



Re-Order No. GL-210R

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TWENTY-FIVE METHODOLOGICAL THESES

Robert M. Doran, S.J.

November 18, 1973

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1. In addition to the world of immediacy and the world mediated by meaning, specified and differentiated by Bernard Lonergan, there is a third "world," which has been discussed in Paul Ricoeur's study of Sigmund Freud. It is the world of a second immediacy.
2. Second immediacy is post-critical. It is attained after (but not as a result of) intellectual conversion.
3. Second immediacy is an immediacy to the ambiguity of symbol--as exploratory rather than aetiological, in terms of interiority rather than exteriority, in terms of time rather than space, in terms of the generic rather than the specific.
4. Second immediacy is the result of a sublation on the part of conscious intentionality that is additional to the sublations explained by Lonergan. In addition to the sublation of sensory experience by understanding, of experience and understanding by reasonable judgment, and of experience, understanding, and judgment by moral responsibility and cooperative-inter-subjective consciousness, there is a sublation of the imaginal, and principally of the symbolic revelations of dreams (through which feelings are released from their muteness) on the part of the whole of attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, cooperative-intersubjective waking consciousness. Thus, in addition to the attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible appropriation of one's rational self-consciousness, there is the attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible appropriation and negotiation of one's irrationality.

5. This sublation is achieved in a psychoanalytic context, in the general case.
6. In order to achieve, this sublation, this psychoanalytic context must respect the archeological-teleological unity-in-tension of the concrete symbol insisted on by Ricoeur in his critique of Freud.
7. This psychoanalytic context will thus be closer to that suggested by Carl Jung than to that inspired by Freud.
8. This sublation effects a conversion of the existential subject. This conversion is called psychic conversion.
9. Psychic conversion is the issuing of the existential subject into the capacity to distinguish symbolic positions from symbolic counterpositions, mystery from myth. This capacity is therapeutic, involving a healing of affect.
10. The criteria for this distinction are thus psychoanalytic.
11. Psychic conversion is to be joined to the religious, moral, and intellectual conversions specified by Lonergan as qualifying the authentic subjectivity which is the foundational reality of theology.
12. Psychic conversion is a first restoration of post-critical man to his roots in the rhythms and processes of nature, but in terms of what is interior rather than exterior, temporal rather than spatial, generic rather than specific. It is the appropriation of what Jung has called the "objective psyche."
13. Psychic conversion is complementary and dialectically compensatory to intellectual conversion, in the same manner as dreams, according to Jung, are complementary and dialectically compensatory to the attitude of waking consciousness.

14. These complementary conversions are the first and indispensable step in overcoming all forms of human alienation. They are the common factor uniting all varieties of authentic human liberation. From their dialectical interplay alone can there arise a progressive and cumulative restoration of man to his roots in nature also in terms of what is exterior, spatial, and specific. It is this latter overcoming of alienation that occupied Karl Marx.
15. This latter restoration will not be in terms of the participation mystique or projection of pre-critical man, but will be accomplished by fully deliberate choice and through social and, where necessary, revolutionary praxis.
16. In effect, psychic conversion is a second religious conversion. It is the foundation of the authentic religion of the post-critical man.
17. Thus, as Lonergan has done for theology in the context of the scientific revolution what Aquinas did in the context of the discovery of Aristotle, so Christian theology must do with the psychoanalytic revolution what an early Christian writer such as Origen did with the mythology of Gnosticism.
18. Martin Heidegger has disclosed the temporality of this phenomenon of psychic conversion. Psychic conversion is thus the recovery of the primordial temporality of the transcendental imagination. It is the giving up into explicit appropriation of the transcendental time-structure of human imagination, so that the future beckons the past into the present. This occurs through psychic immediacy to the archeological-teleological unity-in-tension of the concrete symbol.
19. Psychic conversion is thus the clearing for the recovery of the "ontological difference," which is necessarily a post-critical event.

20. Thus, as dreams are complementary and compensatory to waking consciousness, and as psychic conversion and intellectual conversion are complementary and dialectically compensatory one to the other, so Heidegger's notion of authenticity and Lonergan's notion of authenticity are complementary and dialectically compensatory one to the other.
21. Psychic conversion reveals to us a genuine sphere of being, a realm whose contents can be intelligently grasped, reasonably affirmed, and responsibly appropriated and differentiated. This sphere of being is what recent Jungians have called "the imaginal." This term has the same comprehensiveness and extension as the term "cosmic."
22. Authentic religious language consists in the articulation of mystery according to the depths of one's conversion. Such articulation by a religiously, morally, intellectually, and psychically converted human subject is pre-eminently authentic religious language.
23. As foundational for theology, psychic conversion allows the derivation of theological categories, positions, and system which are avowedly and legitimately symbolic, poetic, aesthetic. The terms and relations of systematic theology are psychological, not only in terms of cognitional theory, but also in terms of the psychology of the imaginal.
24. The progressive discrimination of symbolic positions from symbolic counter-positions, the progressive articulation of mystery, is in effect the progressive unveiling of what Alfred North Whitehead has called the consequent nature of God.
25. Thus psychic conversion is foundational for understanding the history, not only of religion, but also of revelation, including the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures and Christian history.

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