

LONERGAN WORKSHOP

Boston College

June 20 - 24, 1977

Dialogue for Discussion

June 21, 1977

1. In what way are the goals of mathematics and art related?
2. Would you comment on the relation between the empirical residue in myth and in art?
3. Would you comment on the construction of metaphor in relation to abstraction from phantasm and the underlying rhythms of nature and psyche?
4. What role does art play in the orientation of subjects towards conversions?
5. In Method you stress theology's task of recovering four centuries of differentiations of consciousness, and in "Theology in It's New Context," you refer explicitly to the period around 1680. Would you comment further on this task?
6. In what way does Praxis involve emergent probability?
7. In what way(s) are the operations of the lower and higher "quasi-operators" within emergent probability? Are their operations beyond the immanent intelligibility of the universe?
8. What kind of stand should political theology take on economic theory and practice?
9. During the five years ending in 1975, corporations retained a total of 180 billion dollars of undistributed profits (after taxes and dividends) and during those same five years, the net corporate debt increased 509 billion dollars. Could you comment critically on both the profits and the debt from the perspective of your own views on pure surplus income and the problems of debt-servicing?
10. Present economic theory requires a percentage of unemployment for the avoidance of inflation. Would you comment on this, on government's responsibility in the area of employment, and more generally on the extent of government's involvement in the economy?
11. What are the economic, or other, grounds for the exclusion of union and corporate monopolies?

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PERHAPS THE GENERAL RUBRIC FOR QUESTIONS 8-11 (+6?)
COULD BE SOME KIND OF ~~GENERAL~~ "INTRO" TO THE
ECONOMIC QUESTION FOR US UNWASHED.

1. Mathematics may be regarded as the exploration of all possible scientific theories: e. g.,

analytic geometry and calculus made Newtonian theory possible
riemannian geometry made Einsteinian relativity possible
lattices made Heisenberg's formulation of Q T possible
Similarly, the work of artists may be regarded as the

exploration of man in his world:

of differences of the worlds in which men might live
of differences of the men living in the worlds

where "world" means what is mediated by meaning and motivated by value, what man makes of the world given by nature, and where men are constituted by the meanings that inform and the values that motivate their lives.

Further, in both the constructions of mathematicians and the constructions of artists there is a basic freedom (for both explore not actuality but possibility) but also a controlling criterion. This criterion is esthetic. It is the clarity, simplicity, elegance, comprehensiveness of a mathematical treatise that delights the mathematical mind. Similarly, in each of the arts there is a certain tatonnement (slow or rapid) that gets things right.

R. G. Collingwood, The Principles of Art, OUP, 1938, 1958, this reprint 1972. Pb.

2. The empirical residue in mathematics is the material which the mathematician distinguishes, orders, constructs, relates. E g sets, groups,

Mathematics is content to deal with this empirical residue in defined relations

Art is never content with the empirical residue as its material: it wants colors, sounds, shapes, feelings, presence

Suzanne Langer, Feeling and Form

3. Abstraction from phantasm is consequent to insight into phantasm.

To talk about abstraction and to forget insight has been the mark of decadent scholasticism since the beginning of the fourteenth century. Alternatively it has been the aftermath of the Augustinian-Aristotelian controversy at the close of the thirteenth century with a succession of books with titles like Correctorium fratris Thomae, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Correctorium corruptorii fratris Thomae, etc etc.

Now it is insight that explains metaphor, for insight is constructive, the source of new initiatives, while speech also is constructive and metaphor when fresh and live is a new initiative in speech

George Steiner, After Babel, OUP 1975, Pb 1976, is a long and rich reflection on the multiplicity of languages and the possibility of translation from one language to another.

He inclines to explaining the multiplicity of languages by supposing that really we all make up our own ~~languages~~ sentences out of the available materials, that the understanding each of/has of what others say is approximate, that metaphor and other devices are discoveries of new uses for old words, what Horace in the *Ars poetica* called a callida iunctura, a witty or bright or smart combination.

us/

4. In so far as art is correctly conceived as an exploration of possible worlds in which men might live and of possible ways in which men might live and do and make,

it also reveals the possibilities of pulling out of established routines and starting afresh in a new life-style.

5. The basic problem arises from the destruction of the achievement of the 12th and 13th centuries. Then theology had a method. In its endless questions it was devoted to the logical ideal of clarity in its terms, coherence in its propositions, rigor in its proofs or else explicit acknowledgement that its arguments were only probable. But method is more than being logical, for it guides ongoing inquiry and investigation. Now in the earlier period there was the recovery of ~~sources~~ sources, their distribution, translation, the study of them facilitated by commentaries, the results of commentaries collected and collated in books of sentences. The logical ideal of clarity coherence and rigor was applied to this amorphous traditional mass in the technique of μ the quaestio: videtur quod non, sed contra est, respondeo dicendum, ad 1m 2m 3m... The strategic move was taken towards securing a coherent Begrifflichkeit, so that the many solutions would themselves be coherent and not merely more problems, when Albert the Great and Aquinas adopted and adapted Aristotle to Xtian needs.

In this early period in which ongoing research was comined with logical reflection and clarification, there was perpetual

The period around 1680 is significant as the time when theology settled down into its post-Tridentine fortress mentality. It stressed certainty, doctrine, clarity. It replaced questions by theses and the theses were to be expounded and defended. It has been a casualty of Vatican II.

6. Praxis ~~xxxxxx~~ does not so much involve emergent probability as be involved in emergent probability.

Emergent probability is a world view that results when the course of affairs is settled not only by natural laws but also by probabilities. It embraces the genesis of chemical elements, their distribution, their combinations; it embraces the evolution of plant and animal species; it provides the basis and background ~~xxxxxx~~ from which man emerges and in which he operates.

But his operation is not just a matter of natural law but also of intelligent originality. Man does not wait for significant constellations to emerge but he figures them out and brings them about. Human history deflects the course and hastens the pace of emergent probability. And this history itself is a product of the probabilities that have emerged probabilities about insights, discoveries, cooperations, etc.

7. Emergent probability is a combination of natural laws, probabilities, and human initiatives. Operators and quasi-operators pertain to the hierarchic structure of many-levelled beings.

8. The basic problem is the derailment of humanity initiated by realistic theories of state and society.

They asked what is the use of moral precepts that are very beautiful but ineffective.

They went on to procedures that they felt would be effective: the procedures of Machiavelli, the theories of Hobbes and Locke, etc.; within this crop comes modern economics which fundamentally searches for a technique that will control economic operations beneficently.

The opposite procedure is to analyse the matrix of economic relationships and derive ~~xx~~ from the analysis moral precepts that dictate the economic conduct, praxis, necessary for the proper functioning of the economy.

The basic problem will be educational. There will have

to be formed a public opinion that conforms to the elementary requirements of economic public health and, what is more difficult, a public spirit that is willing to conform.

9/10/11 Perhaps the general rubric here would be some kind of introduction to the economic question.

Science ~~is~~ begins to get round the corner from mere endless discription (old style botany) to explanation (Mendeleev's periodic table) when it introuces its own basic concepts.

A first requirement is to get rid of a juridicawl notion of capital interms of property and replace it by a macroeconomic functional notion, namely, goods and services that ~~makke~~ promote maintenance improvement and growth.

A second requirment is to get rid of a book-keeper(s) ~~make~~ notion of profit and replace it by a ~~make~~ macroen!!! functional notion, Namely, the part of total current income that results from the sale of goods and services that promote maintenance, improvment, and growth.

There follows a simple theorem: total current income is the sum of current income from the sale fo goods and services that promote the community's standard of living and the current income from the sale of goods and services that promote maintenance imporvement and growth.

Cross-over but each department in the economy can g keep going at the present rate on the basis of current income. Hence there is a part of total income that need not be spent on standard living, that cannot be spent on standtard of living without causing a rise of prices, and this quantity is profit in macroeconomic functional sense.

Maximizing this type of profit is a matter of maximizing goods and services that promote

Maximising this rate of profit

Profit as motive and profit as criterion