

LONERGAN WORKSHOP

Boston College

June 20 - 24, 1977

Dialogue for Discussion

June 23, 1977

1. One pivotal aspect of the event of the crucifixion of Jesus was the tearing of the veil (curtain) of the Sanctuary in Jerusalem, the symbol of the presence of God to the Jewish people. This can be associated with the veiling of Moses and what St. Paul refers to in Hebrews and elsewhere. (The hope which extends beyond the veil, thru which Jesus, our Forerunner, has passed.) Could you comment in terms of your theological method, on the understanding of the revelation of God in Christ which is expressed in symbolic language?
2. Last year you expressed interest in Sebastian Moore's understanding of generic guilt. Do you find Sebastian's understanding of the sinlessness of Jesus acceptable in this light? Does he put more weight on this one point of the tradition than it can bear?
3. Could you make some suggestions on how people are collaborating with you in various aspects of the theological enterprise (e.g., psychology, spirituality) can make a contribution to your renewed efforts in economic and political theory?
4. Do you agree that energy can be informed psychically as well as biologically, chemically, and physically?
5. Would you comment on your present views on the possibility or impossibility of the REDUCTION of psychic and conscious activities and operations to the biological level? Is such a reduction impossible IN PRINCIPLE? Why?
6. Are you sympathetic to Bob Doran's reworking of the understanding of dreams in Chapter 6 of Insight? How does the distinction between dreams of the night and dreams of the morning relate to this question?
7. Could you say something about "genuineness," "authenticity," and the relationship between them? How is the distinction between first and second naivete relevant to genuineness and authenticity?
8. Would you comment from the point of view of your method on the alleged discovery of powers of physical healing in the community of believers?
9. In your comments yesterday afternoon, you emphasized the importance of an economic arrangement that provided for insights into the concrete situation and encouraged initiative at the local level. If the economic planners kept in touch with realities at the local level and if persons at the local level were provided with ample opportunities for expressing initiative, would you be receptive to a socialist economy characterized by public ownership of production facilities and public planning of production and distribution? Does the "brigade-village-commune" approach now being followed in China provide an example of how a socialist society can consciously seek to avoid inefficiency and the stifling of local initiative.

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1 This is a large and intricate issue. My paper this evening attempts to say something apropos of symbols and of revelation. Perhaps, if desired, we may return to the issue in tomorrow's dialogue.

2 I am still very sympathetic to Sebastian.

I was reminded of his ~~x~~ contention that the heroes of the NT were the publicans and sinners during the meeting at Notre Dame. ~~xxxx~~ Myles Bourke took issue with those that spoke so feelingly about Jesus concern for the poor and the oppressed. He remarked that according to the gospels Jesus was concerned with the publicans, the tax-gatherers, and the notorious sinners. The tax gatherers were not oppressed but rather oppressors: imagine what would happen if the Internal Revenue Service was replaced by a system that sold the right to collect taxes to the highest bidders.

That Jesus ~~x~~ was sinless is scriptural doctrine Heb 4 15; 7 26.

That the love ~~xxxxxxx~~ of God inspired by the sufferings of Christ ~~xxxxxxxx~~ can cause such sorrow for one's sins that there is no need for any punishment to make satisfaction for them is the doctrine of St Thomas C Gent III 158 (BL pp X 8 f.)

Sebastian is meditating on the principle that showing love is a cause of love, a cause of the liberation that makes loving possible. I am not aware that this principle was explicitly taught in the tradition but I am inclined to think that it was understood in all preaching of Christ and him crucified.

I would not say that the principle is a matter of faith, but I do think it pertains to the understanding of the faith that it is a theologian's business to promote.

3. Collaboration is of many kinds.

The kind of collaboration that rests on accepting my method is like any scientific collaboration: basically it is a matter of people doing their own thing

Because one is converted intellectually morally and religiously and enjoys a certain differentiation of consciousness, he will simply be himself and enjoy all the liberty that flows from being himself

People expert on psychology or on spirituality ~~mm~~ obviously can contribute to the educational project in which political and economic renewal is involved. But that that is the best thing for them to do and how they might go about it, is a matter

for their decision and judgment, not mine.

4 I think that this conclusion follows from general cybernetic theory: control and direction ~~h~~ moves from above downwards, energy moves from below upwards.

5 Control moves from above downwards because the higher level makes systematic on the lower level what on that level would be merely coincidental.

Conversely, to reduce the higher level to the lower would be to argue that the higher level has no effect on the lower or, alternatively, that what is systematic on the lower depends simply on the lower.

McShane, Randomness Statistics and Emergence

Howard H Pattee, Hierarchy Theory, Braziller 1973

6 Very sympathetic. He brings out a difference between Freud and Jung on a point in which I feel Jung is superior to Freud.

The kind of interaction Bob envisages between psyche and conscious living is something more than dreams of the morning.

7 For me "genuineness and authenticity" are equivalent. It is a matter of raising and attending to relevant further questions on the level of intelligence, of reasonableness, of responsibility, and of love.

Or in Plato's language it is being willing to follow the argument, the logos, wherever it leads. P's dialectic as opposed to eristic.

First and second naivete are relevant to genuineness because both allow symbols their operative power. Second adds to first because it adverts to the symbol as symbol without allowing such advertence to weaken the symbol's power.

8 It is part of the charismatic movement.

I am not in a position to say much about this either factually or theologically.

But I have known for a dozen years a nun whom I consider very holy and I can tell you her story about her brother dying of cancer and a person referred as Fr Gino.

9 Public ownership means ownership by the political powers that be

Public planning at best is committee planning, and a camel has been defined as a racehorse designed by a committee

It is individuals that get new ideas and the new ideas are not planning. Planning merely assembles old ideas, and public planning assembles ideas that not only are old but also as the saying / tried and true.

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