

Questions for November 8

- 1.) In Method you argue that there comes a point in the flow of one's questions concerning a single topic "when no further relevant questions arise" (p.163) Again on p.191 you state: "Part by part, historical investigations come to a term. They do so when there have been reached the set of insights that hit all nails squarely on the head. They are known to do so when the stream of further questions on a determinate theme or topic gradually diminishes and finally dries up." Yet in your article on "Natural Knowledge of God" you state: "But answers only give rise to still further questions. Objects are never completely, exhaustively known, for our intending always goes beyond present achievement. The greatest achievement so far from drying up the source of questioning, of intending, only provides a broader base whence ever more questions arise." (p.60, Proceedings of the CT3A, 23) Would you clarify the nature of the "drying up" process? Are the two quotations reconcilable? Do they refer to the same process, or perhaps to different stages of the process?
- 2.) On p. 254 of Method you state that: "...man's deepest need and most prized achievement is authenticity." On page 268 you seem to add a fifth transcendental precept. "...conversion is from unauthenticity to authenticity. It is total surrender to the demands of the human spirit: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible, be in love."
 - a.) Why have you not framed the fifth transcendental precept as "Be authentic"?
 - b.) Does "be in love" correspond to a fifth level of consciousness and if so does it sublate the previous four in the manner that they sublate each other? Is this the sense of the statement on p.290 that "There is in the world, as it were, a charged field of love and meaning; ... but it is ever unobtrusive, hidden, inviting each of us to join. And join it we must if we are to perceive it, for our perceiving is through our own loving."?
- 3.) Walter Conn in an article entitled "Bernard Lonergan's Analysis of Conversion" (Angelicum 53/3, 1976) and Robert Doran in "Psychic Conversion" (The Thomist April, 1977) note an ambiguity in the presentation of the three conversions. Intellectual conversion is sublated by moral conversion, which needs intellectual conversion and carries intellectual conversion "forward to a fuller realization within a richer context" (p.391-2) The same is said for the relation between moral and religious conversion. Yet in the order of reality, religious conversion most often precedes moral conversion which together, though rarely, can carry one into an intellectual conversion. This ambiguity leads Conn (and Doran in a slightly different way) to speak of "uncritical religious moral and intellectual conversions" and "critical religious, moral and intellectual conversions." Do you agree with this distinction?
- 4.) Much of the controversy in contemporary theology, particularly in the discussions concerning method have centered on the question of authority. If I interpret Method correctly the methodologist's commitments are to the authority that is derived from 1.) an actualizing and mature (already partially differentiated) differentiated consciousness that is 2.) intellectually, morally, and religiously converted. Yet if it is granted that these sets of factors are dynamic processes and no single theologian once for all appropriates these, then those who are neither methodologists nor theologians (lay persons) are left with the dilemma of choosing between what are, at least apparently, opposing theological

systems. From a methodological standpoint, how does one choose? Moreover, how does one become aware if a theologian has undergone these conversions which are so essential for doing theology? Is this simply a matter of self-appropriation and "an erring conscience binding?"

- 5.) What ^{are} the relations between theologians and the Magisterium, especially regarding the infallibility of the Pope?
- 6.) Is it possible to know revelation? How does one experience, understand, judge revelation? Does one start with revealed truth or does one arrive at revelation?
- 7.) On the judgment level the critical realist is engaged in ascribing to positions and reversing counter-positions. Does one necessarily undergo intellectual conversion before he or she becomes a critical realist? If so, will the critical realist who has not undergone religious or moral conversion be capable of discerning positions from counter-positions; or will such a person only be able to see the antithetical nature of the positions while not discerning which is position and which is counter-position?

QQ 11/8/79

1) "on a determinate theme or topic gradually diminishes and finally dries up"

"Answers only give rise to still further questions"

They are further if they go on to a further topic or theme.

Cf Insight 283 f. (God is an infinite ~~x~~ series of topics)

2) Why not "Be authentic" as the fifth transcendental precept? Because that would merely repeat the first four.

Love pertains to the fifth level of consciousness as the high ~~pp~~ point of self-transcendence. It sublates the ~~xxxxxxx~~ preceding levels: a new basis, a broader finality, a transformation of previous values and insights.

3) Not "critical" and "uncritical" but "critical" and "precritical"

"Critical" is the name of a philosophy that establishes its own ~~xxx~~ basic assumptions. *"Indian guides" is precritical in his answers.*

4) ~~Cf Method p. 270 on deductivist methods which have no option in a field of contingent fact than assume that there must be authority as first principle.~~

Authority instructs or commands the pupil or subject; by self-appropriation one does not become an authority to oneself; one accepts oneself as one is and takes one's stand on that.

It is the basis for a method in theology, but it is not the prima veritas on which theological truth depends; that is God himself.

Method in theology is one thing and method in advancing to religious knowledge is another: R D (religious doctrine) is not theology; it is instruction of the ignorant and it proceeds by authority, by the authority of God, Christ, his Church, his ministers, and if a supreme minister is acknowledged, then by his authority.

4) Discussions in contemporary theological method center on the question of authority

If the method, presupposed to be the only possible method, is deductivist, then the question necessarily is authority, p. 270.

If the method is ongoing development, then it has to be based on the structure of the process, as in the sciences, which do not rely on first principles (logical premises) supposed to be true and certain, but on the set of operations (method) that have brought about present theories and can ~~re~~ revise them.

Establishing that structure is a matter something ~~in~~ each one must do in him self and for himself; it is the structure of his attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible being. It is not an authority, eg parents to children, teachers to pupils, commanding officer to subordinates, etc.

It is not a matter of choosing someone else whom one believes to be attentive intelligent reasonable responsible; it is the personal discovery that to be genuine, authentic, one has to be attentive intelligent reasonable responsible.

5) Distinguish "theology" and "religious instruction"

On the deductivist view, the distinction ~~is~~ vanishes; if one's basis is authority, then all one can do is be instructed by the authority.

When theology becomes methodical, the distinction becomes necessary:

on the one hand, there is a religious process in which one is given the grace of the light of faith and proceeds to believe the relevant authority

on the other hand, there exists a developing body of reflection on the religion; the method of theology is the method of that reflection; the only presupposition is that the religion exists

The relation between the theologian and the magisterium is the relation between a person who accepts a religion and the persons who exercise authority within that social group that accepts that religion

It is a ~~magisterial~~ relation of the theologian, not qua theologian, but qua member of a church. It is as member of the church that he has a duty not to mislead other members of that church, especially in view of the fact that the church employs him to teach the theology of its religion.

6) Distinguish knowing and believing: God knows the truth of what he reveals; we believe that what he reveals is true. Basically Jn 6 44f; 12 32.

The relation of the theologian to Xtian doctrine is like the relation of the historian of a science to the science, eg Thomas Kuhn to the history of scientific revolutions.

However, as theologians normally are believers, their relation to Xtian doctrine is not solely the relation of the theologian to the doctrine but also the relation of a believer ~~x~~ to the doctrine

7) "Necessarily," "capable," "ABLE," the horizon of the questioner is that of the deduction of necessary conclusions from necessary premises.

The necessities and impossibilities we know are necessary not absolutely but hypothetically: granted your definitions of two and ~~and~~ two and equals and four, then two and two are four.

If one distinguishes "data" and "percepts" and restricts the meaning of "experience" to the "givenness of data", and knows from experience what understanding is and what it reveals, and how we arrive at judgments, then both empiricism and idealism are out of court.

One has a choice (Santayana) between skepticism and animal faith and also critical realism.

The third possibility has not ~~x~~ occurred to many people since philosophic thinking began. f

Hence at the present time the prodound and often rabid opposition to propositional truth, at least in religious matters.

Without even the honor common among theives^{ie}, one will not discern the difference between worth while and what's in it for me or for us.

But moral conversion is not minimal morality: it is a recognition ~~xxxx~~ blame is the due of people who are merely selfish.

Topics are an endless series

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generic

- A) Why have you not framed the fifth transcendental precept as "Be authentic"?
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Kevin McGinley, S.J.

practical

*critical philosophy establishes
its own presuppositions*

QUESTIONS CH. II, FOUNDATIONS

P. 270

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4.) MUCH OF THE CONTROVERSY IN CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY, PARTICULARLY IN THE DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING METHOD, HAVE CENTERED ON THE QUESTION OF AUTHORITY. IF I INTERPRET METHOD CORRECTLY THE METHODOLOGIST'S COMMITMENT IS TO THE AUTHORITY THAT IS ^{already partially differentiated} DERIVED FROM AN ^{by term} ACTUALIZING AND "MATURE" CONSCIOUSNESS THAT IS ^{INTELLECTUALLY, MORALLY, AND RELIGIOUSLY} CONVERTED. (YET IF IT IS GRANTED THAT THESE SETS OF FACTORS ARE DYNAMIC PROCESSES AND NO SINGLE THEOLOGIAN ONCE FOR ALL APPROPRIATES THESE, THEN THOSE WHO ARE NEITHER METHODOLOGISTS NOR THEOLOGIAN (lay persons) ARE LEFT WITH THE DILEMMA OF CHOOSING BETWEEN WHAT ARE, AT LEAST APPARENTLY, OPPOSING THEOLOGICAL SYSTEMS. FROM A METHODOLOGICAL STANDPOINT, HOW DOES ONE CHOOSE? MOREOVER, HOW DOES ONE BECOME AWARE IF A THEOLOGIAN HAS UNDERGONE THESE CONVERSIONS WHICH ARE SO ESSENTIAL FOR DOING THEOLOGY? ~~IS THIS~~ IS THIS SIMPLY A MATTER OF SELF-APPROPRIATION AND "AN ERRING CONSCIENCE BINDING?"

5.) What is the relationship between theologians and the Magisterium, especially ^{regarding} the infallibility of the Pope?

6.) Is it possible to know revelation?
How does one experience, understand, judge revelation?
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| Jn 6 44 f
| 12 32

| Jesus spoke in authority - astonished the people

ON THE JUDGEMENT LEVEL THE CRITICAL REALIST IS ENGAGED
IN ~~THE~~ ASCRIBING TO POSITIONS AND REVERSING COUNTER-POSITIONS.
DOES ONE NECESSARILY UNDERGO INTELLECTUAL CONVERSION BEFORE
HE OR SHE BECOMES A CRITICAL REALIST? ^{IF SO} WILL THE CRITICAL REALIST
WHO HAS NOT UNDERGONE RELIGIOUS OR MORAL CONVERSION BE CAPABLE
OF DISCERNING POSITIONS FROM COUNTER-POSITIONS; OR WILL
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