

Thank you, Fr. Doran, for once again inviting me to be a respondent at this colloquium, and thank you to both Dr. Ogbonnaya and Dr. Ormerod for your contributions.

For a thorough account of the heuristics of the concrete contemporary political, social, and economic situation, one need look no further than Doran's *Theology and the Dialectics of History*. Building on and developing beyond that text, this paper affirms three things: that the successor to cosmopolis is not functional specialization as such, but a world-cultural humanity that, in part, *fosters* functional collaboration; that the contexts typically identified as modernity and postmodernity can be identified in a more explanatory fashion as a late second stage of meaning and an incomplete attempt at a third stage of meaning; and that the scale of values offers a heuristic normative model for concrete situations, including that of globalization. I agree with Fr. Doran on all three of these points, but it is the second that catches most of my attention.

As I said, I agree with Fr. Doran's analysis of modernity and postmodernity, *but* I think his position here can be strengthened and, if you will, thickened, by the addition of some recent developments in Lonergan studies. This, in turn, gives rise to a question about world-cultural humanity that I will bring up at the end.

Based on the work I've been doing recently, I would argue that, while Lonergan initially understood interpersonal relations as highly important but extrinsic to the immanent intelligibility of the human subject, in the late 1960's there was a breakthrough after which he affirmed interpersonal relations to be constitutive of the *intrinsic* intelligibility of the human subject. As this later conception developed, it became clear that for Lonergan the truly human is not an isolated monad, but includes interpersonal, often loving, relation as a constituent element that is consciously experienced and is therefore to be identified as a fifth level of consciousness.

There are two major vectors of errors in conceiving human being with respect to this fifth level of interpersonal loving relations. Firstly, to consider the human as proximately an individual and only remotely or, still less, derivatively interpersonal is to err in understanding the full reality of human subjectivity. Secondly, to flip the coin, so to speak, and consider the human as so interpersonally situated and contextualized as to negate our ability to understand intelligently, judge reasonably, and decide responsibly is also to err in

understanding the full reality of human subjectivity.<sup>1</sup> Doran argued—correctly, I think—that the modernity/postmodernity distinction can be given a better explanatory account by situating it in terms of the stages of meaning: modernity amounts to a late second stage and postmodernity is really an incomplete turn to a third stage. This is precisely the point at which my two observations about the full, interpersonal reality of human subjectivity help to thicken Doran’s argument.

Consider modernity first. Doran suggested that modernity has erupted into “an unconverted neoliberal economic mentality” (7), in which theory, governed by logic, has refused the invitation to interiority and now serves a “global capitalist reduction of culture to market values and the subsequent, progressive, and cumulative evacuation of human living of genuine meaning.” (4-5) In many ways, modernity outright refuses to accept the idea that human beings are not primarily individuals. One sees this clearly in the economic structures Doran highlights, in which interpersonal connection is, not just neglected, but actively combatted, in the name of a technocratic capitalist expansion in which human beings are seen as merely monadic economic units (witness, for example, the economic policies that flow from Paul Ryan’s adoption of Ayn Rand’s view of the human person). In the contemporary globalized context, the claim, “a rising tide lifts all boats” has come to represent, not the betterment of all persons by the acceleration of the global economy, but rather one soundbite-style phrase among many that garner support from those with less wealth and power in order to increase the wealth and power of the already wealthy and powerful. Such co-opted pseudo-solidarity masks the anthropological conception truly at work in these systems: namely, that solidarity is a myth and we are, in fact, merely individuals competing against one another for resources.

In its opposition to modernity, however, postmodernity suffers from a mirror-image error. While rightly emphasizing interpersonal connection and the contextuality of human knowing, and thus in one sense affirming solidarity, postmodernity risks so strongly emphasizing the interpersonal that it becomes blind to, as Doran put it, “what truly and solely *is* normative.” (8) Postmodernity, that is, flirts with relegating human knowing, judging, and deciding to activities confined within contexts to such an extent that there is

---

<sup>1</sup> These may relate to RD’s anthropological and cosmological poles in TDH.

no true normativity for any human effort (just to even things out, witness the American political Left's efforts to promote both a "solidarity" and a "freedom" absent sufficient consideration of the *purpose* of such solidarity and freedom). This failure to recognize the normative function of attending, understanding, judging, and deciding prevents adequate reflection on what really is a better situation and what really are the steps needed to arrive at that destination, reducing contemporary claims of solidarity to hollow and moralistic pontificating.

So, the late second-stage has eagerly adopted a strategy of denying the intrinsically interpersonal reality of human subjects, while the failed third stage affirms that interpersonal reality while denying normative subjectivity. Together, these failures hamper not only the advance to a third stage grounded on interiority, but also the development to a fourth stage, which requires the recognition of the subject as intrinsically interpersonal (contra late second stage "modernity") as well as the recognition that the interpersonal subject needs to be holistically and normatively conceived (contra failed third stage "postmodernity").

It may be that until one reaches the third stage, one cannot recognize the truly interpersonal reality of human being. This would make some sense I think, given how Lonergan conceives the stages. Yet as Fr. Doran has pointed out, perhaps *the* two primary ways of looking at our contemporary global reality carry within them a resistance to a development to that third stage. It seems like a catch-22: in order to move beyond their late second stage and failed third stage entrapments, they need to realize the full, holistic reality of the interpersonal human subject, yet they cannot do so without moving beyond those entrapments.

This shows strongly the need for a world-cultural humanity, which would promote the third stage necessary to recognize the fully interpersonal reality of human beings. As a converted mentality, world-cultural humanity meets the contemporary issue, because only a conversion can overcome the trap of the sort of catch-22 involved in this problem.

At this point, though, I do want to raise a pair of questions about world-cultural humanity. Lonergan conceived love as a fifth level of consciousness, but such a fifth level was not always religious. Proportionate, interpersonal human love is a fifth level of consciousness, which *may* be elevated by grace. In this paper, Doran has grounded the

crosscultural efforts of world-cultural humanity in “attentiveness, inquiry and intelligence, reflection and reasonableness, deliberation and moral responsibility, and awareness of the gift of divine love,” but I wonder, as a first question, if it would be possible to change the final one to something like “awareness of the interpersonal solidarity of all human beings.” One can go on *then* to affirm that this fifth-level, interpersonal solidarity is the locus of the inbreaking gift of divine love. Such interpersonal, solidaristic relations establish the authenticity of the subjects they, in part, constitute, and for their *sustained* authenticity these relations require what the Christian tradition has understood as God’s gift of love, but perhaps the fostering of world-cultural humanity would benefit from a way of speaking that affirms the solidarity of all human beings with one another that does not require an explicit affirmation of the role of divine love in those relations. My second question would then be, “What of the convertedness of world-cultural humanity?” It must be a converted reality, as the problem makes clear, but if interpersonal relation is constitutive of the human subject, and this interpersonal relation need not be graced, does this suggest a conversion to solidarity distinct from religious conversion? I am not sure, but I’m hoping that Fr. Doran can help me untangle this knot.

To conclude, it is absolutely true that, as Doran put it, “The ongoing differentiation and ever more refined conversion of human consciousness in community is the effective operator of the cultural and social transformations that the current state of our globalized humanity imposes upon us” (18). I hope that my comments here aid in refining our understanding of the human consciousness in community so that we might meet those demands.