4. Linguistic Meaning.

By its embodiment in <u>language</u>, in a set of conventional signs,
meaning finds its greatest liberation. For conventional signs
    can be multiplied indefinitely,
    can be used reflexively in analysis and control of linguistic
      meaning itself.
Incontrast, intersubjective and symbolic meaning seem restricted
to the spontaneities of human living together, and whatever
conventions they may develop are limited by the materials in
which colors and shapes, solid forms and structures, sounds and
movements are embodied.

4.1   The moment of Language in human development

    (a) As illustrated by the story of Helen Keller's discovery
        that the successive touches made on her hand by her teacher
        conveyed names of objects; the consequent emotion and
        interest issuing in her incredible career in learning.

    (b) As the reason why ancient civilizations prized names so
        highly:
            not that the name was the essence of the thing
        for them (a later Socratic concern seeking universal
        definitions),
            but that they prized the human achievement of
        bringing conscious intentionality into sharp focus and,
        thereby, setting about the double task of both ordering
        one's world and orientating oneself within it.

4.2   Conscious intentionality develops in and is moulded by its mother tongue

    We not only learn the names of what we see but can attend to
    and talk about the things we can name. Available language
    takes the lead. It picks out
        - aspects of things that are pushed into the foreground,
        - relations between things that are stressed,
        - movements that demand attention.
So different languages develop in different manners, and the
best of translations can express, not the exact meaning of the
original, but the closest approximation possible in another
tongue.

4.3   Besides moulding developing consciousness, <u>language</u> structures the world about the subject

    - Spatial adverbs and adjectives relate places to the place
    of the speaker.
    - Tenses of verbs relate times to his present.
    - Moods correspond to his intention to wish or exhort or
    command or declare.
    - Voices make verbs active, passive
        shift subjects to objects, objects to subjects.

- Grammar, on the one hand, almost gives us Aristotle's categories of substance, quantity, quality, relation, etc., ; Aristotle's logic and theory of science, on the other hand, are deeply rooted in the grammatical function of predication.

4.4 As language develops, there emerges a distinction between (a) ordinary, (b) technical, (c) literary language

(a) <u>Ordinary Language</u>: the vehicle in which the human community conducts its collaboration in the day-to-day pursuit of the human good. It is the language of the home and school, of industry and commerce, of enjoyment and misfortune, of the mass media and the casual conversation. It is

<u>Transient</u>: expresses the thought of the moment at the moment for an moment.

<u>Elliptical</u>: knows that a wink is as good as a nod, that full statement is superfluous and would only irritate.

<u>Based in common sense</u>: nucleus of habitual insights such that the addition of one or two more will bring one to the understanding of any of an open series of concrete situations. E.g., how to behave, what to say, how to say it, what to do, how to do it, in the currently emerging situation.

Hence, <u>centered in the subject</u>: regards the world as related to him, as the field of his behavior, influence, action, as colored by his desires, hopes, fears, joys, sorrows.

As <u>shared by a group</u>, the nucleus of insights is the <u>common sense of the group</u>: when it is just personal, it is thought odd; when it pertains to the common sense of a different group, it is considered strange.

--- On common sense, <u>Insight</u>, chapters six and seven.

(b) <u>Technical Language</u>:

Common sense development of human intelligence yields not only common but also complementary results. (Primitive fruit gatherers differentiate into gardeners, hunters, and fishers.)
-- New groups, ends, tasks, call for new words.
-- Continued division of labor fosters the specialization of language.
-- A distinction emerges between <u>words in common use</u> that refer to what is generally known about particular tasks and, on the other hand, the <u>technical words</u> employed by craftsmen, or experts, or specialists, when they speak among themselves.

Eventually human intelligence shifts from common sense to <u>theoretical development</u>, when inquiry is pursued for

its own sake, when logics and methods are formulated,
when a tradition of learning is established, different
branches are distinguished, and specialties multiply.

(c) Literary Language: the vehicle of a work, a poiema, to be
learnt by heart or to be written out.

While ordinary language is content to supplement the
common understanding and feeling already guiding common
living, literary language not only aims at a fuller state-
ment but also attempts to make up for the lack of mutual
presence. It would have the listener or reader not only
understand but also feel.

So where the technical treatise aims at conforming to the
laws of logic and the precepts of method, literary language
tends to float somewhere between logic and symbol.

Giambattista Vico and the priority of poetry.

Analysis of literary language by the logical mind,
the intrusion of non-literary criteria: the expression
of feeling is symbolic and, if words owe a debt to
logic, symbols follow the laws of image and feeling....
Literary meaning literally expressed is a later ideal
and only with enormous effort and care can it be realized,
as the tireless labors of linguistic analysts seem
to show.

Incarnate Meaning

II. The Structures of Meaning.

5. Elements of Meaning.

Distinguish (1) sources, (2) acts, and (3) terms of meaning

5.1 <u>Sources of meaning</u>: All conscious acts and all intended contents
(from dream state in thru four levels)

    <u>Division</u>: (a) <u>Transcendental</u> - the very dynamism of intentional
consciousness, its capacity to attend, inquire, re-
flect, deliberate (a capacity that endlessly both
heads for and recognizes data, intelligibility,
truth, reality and value).

           (b) <u>Categorial</u> - the determinations reached thru
experiencing, understanding, judging, deciding.

    <u>Conclusion</u>: Transcendental notions put the questions. Answers come
in categorial determinations.

5.2 <u>Acts of meaning</u>: Potential, formal, full, active, and instrumental

    a) <u>potential</u> - elemental meaning; has not yet reached the
distinction between meaning and meant.

        <u>Ex.</u> (1) the smile as simply intersubjective determinant
             (2) the work of art prior to interpretation
             (3) the symbol as internal communication prior
to therapy

    Acts of sensing and understanding of themselves have only
potential meaning.

    c.f. Aristotle - the sensible in act and sense in act are
one and the same; the intelligible in act
and intelligence inaact are one and the same

    <u>Conclusion</u>: Sounding and hearing are an identity; without
ears there can be longitudinal waves in the
atmosphere but no sound. Data are potentially
intelligible, but their intelligibility in act
coincides with an intelligence in act.

    b) <u>formal</u> - an act of conceiving, thinking, considering, de-
fining, supposing, formulating; the distinction
between meaning and meant has emerged - the meant
is what is conceived, thought, considered, defined,
supposed, formulated.

      Need - to define the precise nature of this distinction
(Is the object of one's thought merely an object
of thought or something more than that?)

    c) <u>full</u> - the act of judging; one settles the status of the
object of thought - it is merely an object of
thought, or a mathematical entity, or a real thing
lying in the world of human experience, or a trans-
cendent reality beyond that world.

    d) <u>active or performative</u> meaning * judgments of value,
decisions, actions (c.f. later section on the
effective and constitutive functions of meaning
in the individual and the community).

e) <u>Instrumental</u> - expressions; they externalize and exhibit for interpretation by others the potential, formal, full, or active acts of meaning of the subject. (As expression and interpretation may be adequate or faulty, instrumental acts of meaning provide the materials for a special chapter on hermeneutics.)

For performative meaning, c.f. Donald Evans, THE LOGIC OF SELF-INVOLVEMENT, London, SCM Press, 1963.

5.3 <u>Terms of meaning</u>: what is meant.

ad (a) in potential acts of meaning, meaning and meant are not yet worked out

ad (b) in formal acts, the distinction emerges but the exact status of the term remains indeterminate.

ad (c) in full acts, there occurs the probable or certain determinations of the status of the term - one settles whether or not A is, or whether or not A is B.

ad (d) in performative acts, one settles one's attitude to A, what one will do for B, whether one will endeavor to bring about C.

<u>Spheres</u> of being. With regard to full terms of meaning, we must distinguish different spheres of being.

Realms

e.g. 'the moon exists'
'there exists the logarithm of the square root of minus one'

Need: distinguish a sphere of real being and other restricted spheres such as the mathematical, the hypothetical, the logical and so on. These spheres differ enormously from one another but are not simply disparate. The contents of each sphere are rationally affirmed. The affirmation is rational because it proceeds from an act of reflective understanding in which is grasped the virtually unconditioned; i.e., a conditioned whose conditions are fulfilled. (c.f. INSIGHT, chap. 10)

Problematic: the spheres differ so vastly because the conditions to be fulfilled differ.

1) the fulfilling conditions for affirming real being are appropriate data of sense or consciousness

2) the fulfilling conditions for proposing an hypothesis is a possible relevance to a correct understanding of data

3) the fulfilling conditions for correct mathematical statement do not include even a possible relevance to data

4) beyond restricted spheres and the real sphere there is the transcendent sphere of being: the transcendent being is the being that, while known by us through grasping the virtually unconditioned, is itself without any conditions whatever; it is formally unconditioned, absolute.

Conclusion:

The foregoing is the <u>realist</u> account of full terms of meaning. For the <u>empiricist</u>, one disregards the virtually unconditioned and identifies the real with what is exhibited in ostensive gestures
  e.g.   What is a dog? --take a look here.

For the <u>idealist</u>, one draws attention to the empiricist's failure to note all the structuring elements that are not given to sense yet are constitutive of human knowing; but one fails to challenge the empiricist notion of the real and discover that one comes to know the real when one grasps a certain type of virtually unconditioned.

6. The Exigencies of Meaning: The Unity of Differentiated Consciousness

A. <u>Differentiated</u> consciousness achieves its unity
  1) by keeping distinct the worlds of common-sense, of theory,of interiority, and of transcendence.

  2) by understanding the relations between them

  3) by moving easily from living in one to living in another

B. It differs from the unity of undifferentiated consciousness for which the different worlds or realms have not yet become distinct.

C. It differs from the troubled consciousness, for which different worlds are becoming distinct but the discovery has not yet been made that, when these distinctions arise, the old unity of undifferentiation is no longer possible and a new <u>dynamic unity</u> of well understood transitions has to be achieved.

D. Towards such achievement, consider the four exigencies that give rise to the different realms or worlds; viz., the <u>systematic</u> exigence, the <u>critical</u> exigence, the <u>methodical</u> exigence.

6.1 <u>The systematic exigence</u> - separates the worlds of common-sense and theory; i.e., same contents, different standpoints.

World of common-sense: the world of persons and things in their relations to us.

We come to know it not by the scientific method but by the self-correcting process of learning (insights accumulate, coalesce, qualify, and correct one another).

The objects in this world are in everyday language, in which the words have the function, not of naming the intrinsic properties of things, but of completing the focussing of our conscious intentionality on the things, of crystallizing our attitudes, expectations, intentions, of guiding all our actions.

Examples of the shift:

     a) from Plato's early dialogues (Socrates search
       for definitions of virtues)

     b) to Aristotle's <u>Nicomachean Ethics</u> - definitions
       for virtues and vice in general and for a series
       of virtues each flanked by two opposite vices
       (one sinning by excess; the other by defect)

     c) but these answers to Socrates' questions have now
       ceased to be the single objective: the systematic
       exigence not merely raises questions that common-
       sense cannot answer but also demands a <u>context</u>
       for its answers, a context that common-sense
       cannot supply or comprehend.

World of Theory: that context is theory and the objects to
             which it refers are in the world of theory.

One may ascend from common-sense starting-points, but
they are properly known, not by this ascent, but by
their interrelations, their similarities and differences,
the functions they fulfill in their interactions.

So, too, one may invoke common-sense to correct theory,
but the correction will be effected not in common-sense
language but in theoretical language and the implications
will be the consequences, not of the common-sense facts
that were invoked, but of the theoretical correction
that was made.

      Other examples: mass, temperature, the electro-
              magnetic field
              biologist and son at zoo

<u>Conclusion</u>:

     a) there are the world of common-sense and of theory with
       different languages and resultant social differences
       (e.g., specialists talk to their wives but not about their
       specialities.).

     b) what gives rise to these quite different standpoints, methods,
       languages and communities is the systematic exigence.

6.2 <u>The critical exigence</u> - To meet the systematic exigence only
                   reinforces the critical exigence.

    Questions arise: is common-sense just primitive ignorance
                to be brushed aside by science?
              is science of merely pragmatic value?
              is there any such thing as human knowing?

Three basic questions:

      what am I doing when I am knowing?
      why is doing that knowing?
      what do I know when I do it?

With these questions one turns from the outer worlds of
common-sense and theory to the appropriation of one's own
interiority, one's subjectivity, one's operations, their
structure, their norms, their potentialities.

In its technical expression such appropriation resembles theory
but in itself it is a heightening of intentional consciousness,
an attending not merely to objects but also to the intending

subject and his acts. And as this heightened consciousness constitutes
the evidence for one's account of knowledge, such an account by the
proximity of the evidence differs from all other expression.

6.3 <u>The methodical exigence</u> - From the world of interiority one returns
to the worlds of common-sence and theory
with the ability to meet the methodical
exigence.

For self appropriation is a grasp of transcendental method
and that grasp provides one with the tools not only for an
analysis of common-sense procedures but also for the differ-
entiation of the sciences and the construction of their methods.

6.4 <u>The transcendental exigence</u> - Finally, there is the transcendental
exigence.

a) there is to human inquiry an unrestricted desire for
intelligibility

b) there is to human judgment a demand for the unconditioned

c) there is to human deliberation a criterion that criticizes
every finite good.

So it is that man can reach fulfillment, peace, joy only by
moving beyond the world of possible experience into the world
of religion where God is known and loved.

6.5 <u>Conclusion</u>: differentiated consciousness sharply distinguishes
the four worlds

it does not seek to give them the homogeneity of
undifferentiated consciousness but leaves them in their
proper diversity.

it is not thereby divided, split up, into unrelated
compartments

through self-understanding and self-knowledge, it
finds XXX in itself the grounds of this diversity and
acquires the flexibility and dexterity that enables
it to shift with ease from any one to any other and
to find itself at home in all four.