

Insight & Beyond II, Lecture 2, Part I: Chapters 12 & 13: “The Notions of Being and Objectivity” & “Cognitive Structure”

[0:00]

- The themes of these chapters and article establish Lonergan as a thinker of the first magnitude.
- “Self and Identity”: Overview.
- Usually speak of identity in terms of membership in one or another human grouping: gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, economic class, religion, etc.
- Foundational identity involves being a knower, chooser, and lover.
- Basic, self-appropriated, transcultural identity is the standard for critiquing the other identities (ethnic, cultural, religious, etc)
- How Lonergan’s sense of identity as “unity or whole” is differs from contemporary use of the term identity.
- By identity, Lonergan means intelligible unity; in contemporary usage identity is about value.

[7:22]

- Meaning of identity in self-appropriation goes beyond the meaning in self-affirmation – adding the affirmation of the *value* of the activities of knowing and choosing to the affirmation of their facticity.

[9:05]

- All affirmation of identity entails alignment with groups and with the value of being a member of that group.
- Knowing, choosing, and loving also makes us parts of a community – namely, the community of being and the community of human history, of the human race.
- Self-appropriation is the standard by which we can discern the pros and cons of other identities.

[12:15]

- Identity as Knower.
- “Why is Doing That Knowing?”
- Why does knowing result from the performance of certain immanent activities?
- What does “immanent” mean here? Opposite of “transcendent.”
- Lonergan’s 3 questions:
 - What am I doing when I am knowing?
 - Why is doing that knowing?
 - What do I know when I do that?

[17:30]

- Knowing-as-Looking vs. Knowing as Self-Transcendence
- The problem of immanence vs. transcendence.
- One way of thinking about the problem is how to get from the inside of consciousness outside to the real world.
- Naïve realism thinks knowing is a single act that gives immediate access to reality.
- The idealist critiques the naïve realists’ account of knowing as immediate contact, but still retain their account of reality, and thus conclude that human knowing knows only appearances, not reality.

- Immanence and the “bridge problem”: If ‘reality is out there’ and ‘consciousness is in here,’ then they cannot connect.

[24:45]

- Lonergan’s second question, then, is actually the question about immanence and transcendence.
- How does this problem relate to Lonergan’s distinction between ‘body’ and ‘thing’?
- How the sense of an ‘in here’ versus an ‘out there’ arises:
 - from the biologically extroverted consciousness.
 - from comparing knowing to the bodily-oriented sense of looking.
- Introspection is seen as ‘taking a look’ inside oneself rather than outside at the world.
- The problem of bridging inside and outside results.
- But if we call into question the assumption that knowing must be a single activity modeled on looking, then we have a new point of departure: What, then, is knowing, really?
- Or, once again, why should the activities appropriated in the first half of *Insight* yield knowledge?

[32:36]

- A confusion about the distinction between internal & external experience:
- External = sensory experiences, vs. internal = experience, consciousness of one’s own activities.
- The boundary of the skin as dividing most primordial notion of external/internal experience.
- The resulting significance of touch and of the skin, both biologically and culture.
- But in Lonergan’s sense, ‘external’ is not outside the skin, but sense experiences in general.
- Experiences of body’s muscles and organs are ‘external’ despite being ‘inside your skin’.
- Lonergan’s senses of internal and external are metaphorical; acts of consciousness are not literally inside one’s skin.
- Internal experiences are of one’s own conscious or intentional acts.
- They do not involve the presence of another object; one doesn’t look at oneself as an object.
- Present, not by being attended to, but by attending; being present to ourselves in and during our experiential, intelligent, and rational activities.
- We are not present in the bio-chemical activities our bodies perform, but we are present in – have internal experience of – our conscious ones.

[43:10]

- Student question about consciousness as not ‘taking a look back’ at the dynamism, but ... how else to state what consciousness is?
 - Meaning of Lonergan’s use of the opposition of non-English terms:
 - Noema* vs. *noesis*;
 - intentio intenta* vs. *intentio intendens*;
 - pensée pensée* vs. *pensée pensante*
 - Discussion of thought, not as object, but as activity; ‘*thought-thinked* vs. *thought-thinking*.’
 - Internal experience has to do with the activities, not their objects
 - Remarkable fact that there are occurrences in the world which are accompanied by and constituted by self-presence
 - Lonergan emphasizes the dynamism and openness of thinking. Discussion of human patterning experience versus biological patterning.

- Lonergan would prefer “differentiate” where other 20th C. philosophers would use “deconstruct” or “destroy” in relation to object-centered, knowing-as-looking centered philosophies

[51:04]

- Student question: Is knowing anything more than an internal experience?
 - Discussion of why question should be phrased differently.

[52:05]

- Question about animal knowledge; same structure but confined to biological pattern?
 - Various kinds of animal knowing are the subject matter for animal biologists;
 - Lonergan lumps many different kinds of animal under the general heading of “biological pattern of experience”;
 - In general animal knowing is the use of sensations of vibrations to detect entities located in the outer world.
 - Animal knowing probably does not have the three-leveled structure, but this is disputed
 - Animal knowing is different from dramatic, religious, philosophical, patterning of animal knowing.

[55:29]

- Is the goal to become present in the performance of your activities?
 - You are already present to your activities
- Discussion of above question:
- The exercises done in this class so far have been aimed at awakening our awareness to the experience of insight we’ve always had.
- Aimed at re-duplicating the structure – heightening the experiencing of our conscious activities on all three levels; understanding that experiencing; critically assessing, correcting, and judging our understanding of that experiencing.
- Habermas and the end of philosophy of consciousness; there is no self-presence that is unmediated by language.
- How language and insights into one’s experiences heightens experiences already being experienced.
- Our intelligence always mediates our experience of what is given.
- The aim is not to become conscious of our activities, but to better understand our consciousness, our experiencing, of those activities.