

LOWERGAN WORKSHOP

Boston College

June 20 - 24, 1977

Dialogue for Discussion

June 22, 1977

1. Would you please specify the meaning of "whole" and "unity" in your analysis of "thing" as a unity, identity, whole?
2. What is the relation between prime potency, the potency of lower levels in nature for higher forms, and potency as a metaphysical element? Would you comment from your present perspective, on your relating in Insight of potency and finality?
3. To what extent does the notion of emergent probability provide an invariant heuristic for Theology, and in particular for ecclesiology?
4. In what context, and at what point, was the term "praxis" introduced into your work? What is its meaning and how should it be differentiated from the Marxist use of the term?
5. Could you specify how your functional macro-economics relate to the praxis of moral values?
6. What political consequences could be heuristically anticipated from the implementation of functional macro-economics?
7. How would your functional macro-economics ground a criticism of present socialist centralization and capitalist monopolistic process?
8. What modifications of your early circulation analysis does the modern element of economic acceleration call for?
9. How would you relate the study of J. Collins and F. Lappe, Food First: The Myth of Scarcity, to your developing macro-economics?
10. You said yesterday it will take a century or more before the economic analysis you are proposing will become praxis. In the meantime, we have and are able to understand schemes of recurrence of alienation due to inadequate economic praxis. There must be some way, however incomplete, of exercising and promoting emancipatory praxis in the interval between now and the schemes of recurrence of sound economic praxis. Would you comment?
11. Does your approach to economics assume the private ownership of production facilities and a market mechanism or does it look to a "socialist" arrangement which emphasizes public ownership and the public planning of production and distribution?
12. How would your Method in Theology relate to the various liberation theologies (e.g., Gustavo Gutierrez's)? How should Theology contribute to the critique of de-humanizing social institutions.

It is a whole by (2) and (3).

Present perspective: human studies ~~xx~~ commonly can be treated on the basis of ~~x~~ intentionality analysis without a detour through metaphysics; the detour becomes necessary when one deals with elementary notions (unity identity whole) or precognitive realities.

3. In so far as new structures or new operations become possible, become probable, actually emerge

eg new theology in the minds of theologians, in the minds of those that learn from theologians

eg in the church in any part or on any level new structures new operations

4. Introduced explicitly in the paper recently read to the CTSA and to be repeated tomorrow evening.

In the Aristotelian contrast between conduct and product: products pass beyond the control of their maker; the use to which they will be put depends on the choices of others conduct results from one's own choices

To this Aristotelian sense Marx adds his dialectical materialism and his analysis of Das Kapital as interpretative context.

Marx is reacting to the same thing I am reacting against, namely, the political philosophy that conceives the state and consequently the economy as a matter of technique rather than praxis.

His tool is universal revolution: ~~which is the only technique~~

My tool is education: ~~which is the only technique~~

His tool is initially and de facto ongoingly a technique of force

My tool is a technique of persuasion.

5. The praxis ~~which~~ that brings moral values into play is a ~~pr~~ praxis aware of what makes the economy function properly and further willing to do whatever is needed to make it function properly, not out of fear of punishment, but because that is worth while.

Such praxis does not exist at the present time because an economics that brings to light the precepts immanent in the workings of an exchange economy ~~is~~ is unknown indeed the very idea of it is beyond the grasp of practically all economists, including all our do-gooders who talk about justice

6 If actually and successfully implemented one could reasonably anticipate the elimination of the billion dollar abuses of ~~industrial and commercial institutions and their trade unions of government departments and their pork barrels including education~~ of industrial and commercial institutions and their trade unions of government departments and their pork barrels including education

7. Compare Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities, Random House 1961 Pb

and the Garden Cities designed by planners which she constantly criticizes.

In the comparison note that the planners go by general concepts and ~~the~~ bland ~~general~~ general notions about the good life

Jan Jacobs walks the streets finds some safe and others menacing, comes to a whole set of insights that reveal why some are safe and others are not safe

Planning is the work of conceptualists

Free enterprise is the work of people with ideas on just what people really want and how to provide it in what quantities and then go ahead and risk their shirt on the project

Planners risk your tax money on their ideas

Capitalist monopolistic practice is just a device to avoid the diminution of profit that results whenever the ratio of M I G to GNP decreases

They avoid that diminution by handing ~~it~~ all of it over to non monopolistic enterprises: the squeeze goes elsewhere

8 The analysis is perfectly general: its form is the distinction between ~~the~~ acceleration, velocity, and constant of integration.

~~Difficult to see how this can be a generalization of the relations between these three (a) in the order of goods and services and (b) in the order of monetary movements are of equal generality~~

The relations between these three (a) in the order of goods and services and (b) in the order of monetary movements are of equal generality

conditions

The ~~conditions~~ of possibility of proper functioning are of equal generality.

Their applications are multitudinous and would call for a vast research program ~~to~~ conducted by experts.

9 One of the implications of current main-line economic doctrine is that the freedom of multinational corporations ~~is~~ is in the long run to the optimal benefit of all concerned

Its theoretical premise is mistaken.

Collins and Lappe show that its actual results are starvation.

10 ~~My notion of promoting emancipatory praxis is doing~~

No doubt, one can know when things do not work well, when their results are disastrous, etc., economically culturally politically morally religiously, when the ~~xxxxx~~ evil results are recurrent and proximately why their are recurrent

My notion of promoting emancipatory praxis is doing what can be done

to understand the ideas needed for the praxis to be emancipatory to promote the good will for the praxis to be carried out.

Both are problems of education: intellectual education and moral education.

I do not know of any short-cuts if the goal is praxis namely human acts based on human knowledge and human good will.

My estimate of 100 x years is perhaps pessimistic, perhaps optimistic.

But I set aside my economic MS 33 years ago because I had it read by six or seven economists none of whom could figure out what I was trying to do

At the present time things are slightly better: Kalecki has been translated by Cambridge England and has a following there are perhaps elsewhere; his work gives me now a small bridgehead; but for an ~~am~~ amateur to convince the establishment that they have something to learn is a rather long process.

Insight was published 20 years ago; Harper and Row hope to bring it out in paperback next spring; but that does not mean that the book will be accepted by the philosophic establishment; it is not their style of thing.

11 Ownership is not an economic but a juridical notion. What I consider desirable is a maximum diffusion of possible initiative. What I am opposed to leaving initiative to committees politicians and generally people without relevant practical ~~insight~~ insight into the concrete processes that exist and can be improved.

12 I was in the same small ~~xxxxx~~ discussion group/at the Notre Dame meeting. He volunteered to us the remark that the weakness of the S A liberation theologies was their ignorance of economics. He insisted that basically they were Christians appalled by the social situation in their countries and working to the best of their ability at improving the situation.

Basically through interdisciplinary activity with social cultural political philosophers and scientists. High quality at Notre Dame.