

Questions for Myth and Theology seminar, 3/3/77:

1. In Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) one learns to attend to one's feelings, to express them, "to deal" with them. One's presence in a group receives critical attention from others and one learns to listen to feelings of others. At no time does the question of being arise. Heidegger speaks of mood as a characteristic of Dasein. He maintains that mood is significant for understanding the being of humankind.

- a) How can we distinguish the psychological approach to feelings from the ontological approach to mood? Is the latter a "deeper" approach or is it simply a different point of view?
- b) What connection does this distinction between the psychological and the ontological have with Heidegger's method?

J.P.

2. This question follows on the preceding one but is concerned with Lonergan rather than with Heidegger.

In general: What constitutes metaphysical knowledge, i.e., what is needed before one can say truly, "This statement has ontological import"?

Specifically: Is the task of explicit metaphysics to spell out only the heuristic structure of being?

Or, on the other hand, does one know being in metaphysics? And if so, is it not true that metaphysical knowledge is not had apart from empirical science which fills in the content of what is known?

How does knowledge (verified understanding) of, say, the psychologist differ from knowledge of the same reality in metaphysics? Does the psychologist know being? What is added to the psychologist's knowledge when that knowledge is deemed an ontological/metaphysical statement?

D.A.H.

3. "Prior to the 'we' that results from the mutual love of an 'I' and a 'thou', there is the earlier 'we' that precedes the distinction of subjects and survives it oblivion." (Method in Theology, p. 57)

Is this a mythic assertion? It sounds much like Eliade's reports of events in illo tempore. What is the meaning of the "earlier" in the statement above?

"It is as if 'we' were members of one another prior to our distinction of each from the others." (Ibid.)

Is "as-if" language the sign of a broken myth? What use of language is this? systematic, mythic or something in between?

J.P.

Jon Parsons was hoping that Fred would deal with this first question as a continuation of his lecture on Heidegger. I've made a note to Fred to this effect, and he will be in touch with you about it.

Dan

2. In general, what constitutes metaphysical knowledge?
i. e., what is needed before one can say truly, "This statement has ontological import"?

In general, every true statement has ontological import simply by the fact that it is true

and it will be a fact that it is true, if the statement proceeds rationally from a grasp of sufficient evidence, from a reflective act of understanding, from a grasp of the virtually unconditioned (Insight ch 10).

However even this very general statement presupposes a cognitional theory (what am I doing when I am knowing?) an epistemology (why is doing that knowing?) a metaphysics (what does one know when one does it?)

Where the cognitional theory emerges from the data of consciousness, the epistemology emerges from the cognitional theory, and the metaphysics emerges from the cognitional theory and the epistemology.

Further, it is only through the CT-E-M that one can classify differentiations of consciousness, ascertain the differentiation within which the true statement in question occurs, effect a proper interpretation (for ontological purposes) of the true statement, and proceed from that proper interpretation to the metaphysical categories in which the ontological import of the true statement can be determined.

Specifications

The task of spelling out the heuristic structure of being provides the categories in which the metaphysical import of a particular statement can be gauged

But the use of these categories calls for expertise in the transition from non-metaphysically-formulated statements that are true to the metaphysically-formulated-statements that assign the ontological import of the true statements

Does one know being in metaphysics?

Distinguish: the notion of being, the idea of being, implicit concepts of being, explicit concepts of being, affirmations that are true, affirmations of ontological import.

The notion is not knowledge but the first stage of the movement from ignorance to knowledge: it is expressed in questions for intelligence and reflection

*experience & affirmation
total openness to total determination*

The idea of being is the content of an unrestricted act of understanding

In general an idea is the content of an act of understanding; an understanding of being is an understanding of everything about everything; and so the idea of being is the content of an unrestricted act of understanding.

Every concept is an implicit concept of being: for we conceive in order to judge; and so concept is intrinsically related to judgment and, indeed, to true judgment; but in true judgment there is some knowledge of being, some ontological import; and so every concept by its intrinsic relation to judgment also is related to being, and so a concept of being.

An explicit concept of being, on the other hand, is an hypothesis or theory of what one means by being. Such hypotheses and theories are many, but only one is simply true.

Affirmations that are true have ontological import and in that sense they are instances of partial knowledge of being

However, such knowledge does not advert explicitly to the fact that it possesses ontological import, that it regards being.

Hence, affirmations of ontological import that assign what the ontological import is are explicit ~~knowledge~~ though partial knowledge of what ~~is~~ is and in that sense of being.

Noterealms of being: logical, hypothetical, actual, transcendent. Knowledge of them differs via the conditions that are fulfilled in reaching the virtually unconditioned.

Does one know being in metaphysics?

CT-E-M are third level cognitional operations: they presuppose common sense and the sciences; their purpose is to place the results ~~of~~ of both within in a single view that deals explicitly with knowledge as activity, knowledge as related to its objects, and the objects to which ~~knowledge~~ knowledge is related.

This differs from the Aristotelian/Thomist view which presupposes common sense (ordinary language) and from that basis proceeds to both metaphysics and the sciences (prior to us, prior in itself)

Common sense knowledge of itself is prescientific, but scientific knowledge emerges out of ~~scientific~~ commonsense knowledge. Similarly commonsense and scientific

knowledge are prephilosophic, but out of them emerges philosophic knowledge.

There is one human knowledge (partial) of being. The knowledge itself has its components so that common sense, science, and philosophy are three parts in a single knowledge possessed by a differentiated consciousness.

For undifferentiated consciousness there is just one part that "confusedly" (ie poured together) regards the world accessible to man.

How does the knowledge of the psychologist differ from the knowledge of the same reality in metaphysics?

The k of the psy qua scientific is without the context supplied by an explicit account of knowledge, its relation to reality, and the reality to which it is related.

The metaphysicians knowledge of what the psych knows is belief in what the psy ~~sk~~ knows plus the overarching framework known by the metaphysician

The psych^ologist knows being in the sense that every true statement has an ontological import

What is added is the ~~framework~~^{work} of CT-E-M

3. "Prior to the 'we' that results from the mutual love of an 'I' and a 'Thou' there is the earlier 'we' that precedes the distinction and survives its oblivion." Method p 57.

What is the meaning of 'earlier' in the above?

The unthematized experience is prior to the experience as thematized

Again, after an experience has been thematized, it may recur without being explicitly thematized. (survives its oblivion)

"as if we were members of one another prior to our distinction.."

What use of g language is this?

Perhaps "genetic": the attempt to describe elements of experience that are not linguistically informed and so not deliberately intended.

"Mythic" language regards what from a later viewpoint is pronounced to be the inadequate linguistic formation of experience or interpretation of experience.

Intersubjectivity is not myth but fact - according to one's intersubjectivity, as experienced is a help towards a 'real' apprehension of mythic consciousness