

1 General Introduction – Class 1, September 8 1980

1.1 Overall Purpose

The overall purpose of our course is to explore some relations between the human psyche and the spiritual life, and between the science of depth psychology and the theology of the spiritual life. So we are exploring relations at both the infrastructural level and the superstructural level. The infrastructure of society is twofold: spontaneous relatedness and practical organization; the superstructure results from reflection on infrastructural experience.¹ There are two social dialectics: one within the infrastructure (*Insight*, chapter 7), and the other between the infrastructure and the superstructure. We will be speaking of the interaction of these social dialectics with the dialectic of the subject, which itself is twofold: the dialectic of sensitivity and spirituality (a dialectic of contraries), and the dialectic of good and evil (a dialectic of contradictories). Our main concern in fact is with the dialectic of the subject. We will be conducting superstructural reflection on this infrastructural set of events.

¹ On the infrastructure, see Lonergan on the dramatic and practical patterns of experience, *Insight*, chapters 6 and 7, which themselves are an example of superstructural reflection. On the distinction of infrastructure and superstructure, see Lonergan, ‘Belief: Today’s Issue,’ in *A Second Collection*, ed. Bernard J. Tyrrell and William F.J. Ryan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) esp. 91-97. On the inadequate notion of infrastructure in Marx, see Lonergan, ‘The Role of a Catholic University in the Modern World,’ *Collection*, vol. 4 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran) 110, and Fred Lawrence, ‘Political Theology and “The Longer Cycle of Decline,”’ *Lonergan Workshop 1* (1978) 237. 2011 addition: For my own later elaboration, see chapter 12 in Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990, 2001). The title of the chapter is ‘Infrastructure and Superstructure.’

The relations that we will explore will be reciprocal. At the infrastructural level, (1) how does the human psyche participate in and affect the procedures of the human spirit, especially as these latter are involved in the quest for and discovery of God in Christ Jesus? and (1) conversely, how do the procedures of the human spirit in its life of religious quest and partnership affect the states and movements of the human psyche? And at the superstructural level, (1) what is the place of the science of the human psyche in the theology of the spiritual life? and (2) what is the role of the theology of the spiritual life in regard to the science of depth psychology?

The infrastructural questions are reflection on religion, and so they are theological. The superstructural questions are reflection on theology, and so they are methodical. These four questions, in both an explicit and an implicit manner, will reappear over and over again in the course of the semester.

1.2 The Notion of Theological Foundations

For those of you who are familiar with Lonergan's method, what we are doing here is largely a matter of what he calls foundations, but not exclusively so, as our material also falls in part under the tasks that he outlines in his chapter on communications, where he includes theology's relations with other disciplines. Thus we treat the problem of foundations: Lonergan's account of foundations, the complement that I have added to his notion of foundations, but also the theological foundations of interdisciplinary collaboration, starting with a reorientation of the human sciences. The first science to be monitored critically by foundations is depth psychology, since it provides a dimension of foundations through its contribution to an objectification of the subject as subject. This is argued extensively in *Psychic Conversion and Theological*

Foundations, and compendiously in ‘Theological Grounds for a World-Cultural Humanity.’² At the superstructural level, our concern, then, is twofold: to advance the set of foundations for theology already underway in Lonergan’s work by adding a psychological dimension; but also to place depth psychology itself on a new set of foundations, and to argue that these are theological. This is a controversial point, but one that is emergent from my own dialectic with Jung over the past eight years.

1.3 Some Major Options in Depth Psychology and Their Relation to Religion

Our options are Freud, Adler, Jung, Rank-Progoff-Becker. Their respective relations to religion may be characterized as: obsessional neurosis and/or illusion (Freud); socially useful (Adler); legitimate autonomous realm of experience, but treated with insufficient discernment and an inadequate method (Jung); toward a realistic account of an interpretation ‘beyond psychology’ (Rank, Progoff, Becker). Thus we may perhaps discern in depth psychology a progressive recognition of the religious dimension of human experience as possessing its own intrinsic intelligibility, not reducible to psychodynamics, and as possibly possessing even its own truth. There is in this process a movement toward what Eric Voegelin calls a psychology of orientations as sharply contrasted with a psychology of passionate motivations.³ But for this psychology to escape the residual reductionism even of Rank and Becker, it must be placed on the quite explicit and new foundations which establish unequivocally that the meaning and

² Robert M. Doran, *Psychic Conversion and Theological Foundations* (2nd rev. ed., Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2006); ‘Theological Grounds for a World-cultural Humanity,’ in *Theological Foundations*, vol. 2: *Theology and Culture* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995) 191-216.

³ See Eric Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952) 184-87.

finality of the human person cannot be understood solely in biological and psychological terms but must be rooted in the distinctly spiritual dimension of the person in its relation to these other aspects.⁴ What makes for human flourishing? What can we hope for (the third of Kant's questions)?

1.4 The Historical Context of Depth Psychology

An interpretation of the historical and cultural circumstances of the origins of depth psychology would be helpful. I locate it in the dialectic of history, the dialectic of expediency versus integrity. Anthropological truth and soteriological truth are replaced by the new myth of expediency and power, which also obliterates even the meaning of cosmological truth. This is true of the Western liberal doctrine of progress and of the Marxist myth of class warfare; in either case there has been a replacement of integrity in the service of life by expediency in the service of power. The primary repression is of the exigencies of spirit. The context is the longer cycle of decline. There are rudiments of reversal in the turn to the subject, with depth psychology as one aspect of this. But also in depth psychology there is the possibility of furthering decline if it does not heal, if it makes people sicker. There is a need for grounding, by answering such questions as, What makes for human flourishing? Freud opts for resignation, Adler for adaptation and social usefulness, Jung for wholeness, Rank for rechanneling the energies bound up in the fear of life and the fear of death. The answer depends on and is related to prior questions: what is the structure of the human person? what is the relation of the person to community, society, history? what are the relations within the person of body, psyche, and spirit?

⁴ See Robert M. Doran, 'Primary Process and the "Spiritual Unconscious,"' in *Theological Foundations*, vol. 1: *Intentionality and Psyche* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995) 447-79. 2011 note: Chapter 2 of *Theology and the Dialectics of History* contains a later articulation of the relation.

The crisis of the historical dialectic is now worldwide. But the foundational move to interiority is transcultural, involving a retrieval of past riches on a new global plane in every dimensions of cultural life.⁵

⁵ 2011 note: The issues in this paragraph anticipate most of the themes in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*.