rei materialis; your finality of intellect puzzled her.

After meeting:

Some urged the primary intelligibiity of being (texts galore in Aq.)

“Existence” must be given from the beginning. Then reflection on it.

One St. Louis man uttered the awful word: Is Lonergan Kantian? **BL: For empiricists. If Kantian \equiv what upsets empiricists & naive realists.**