

LONERGAN WORKSHOP

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION JUNE 18, 1976

1. Would you comment on your change of view regarding generalized empirical method?
2. Would you relate generalized empirical method to the functional specialities and praxis?
3. In what way is an insider's knowledge of science relevant to the work of the contemporary theologian?
4. Early social encyclicals always spoke in terms of the "common good." In a commentary on Mater et Magistra John Courtney Murray praised the fact that for the first time the ethical view of the common good was dropped and replaced by the new liberal view of the common good. How would your description of the common good, as the form of society relate to this question?
5. Does a change in economic structures not imply a basic shift in patterns of education? In what way will they intermesh?
6. The view you expressed yesterday regarding the relevance of "insights on the spot" leaves problematic the question of central directives in both Church and economy. Would you comment on this, please?
7. A contemporary social ethics would seem to require a philosophy of history. In your view, what is a philosophy of history, and how is it connected with social ethics?
8. What is the relationship between symbols as disclosive and transformative and analogy? Is there a place for symbolic language within the functional specialty of systematics?
9. Generally, how would you envisage a contemporary systematics of Christology? Would it involve genetic or dialectic method?
10. You speak about a "startling strangeness" in connection with intellectual conversion. Would you comment about this. Is there a similar "strangeness" associated with moral and/or religious conversion?
11. What would the "black box" say about prayer?

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Would explain how ~~very~~ intellectual conversion can save Barth from his fideism? In the light of your statement that faith is the knowledge born of religious love how does your understanding of faith compare with Barth's?

Intellectual conversion would not modify Barth's faith but it would modify his repudiation of the role of intelligence in connection with matters of faith.

1. In Insight the procedures of mathematics and natural science are found to consist in the cyclic and cumulative repetition of a pattern of dynamically related conscious operations.

In natural science this pattern is applied to the data of sense.

In generalized empirical method the same pattern is applied, mutatis mutandis, to the data of π consciousness.

In both there is experience, understanding, and judgement, but in natural science one operates with respect to the data of sensitive experience while in penetrating^{into} the black box one operates on the data of consciousness.

Now the same structure recurs in human studies and especially in the basic human studies of hermenæutics and history, in which at once are envisaged the data of sense and the underlying data of consciousness.

But there is a further element involved: judgements of value and, indeed, the judgements of value both of the men and women being ~~xx~~ studied and the assumptions concerning values of the men and women doing the studying.

~~In Insight this further element is taken into account only from a metaphysical viewpoint that does not distinguish between the realities that already are or have been and the realities that may be about to be as the result of value judgements. So the fourth level, while acknowledged in a distinction between rational consciousness (3rd level) and rational self-consciousness (4th level)~~

In Insight this further element is taken into account from a psychological view point inasmuch as a distinction is drawn between rational consciousness (3rd level) and rational self-consciousness (4th level).

But this further level is not taken into account inasmuch as the good is conceived not psychologically but metaphysically as the intelligible in act. The good is that from a divine viewpoint within the intellectualist tradition. But it is something quite distinct inasmuch as its emergence in man involves totally different operations with regard to the true (the past intelligible in act) and the human good (the perhaps future intelligible in act).

The foregoing is the change of view that separates Method in Theology from Insight

Besides the change of view there has been at least for a while a change in terminology inasmuch as I speak of transcendental method rather than generalized empirical method.

logically/ But this change of terminology is not altogether happy since one is most apt to think in terms of Kant's transcendental which is the logical condition of the possibility of a priori knowledge qua a priori. Both in Marechal and in Rahner as represented by Coreth, there is a similar notion of transcendental which concludes however not to logical but to real conditions.

But Husserl has given rise to a further and distinct notion of the transcendental, namely, that one does not treat of objects without adverting to the operations of the subject, and one does not treat of the operations without adverting to the appropriate objects.

It is this notion of transcendental that is relevant in understanding my talk about transcendental method.

It is not to be taken to imply that my account of the subject and his operations coincides with Husserl's account: one can go from Husserl to Sartre's denial of any reality to the subject, the pour-soi is not en-soi; one cannot go from my one multiply-differentiated subject with his many levels of diverse yet related operations to a denial of the subject.

2. One reaches the functional specialties and praxis only by moving beyond the generalized empirical method of Insight to the successive sublations of sense and consciousness by intelligence, of intelligence by reasonableness, of reasonableness by responsible freedom, and of all by being-in-love.

However such moving beyond only supplies the terms and relations for speaking about the functional specialties and praxis.

The realities one speaks of come to light only through a prolonged struggle with the complexity introduced into Catholic theology inasmuch as doctrinal and systematic theology, which formerly had immediate access to scripture and tradition, latterly find themselves separated from scripture and tradition by mountains of exegetical and historical investigation.

To meet that issue one may

- (1) keep on doing doctrinal and systematic theology in the former fashion in the hope that the new studies will go away or be ~~XXXXXXXX~~ brushed aside by apologetics or be overcome by exegetes and historians ~~XXXX~~ coming to agree with the doctrinal and systematic theologians, or
- (2) one may give up on doctrinal and systematic theology and become simply an ~~XX~~ exegete or simply a historian, and then if one practises these disciplines properly one will find that one cannot account ~~XXXX~~ for the emergence of the dogmas

one cannot because the exegete and the historian as such have not the philosophic and theological equipment necessary to distinguish differentiations of human consciousness, to justify their emergence, and to account for the dogmas by such differentiation

the result is that Christiana theology ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ gives up on the dogmas, tries to put something more intelligible in their place

- (3) one acknowledges differentiations of consciousness, ~~XXXX~~ functional specialties, the end of the age of innocence, and the ~~XXXXXX~~ ultimate key role of praxis

3. With respect to knowledge of science, distinguish:

knowledge of science in the technical fashion of one who can do science by repeating in his own development what already is known and by advancing upon that prior acquisition

knowledge of science in an exact but ~~XXX~~ schematic fashion that can read with profit a book such as Lindsay and Maréna^g's Foundations of Science

The theologian needs the former type of knowledge if his theology is to be interdisciplinary in the sense that it can argue with the scientist about science

He needs the latter type of knowledge if his theology is to be interdisciplinary in the sense that it has some grasp of what the scientist is up to and what he means

But the latter type also is very important if the theologian is to have a sound knowledge of his own black box, its resources and capabilities, and of the analogies that the sciences may provide for an understanding of mysteries.

4. My idea of the common good is a conception of human interdependence in terms of the emergent probability of schemes ~~f~~ of recurrence.

I am not aware that moralists, liberals, or the social encyclicals formulated such a view.

I should say that the later encyclicals come closer than the earlier, but that is mostly surmise.

5. I am not concerned about changing economic structures I am concerned about formulating economic morality and this I feel is an extremely novel project completely beyond the comprehension both of moralists (who commonly do not fancy there is any relevance of economic/~~xxxxix~~ to economic morality) and the comprehension of economists (who conceive their science not as an instrument to be put at the disposal of human freedom but as a means of predicting what men will do whether or not they are free).

It will require a shift in basic patterns in education, isasmuch as education for a moral economic order will have to be an education towards intellectual moral and religious conversion. That, however, is a very old and respectable type of education, though perhaps beyond the comprehension of the politicians who spend the taxpayers moneyx on education and ~~xxxxix~~ putatively related matters.

6. What becomes problematic is not central directives but certain types of central directives.

When central directives rest on classicist assumptions (human nature is ever the same; human affairs are ever substantially the same) and on abstract principles that prescind from concrete circumstance, then obviously they are most unlikely to prove helpful in social development ~~ix~~ via the implementation ~~ix~~ of the schemes of recurrence make possible ~~f~~ by emergent probability.

But there is no necessity of central directives being based on classicist assumptions and abstract principles. They can be based on feedback from the concrete to the next level of integration, ~~ix~~ on feedback from those to the next higher level, etc etc. They can emerge as insights into the proximate lower level where that level finds those insights helpful, and so on down the chain of command

7. I conceive a philosophy of history as a general social dynamics in which

progress results inasmuch as situations lead to insights, insights to new courses of action, new courses of action to changed situations, and changed situations to new insights; this is a permanent scheme of recurrence by which the schemes of emergent probability are discovered and implemented continuously

decline results from the monkeywrench of obtuseness inattention bias compromise suspicion, hatred violence distort progress and produce objectively unintelligible and intractable situations

recovery results from redemption, from God's gift of his love, of his hoping beyond hope, and from the faith that takes one out of the mire of rationalizations.

8 The basic relationship is between undifferentiated and differentiated consciousness

Eddington distinguished between his two tables, but his janitor did not.

In the field of religion consciousness as undifferentiated thinks in symbols; as differentiated it seeks to formulate analogies.

Systematics is the activity of going from symbolic language to analogy; it is fully aware of both types of thinking but it is busy constructing the second type

9 Christology is a large subject. To be content with a basic component, consider just what is meant by the doctrines of Nicea, Ephesus, Chalcedon, what is the one that is said to be one person, and what is the two that is said to be two natures. I think it a matter of being clear about one and two.

Genetic method is relevant to understanding the historical process to Nicea Ephesus Chalcedon

Dialectic to understanding the opposing heresies then and the contemporary confusions and doubts.