

Stages of Meaning

The Stages are ideal constructs - tools for possible analysis description
Basic constructs: undifferentiated, doubly differentiated, triply diff

common sense
common sense and theory (philosophy part of theory)
common sense, theory, interiority (philosophy out of interiority)

Temporal but not chronological

temporal: one reaches the second from the first, third from the second
not chronological: vast majority of men in undifferentiated consc
many get no further than second when third is reach

Further constructs: subdivisions

early language
the Greek Discovery of Mind (Bruno Snell, Harper Torchbook)
doubly and triply differentiated consciousness
undifferentiated consciousness in later times

Early Language

Though language was described as instrumtnal meaning, it is not
to be inferred thatt potential formal actual constitutive effective
menaning can function without language

Pathology of symbolic consciousness (Cassirer, Phil Smbt Forms)
if aphasia, then disturbance also in perception, thought, action

George Herbert Mead -- Gibson Winter: social origin of language

~~XX~~
one understands the meaning of one's gestures (mnual or vocal)
in observing another's response to them

Wife of American visiting professor in England experienc d great
difficulty in purchasing ordinary objects: English have different
names for many contemporary artefacts. She would ask for a wallplug;
the clerk would say, What does it do madam? She would make lifke
a Hottentot. He would discern that she wanted a multiple outlet.
She would ask for cheesecloth. He would say what does it do madam.
She would make like a Hottentot. He would * tell she wanted some
type of muslin.

The limitations of early language are accounted for by insight
into the meaning of gestures
one can point to anything spatial, external, specific, human,
and early language is at home in all this area
but the temporal, internal, generic, divine cannot be pointed out
and here early language is weak
its tenses do not denote past and future but kinds of action
personal pronouns are preceded by possessive pronoun
Homer has endless words for specific ways of seeing such as peering
staring glaring but no generic term, see
again in Homer inner mental processes are represented by personified
interchanges; Achilles does not think; he talks with a god or goddess,
his horse or a river, or some part of himself such as his heart
or his temper
the divine is the ultimate term of the transcendental notions,
but it is neither perceived nor imagined; but it can be associated
with the object or event, the ritual or recitation, that occasions
religikus experience

Even early language employs the cognitive constitutive effective communicative functions of meaning but these different functions are not clearly apprehended, sharply defined, carefully delimited constitutive: insight into human relationships bring about the constitution of tribes and clans. To name them calls for ingenuity, for one clan is not perceptibly different from another. Totemism names the clans after different plants and animals, in a far complex fashion than the sportswriters who speak of Bruins, Hawks Seals, Bears Colts Lions.

As the constitutive, so too the cognitive function of meaning is exercised. People move out the infant's world of immediacy into a world mediated by ~~man~~ meaning. But the cognitive and the constitutive functions tend to overlap. Man not only constitutes his being in the world but also a ~~xx~~ little too much of the world he believes he is in. The result is myth. Similarly, effective meaning exists in requests, orders, ~~coommands~~, prayers. But its efficacy can be overestimated and there results magic.

One is not to think of primitives as in any way lacking in intelligence, reasonableness, goodness Malinowski (Magic Science & Religion has testified that in all practical matters the Trobriand islanders were as much capable of learning from experience as anyone else. Myth and magic encompassed everything but it did ~~xx~~ not interfere with practical good sense; it came to the fore with regard to the distant, the past, the future, the dangerous.

Again, it was through practical affairs that men made their way from the penury of the primitive to the wealth and power of the temple states and the later empires of the ancient high civilizations in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Crete, the v lleys if the Indus and Hoang-ho, and later in Mdxico and Peru. There there emerged great wlrks of irrigation, vast structures of stone and brick, armies and navies, complicated processes of book-keeping, the beginnings of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy. But this ~~xxxxxxx~~ ~~x~~ in the realm of practical intelligence did not solve the basic problem of myth and magic. Rather it organized both on an imperial scale to depict as continuous and solidary the order of society, the order of the cosmos, and divine being (Voegelin, Order and History, Louisiana State)

advance

The Greek Discovery of Mind

If myth is to be broken, mind has to be discovered. Or in other words there have to be developed the techniques by which meaning can be controlled, distinctions made, precepts formulated and somehow enforced.

In chapters one three five and nine Bruno ^{gnell} has described the arc of Greek literature which gradually developed man's apprehension of himself
 Homeric simile drew on the characteristics of inanimate nature and of plants and animals to illuminate and objectify and distinguish the varied springs of action in the epic heroes
 The lyric poets worked out expressions of personal human feeling
 The dramatists exhibited human ~~ix~~ decisions, their interplay and conflicts, and their consequences

Within the literary tradition there occurred reflections on knowledge
 xx For Homer knowledge comes by perception or hearsay

man's knowledge is always partial and incomplete
 but the Muses are omnipresent; they perceive everything; they enable the bard to sing as if he had been present or as if he had heard an account from an eyewitness

But for Hesiod the Muses do not inspire but teach
 they are far less trustworthy than Homer claimed
 they may teach the truth but they also may teach plausible falsehoods
 they singled Hesiod out on Mt Helicon and taught him not to repeat the folly of his predecessors but to tell the truth about the struggle in which man ekes out his livelihood

Xenophanes was still more critical; rejected the multitude of anthropomorphic gods; taught that god was unity, perfect in wisdom, operating without toil merely by the thought of his mind
 In contrast human wisdom was imperfect, caught in semblance, but still the best of the virtues, to be attained by long seeking

For Hecataeus the stories of the Greeks were many and foolish
 Man's knowledge is not the gift of the gods
 Stories of the past are to be judged by everyday experience
 Man advances in knowledge by inquiry and search and the search is not just accidental, as in Odysseus, but deliberate and planned
 This empirical interest lived on in Herodotus, the physicians, physicists
 But with Heraclitus a new turn emerged

for him the mere amassing of information did not make one grow in intel where his predecessors were opposed to ignorance, he was opposed to folly
 He prized eyes and ears but thought them poor witnesses for men with barbarian souls

There is, he held, an intelligence, a logos, that steers through all things. It is found in god and man and beast, the same in all thought in different degrees. To know it is wisdom

While Heraclitus emphasized process, Parmenides denied multiplicity & motion. At heart his position is a set of arguments
 He denied that there is any intermediary between nothing and being; either becoming is or it is not; if it is, it is being and if it is not it is nothing. Again being cannot differ from being, and so there cannot be different beings

While the arguments, on the one hand, are fallacious, on the other they suggest the principles of excluded middle and of identity
 they revealed the possibility of argument taking a stand against perception; they paved the way for Zeno's paradoxes, for the Sophists, for Socrates Plato Aristotle the Stoics etc.

The limitation of early language we derived from the fact that it arose from ostensive gestures and insights, and so was restricted to the spatial, the external, the specific, the human

With literary and philosophic advance there arose the possibility of linguistic feedback: linguistic development itself provided the source of insights that grounded further linguistic development. So alphabets make words visible, dictionaries collect their meanings, Grammars study their inflections and syntax, literary criticism interprets and evaluates compositions, logics promote clarity coherence and rigor, hermeneutics studies the varying relations of meaning and meant, philosophies relates different worlds mediated by meaning

This sophistication with respect to language and meaning brings about the control of meaning that eliminates myth and magic

Ernst Cassirer notes that mythic consciousness lacks any clear dividing line between representation and real perception, between wish and fulfillment, between image and thing; he goes on to affirm the continuity of dream and waking consciousness and adds that no less than the image the name tends to merge with the thing

In brief the primitive does not succeed in drawing distinctions but this is not surprising if only one reflects for a moment

A and B are distinct if it is true that A is not B

the distinction is verbal if A and B denote names

the distinction is notional if A and B denote concepts, objects of thought

the distinction is real if A and B denote real things or real aspects of them

But this account of distinctions involves considerable dexterity in the manipulation of language, in distinguishing, words, concepts, things and in a philosophic grasp that reality is known through true judgement.

The Second and Third Stages of Meaning

Undifferentiated consciousness operates only in the mode of common sense

Singly differentiated consciousness operates both in the mode of common sense and of theory

Undifferentiated consciousness pursues the concrete good; in doing so it appeals to experience, to understanding, to judgements of fact and possibility; but it does not make a specialty of each of these three; on the contrary, as soon as the purpose of the investigation or discourse no longer centers on the good, undifferentiated consciousness loses interest.

Singly differentiated consciousness pursues not only the good but also the true; it regards the true as an end in itself; it insists that without a pursuit of the true, one will fail to arrive at what truly is good.

By logic, by an Aristotelian Organon, it sets up criteria for the pursuit of truth, and it proceeds to organize a social and cultural milieu, the Academy, the Lyceum, in which human animals may engage in the pursuit

Triply differentiated consciousness begins with scientific development. Science is conceived as only remotely directed to the pursuit of truth; its immediate goal is an advance in understanding

such advance is a closer approximation to truth, but actual attainment is indefinitely remote; the advance in understanding is only a better hypothesis, a fuller theory, a neater system

Such science is autonomous; it does not derive its basic terms and relations from a philosophy but from observation hypothesis experiment

Such science conceives itself as omniscient: its goal is the complete explanation of all phenomena

Undifferentiated Consciousness in Later Stages of Meaning

Our account of the eclipse of the ~~2~~ second stage of meaning though the development of empirical science and practical or existential phil would be incomplete without something being said about the survival of undifferentiated consciousness in the second and third stages

Undifferentiated consciousness is still with us and will remain

It is not the scientist or philosopher that does the world's work, conducts its business, governs its cities and states, teaches most of its classes, runs all of its schools. Commonsense mode of operation.

Humanism Oratory

It was on a rising tide of linguistic feedback that logic, philosophy, and early science emerged. But such technical achievements may repel as well as retract. One may be content to marvel at the fact of language, the fact makes man unique among the animals. One may with Isocrates trace cities and laws, arts and skills, and indeed all aspects of cultural and social achievement to man's powers of speech and persuasion. One may go on to urge one's fellows to seek eloquence through education and thereby to excel among men in the very respect in which man excels among the animals. So to excel linguistically and to become truly human are found to be interchangeable

Philanthropia

Respect and devotion to man as man

Not based on kinship, noble blood, common citizenship, education

but on the fact that another, particularly a sufferer, was a human being

Practice of it could be quite modest; showing some restraint in plundering and enslaving a conquered people

But at least an ideal that inspired education and fostered the gracious urbanity illustrated by Menander Plautus Terence

Merging of theory and common sense

Men of differentiated consciousness tend to be rare

One can study geometry science philosophy under a professor who simplifies, makes things interesting, adds illustrations that prevent one from moving into the heart of the matter

Sp. the worlds of theory and of common sense partly interpenetrate and partly merge

The results are ambivalent: the exaggerations of philosophic error are abandoned; the profundities of philosophic truth are inadequately grasped

?Again, instead of merging theory with common sense, it can also merge with common nonsense

New Role for Literature

Homer, lyric, dramatic poets were opening up new realms of meaning

But the later poets read the literary critics, knew about genres and styles, became playful and artistic, joined Virgil in his nostalgia for earlier simpler times