

INSIGHTCHAPTER XVIIMETAPHYSICS AS DIALECTIC

If Descartes has imposed upon subsequent philosophers a requirement of rigorous method, Hegel has obliged them not only to account for their own views but also to explain the existence of contrary convictions and opinions. Accordingly, our appeal has been not only to the isomorphism between the structure of cognitional activity and the structure of proportionate being but also to the polymorphism of human consciousness. From the isomorphism there has followed the account of the six metaphysical elements, of their distinction, relations, unity, and technical significance. From the polymorphism of consciousness there has followed a series of brief but highly effective refutations of contrary views. However, our method possesses still further significance. Not only is it possible to deal piecemeal with opposed opinions but also there is available a general theorem to the effect that any philosophy, whether actual or possible, will rest upon the dynamic structure of cognitional activity either as correctly conceived or as distorted by oversights and by mistaken orientations.

Such a theorem in itself is simple enough but it labors under one considerable difficulty. No one would deny that conclusions follow from premises or that, as our

metaphysics has followed from our conception of cognitional activity, other metaphysics or negations of metaphysics would follow from other conceptions. But obviously considerable resistance would meet the claim that the procedure yielded results that were strictly coincident with the views of other philosophers. The most that could be established would be a general similarity of structure and of tendencies while, commonly enough, philosophers living and dead are not just structures and tendencies but also less general responses to problems peculiar to particular places and times.

To meet this difficulty, it is necessary to transpose the issue from the field of abstract deduction to the field of concrete historical process. Accordingly, instead of asking whether the views of any given philosopher follow from assumptions of a specified type, we propose to ask whether there exists ~~any~~ single base of operations from which any philosophy can be interpreted correctly and we propose to show that our cognitional analysis provides such a base. In this fashion, the a priori element of cognitional analysis joins hands with the a posteriori element of historical data; attention is turned to the problem of arriving at a heuristic structure for a methodical hermeneutics; and since metaphysics has been defined as the integral heuristic structure of proportionate being, the dialectical aspect of metaphysics is integrated with its scientific aspect by the simple fact that both aspects satisfy a single definition.

The chapter falls into three main parts.

In the first there are determined the relations of metaphysics to myth on the one hand and to mystery on the other. In the second there are explored the criterion of truth, the definition of truth, the ontological aspect of truth, the relations between truth and expression, and the appropriation of truth. Finally, in the third section it will prove possible to define the problem of interpretation and to work out the heuristic structure for a methodical hermeneutics.

1. Metaphysics, Mystery, and Myth

An account of particular mysteries and myths pertains to the history of religions and of literature. But a genetic account of the radical meaning of mystery and myth, of their significance and function, of the grounds of their emergence, survival, and disappearance, can hardly be omitted in a contemporary metaphysics. Myth is a prominent category in Comte's notion of three stages in man's development, in Schelling's later philosophy, in E. Cassirer's Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, in P. Tillich's views on religion and theology, in R. Bultmann's principles of New Testament interpretation. Mystery is a notion that plays a fundamental role in the philosophy of Gabriel Marcel and in widely different ranges of religious reflection. Finally, while we have been engaged in indicating the character of explicit metaphysics, we also have acknowledged prior stages of latent and of problematic metaphysics; and naturally enough there arises the question whether mystery and myth are cognate to these earlier stages and whether they vanish in the measure that the earlier stages are transcended.

1.1

The Sense of the Unknown

First, then, our analysis forces us to recognize the paradoxical category of the "known unknown". For we have equated being with the objective of the pure desire to know, with what is to be known through the totality of intelligent and reasonable answers. But, in fact, our questions outnumber our answers, so that we know of an unknown through our unanswered questions.

Secondly, man's concrete being involves 1) a succession of levels of higher integration and 2) a principle of correspondence between otherwise coincidental manifolds on each lower level and systematizing forms on the next higher level. Moreover, these higher integrations on the organic, psychic, and intellectual levels are not static but dynamic systems; they are systems on the move; the higher integration is not only an integrator but also an operator; and if developments on different levels are not to conflict, there has to be a correspondence between their respective operators.

Thirdly, on the intellectual level the operator is concretely the detached and disinterested desire to know. It is this desire, not in contemplation of the already known, but headed towards further knowledge, orientated into the known unknown. The principle of dynamic correspondence calls for a harmonious orientation on the psychic level, and from the nature of the case such an orientation would have to consist in some cosmic dimension, in some intimation of unplumbed depths, that accrued to

man's feelings, emotions, sentiments. Nor is this merely a theoretical conclusion, as R. Otto's study of the non-rational element in the Idea of the Holy rather abundantly indicates.

Fourthly, such feelings, emotions, sentiments become integrated in the flow of psychic events inasmuch as they are preceded by distinctive sensible presentations or imaginative representations and inasmuch as they issue forth in exclamations and bodily movements, in rites and ceremonies, in song and speech. There results pragmatically a distinction between two spheres of variable content: on the one hand, there is the sphere of reality that is domesticated, familiar, common; on the other hand, there is the sphere of the ulterior unknown, of the unexplored and strange, of the undefined surplus of significance and momentousness. The two spheres are variable, for the first expands with every advance in knowledge of proportionate being. Again, the two spheres may be as separate as Sundays and week-days or they may interpenetrate so that, as for Wordsworth in his youth, the earth and every common sight take on the glory and the freshness of a dream. Finally, while everyone by the dynamic structure of his being is orientated into the second sphere, it seems reserved to the outer accident of circumstance and the inner accident of temperamental disposition to call forth the more intense experiences that leave one now aghast, now amazed, now entranced.

Fifthly, the primary field of mystery and myth consists in the affect-laden images and names that

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Foot-note to Chapter XVII, p. 875, line 27.

There exist infantile and ^edmonic aspects of mythic consciousness. To account for them, one must advert to the existence of an inverse component of the psychic operator. In other words, development is not only advance into the known unknown but also a flight from anxiety and, in more marked instances, from uncanny feelings of horror, loathing, dread. In this connection I can only refer the reader to the posthumous edition of H. S. Sullivan's lectures under the title, The Interpersonal ~~The~~ Theory of Psychiatry, New York 1953. May I add that Sullivan's work seems to me to possess a remarkable significance from a methodological viewpoint? His adherence to the canon of parsimony ~~is rewarded with notable gains in clarity and precision~~ has its reward not only in a liberating clarity but even in the achievement of a basic set of genetic concepts. ~~Now~~ Roughly, Sullivan deals with ranges of intersubjective schemes of recurrence (dynamisms meeting needs), their integrator (the self-system), and their operator (the avoidance of anxiety). From such elements he is in a position to construct any number of fortunate or unfortunate developments from a rather convincing extrapolation to infantile experience, through mischievous children, chums and gangs, early and late adolescence, either to the attainment of psychic maturity, or to the eruption of neurotic malfunctioning, or to the invasion of consciousness by the horrors of the "not-me" in schizophrenia.

have to do with this second sphere. However, as the analysis indicates, the primary field is not the only field, and so it will be well to distinguish between the image as image, the image as symbol, and the image as sign. The image as image is the sensible content as operative on the sensitive level: it is the image inasmuch as it functions within the psychic syndrome of associations, affects, exclamations, and articulated speech and actions. The image as symbol or as sign is the image as standing in correspondence with activities or elements on the intellectual level. But as symbol, the image is linked simply with the paradoxical "known unknown". As sign, the image is linked with some interpretation that offers to indicate the import of the image.

Sixthly, the interpretations that transform the image into a sign are a vast manifold. Anyone who has glanced through a history of religions will be aware of the enormously divergent attitudes and performances that are jumbled together under that single rubric. But there is no reason for restricting interpretations of the image as sign to the field of religion. The primary field of mystery and myth is both quite general and quite permanent. For inquiry and reflection are both general and permanent; the principle of correspondence between the intellectual and the sensitive is both general and permanent; and so some sensitive awareness and response, symbolic of the known unknown, must be regarded as a generally and permanently recurring feature of human living. Moreover, precisely because of its relation to the known unknown, the image can

be interpreted as sign in manners that are as numerous and diverse as human ingenuity and human contrariness. So it is that the full range of interpretations includes not only the whole gamut of religions but also the opposite phenomenon of anti-religious feeling and expression, not only anti-religious views but also the intense humanistic idealism that characterized liberal display of detachment from all religious concern, not only elevated humanism but also the crudely naturalistic nationalism that exploded in Germany under the fascination exerted by a Hitler, not only such social aberrations but also the individual aberrations that led Jung to declare that very commonly psycho-neural disorder is connected with problems of a basically "religious" character. In brief, there is a dimension to human experience that takes man beyond the domesticated, familiar, common sphere, in which a spade is just a spade. In correspondence with that strange dynamic component of sensitive living, there is the openness of inquiry and reflection and the paradoxical "known unknown" of unanswered questions. Such directed but, in a sense, indeterminate dynamism is what we have called finality. But whither finality heads, is a question that receives countless answers, pragmatic or conceptual, naturalistic, humanistic, or religious, enthusiastically positive or militantly negative.

Seventhly, since metaphysics is restricted to the domain of proportionate being, it will acknowledge the fact of finality and determine its general characteristics. But it would be stepping beyond the limits of its competence

if it did not leave to further and distinct inquiries the determination of the precise objective towards which finality may in fact be leading. For there are claims that that goal is transcendent, that it lies outside the realm of proportionate being; and whether or not such claims are justified, cannot be settled within the limits of an inquiry that simply prescind from all questions concerning transcendent being.

Eighthly, it does not follow that metaphysics will have nothing to say on the subject of mystery and myth. For at least in our usage of the term, finality means not a future event but a present fact, not the ultimate result of a tendency but its past and present unfolding. Nor is that unfolding merely a possible topic of metaphysical consideration, for it is interwoven with the very genesis of metaphysics, with the process in which the mind of man moves from a latent through a problematic to an explicit metaphysical view.

1.2

The Genesis of Adequate Self-Knowledge

For an explicit and adequate metaphysics is a corollary to explicit and adequate self-knowledge. It follows upon the affirmation of oneself as a unity of empirical, intelligent, and rational consciousness, upon the heuristic definition of being that reveals intelligent and reasonable affirmation to be knowledge of reality, upon the account of objectivity, as experiential, normative, absolute, and principal, that strips counter-positions of their apparent plausibility. However, such adequate self-knowledge can be reached by man only at the summit of a long ascent. For self-knowledge involves a self-objectification and, before man can contemplate his own nature in precise but highly difficult concepts, he has to bring the virtualities of that nature into the light of day. In the present work this was achieved by our study of insight as activity, for what we mean by a unity of empirical, intelligent, and rational consciousness, has to be gathered from our study of insight in mathematics, in classical and statistical science, in common sense and its fourfold bias, in the ambiguity of things and bodies, and in the reflective understanding that leads to judgment. But such a study would not be possible without the prior development of the sciences and the long clarification of more general issues by philosophic inquiries and debates. Nor would the scientific and philosophic developments themselves have been possible without a prior evolution of language and literature and without the security and leisure generated by

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technological, economic, and political advance.

Still this conditioning of metaphysics by self-knowledge and of self-knowledge by human development does not imply that self-knowledge and metaphysics are not attempted until a sufficient human development is attained to ensure their accuracy and adequacy. On the contrary, from the start there is present and operative the latent metaphysics contained in the dynamic structure of all human knowing which, if it is human, is constituted by experience, by understanding, and by a reflective "Yes" or "No". Similarly, from the start there is present and operative the empirically, intelligently, and rationally conscious subject. What is lacking is the appropriate set of conceptual definitions and linguistic expressions in which the triply conscious subject could convey to himself and to others what it is to be a human knower and what such knowing implies in the known. What is lacking is the cultural milieu, habituated to the use of abstract concepts, and trained in the techniques that safeguard their employment. What is lacking is a critical awareness of the polymorphism of human consciousness, of the alternative formulations of discoveries as positions or as counter-positions, of the momentum of positions for development ^{and} of the goal of counter-positions in reversal. Most of all, what is lacking is knowledge of all that is lacking and only gradually is that knowledge acquired.

So it is that each new venture, each new success and failure, in the history of man provides an objectifying revelation of man's capacities and limitations, a contribution to his self-knowledge, and a premise from which, perhaps,

some item of metaphysical import may be gleaned. Man knows himself in the intersubjective community of which he is just a part, in the support and opposition the community finds in its enveloping world of sense, in the tools of its making, in the rites and ceremonies that at once occupy its leisure, vent its psychic awareness of cosmic significance, express its incipient grasp of universal order and its standards of praise and blame. Still there is a tension between the community and the individual, between the old initiatives that through common acceptance have become inertial routines and, on the other hand, the capacities of individuals constituted by successive higher integrations that are not static systems but systems on the move. And if the proximate effect of this tension is social change, the goal towards which it tends cumulatively is an awareness and an ever more distinct formulation of the nature of the originating subject. So the stories of the gods yield to the more human stories of the heroes; the epic that celebrates a collective past yields to a drama that portrays man's tragic situation; song becomes a more personal lyric; practical techniques open the way to insights into nature; social problems invite social reflection; rhetoricians and sophists call forth logic; and the cosmic whole summons philosophy to venture on its speculative way.

genesis
A long history, then, is involved in the genesis of man's self-knowledge. But metaphysics is a corollary to self-knowledge, and so there is a parallel history to the genesis of metaphysics. And as metaphysics is not uncon-

cerned with its own genesis, so it cannot prescind entirely from the historical phenomena of mysteries and myths.

1.3

Mythic Consciousness

Just as an explicit and adequate metaphysics is to be reached by grasping and formulating the integral heuristic structure of our knowing and its proportionate known, so the hypothetical introduction of blind spots into the structure has the interesting consequence of revealing the categories not only of inadequate philosophies but also, in the limit, of mythic consciousness.

Thus, before the distinction between positions and counter-positions is drawn clearly and distinctly, it is not possible to formulate an accurate and universally applicable criterion of reality and of real distinctness. This lack of a general criterion does not mean that man will be unable to hit things off correctly in particular cases. For as long as man operates intelligently and reasonably, he will succeed in every particular case in determining what is and what is not real and which realities are distinct. But it is not uncommon for other desires to interfere with the unfolding of the detached and disinterested desire to know, and the result of such interference will be error about reality and about real difference. In this fashion, the real sometimes is what is to be known through reasonable affirmation, and sometimes it is what can be really real only if it is "already out there now".

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* On this issue philosophies can straddle, as did Cartesian dualism, or choose one of the alternatives, as did rationalism and empiricism respectively, or reject both, as did Kantian criticism. However, the issue itself is as

old as the polymorphism of human consciousness. If it has occupied an extremely prominent position in modern philosophy, it bedeviled medieval thought, with problems of universals and of distinctions and, in a still less distinct form, it underlay the oppositions between the old Greek nature-philosophers and the Pythagoreans, Heraclitus and the Eleatics, Platonists and Aristotelians, atomists and Stoics. *If the history of philosophic reflection has been a prolonged clarification of the issue, there occurred human inquiry and reflection before philosophy became a distinct branch of human knowledge. In that still earlier period, there could and in fact did occur sudden flashes of philosophic acumen and profundity, such as may be illustrated by Ikhnaton's concern with being and its ground. Still the flashes were no more than flashes for, while man always was intelligent and reasonable, also it always was true that the insights and judgments of the individual can be communicated successfully and permanently to others only in the measure that the community has accumulated the prior, presupposed insights and has developed the techniques for their dissemination and preservation. So it is that pre-philosophic mentality tends to straddle unconsciously and confusedly the problem of reality. The real is known by the rational "Yes"; but the real also must be imaginable; and since imagination is ever fluid, the real attains the stability of reality only when it is named. Similarly, real difference is to be known by comparative negations; but mere judgments are not enough; there also must be different images and different names;

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and, inversely, differences in image and in name can result in an acknowledgement of different realities.

This brings us to the confines of mythic consciousness which operates without the benefit of distinctions that are generated only by the critically reflective process that is aware of myth and goes beyond it. Mythic consciousness experiences and imagines, understands and judges, but it does not distinguish between these activities, and so it is incapable of guiding itself by the rule that the palpable act of rational assent is the necessary and sufficient condition for knowledge of reality. For it, the real is the object of a sufficiently integrated and a sufficiently intense flow of sensitive representations, feelings, words, and actions. Contrary judgments break the integration, but contrary judgments have a palpable ground only in the sphere of common, familiar, domesticated reality, in which trial and error exercise their pragmatic control. But contrary judgments have no palpable ground when unanalyzed consciousness is orientated into the strange realm of the "known unknown". Then there becomes operative, without Kantian reservations, the Kantian scheme of the category of reality, namely, the real is to be affirmed when there occurs a suitable filling of the empty, a priori forms of sensibility. As the uncritical scientist builds for himself a universe constituted by tiny, imaginable knobs or by a sponge-vortex ether, so the myth-maker builds himself a more vital and more impressive world. As for the uncritical scientist, so for

the myth-makers, their respective worlds are "real". A Kantian would point out that really this reality is only phenomenal, but the possibility of this correction lies on the deeper ground that the criterion of the real is the act of judgment issuing from a grasp of the virtually unconditioned. And the same criterion must be invoked if one cares to argue that the myth-maker or the uncritical scientist did not possess a suitable filling for the empty forms of his sensibility.

Next, an adequate metaphysics must distinguish not only positions and counter-positions but also explanation and description. Moreover, the explanatory viewpoint can be adopted, only if counter-positions are rejected and positions accepted. For explanation relates things to one another; it includes by a remote and general implication all relations of the sensible to senses and of the imaginable to imaginations under the broad and comparatively undifferentiated category of the relations of things to one another; it drops from consideration the knower as a spectator of the real and makes him an inconspicuous item in the real that is affirmed. But so fine a detachment, so rigorous a disinterestedness, is a sheer leap into the void for the existential subject. His concern is for things as related to him. He is quite intelligent; he is eager for insight; but the insight he wants is, not at all the grasp of a system of terms defined by their intelligible relations to one another, but the grasp of intelligibility in the concrete presentations of his own experience.

Now I am no opponent of insight into the con-

crete presentations of one's own experience. But I would note that all the explaining is done by the insight and that, unless one distinguishes between the insight and the presentations, then one is open to the blunder of attributing an explanatory power to the presentations and even to associated feelings and emotions. One can know exactly the contribution made by the insight by having recourse to concepts, to abstract formulations, to the utterance of terms and relations with the terms fixing the relations and the relations implicitly defining the terms. But if one employs this procedure, one is involved in the explanatory viewpoint; and if one rejects the explanatory viewpoint, one is without any defence against the tendency to regard as explanatory what merely is an item to be explained.

Nor is the danger of such a tendency remote. For what else is at the root of anthropomorphic projections? We have found the abstract intelligibility of space and time to lie in the invariants of the geometry employed in a verified physics. But if one insists that going beyond concrete insights is a desertion of reality, a flight to metaphysical make-believe, then one cannot rise above one's personal, spatio-temporal frame of reference and one cannot distinguish between the intelligibility immanent in that frame and mere sensitive familiarity with directions and with the lapse of time. Without such a distinction, objective space and time are credited not only with the intelligibility of the frame but also with our feelings. As we feel the gravitational field to be directed from

above to below, so a man at the antipodes would have to move about like a fly walking on the ceiling of a room. As we make decisions and then produce results, so causes are before effects, and a first cause necessarily and exclusively is first in time. Causality cannot be merely an intelligible relation of dependence; it has to be explained and the explanation is reached by an appeal to the sensation of muscular effort and to the image of the transmission of effort through contact. So universal causality is a pervasive fate, linking all things at once, keeping the wandering stars to their strange courses and, by the same stroke, settling for astrologers the destinies of men. Things have properties, but their properties are not conjugates, implicitly defined by verified laws, but sensible qualities that can be detached and reassembled to enable alchemists to transform base metals into gold. Besides the properties, there are the things but they are constituted, not so much by their intelligible unity (what could that mean?), but by their capacity to occupy space and endure through time; they are "bodies". Finally, one is confronted with the antinomies of nothing less than pure reason when one asks how space and time can be infinite or, if they are not, then what is outside space and what is before time.

There is as well the inverse fallacy. Just as anthropomorphic projection results from the addition of our feelings to the content of our insights into things, so subjective projection results when we interpret the words and deeds of other men by reconstructing in ourselves their

experience and uncritically adding our intellectual viewpoints which they do not share. The error of this procedure promptly comes to light when we have to deal with those whom we interpret in this fashion. The stranger turns out to be strange when we find that his mentality is not the same as our own. A visit to the next village, to the bordering country, to a different continent, leads first to amusement at the oddity of the inhabitants and ultimately to despair over their incomprehensibility. But we cannot travel into the past. So fathers are misunderstood by their sons and each century by the succeeding century. As the data assembled by historical research accumulate, insights are revised continuously in accord with the concrete process of learning. But besides the revisions forced by further data, there also are the revisions due to the advent of new investigators, for history is rewritten not only by each new culture but also by each stage of progress and decline in each culture. Nor is there any escape from such relativism as long as men cling to the descriptive viewpoint. Common sense succeeds in understanding things as related to us only because it is experimental; it deals with things with which it is familiar; its insights are guides in concrete activity; its mistakes promptly come to light in their unpleasant effects. But if one would step beyond the narrow confines in which the procedures of common sense are successful, one has to drop the descriptive viewpoint and adopt a viewpoint that unashamedly is explanatory. No doubt, there can be no history without data,

without documents, without the monuments that have survived destruction and decay. But even if one supposes the data to be complete, so that there is available a cinema of past deeds, a sound-track of past words, an inner re-enactment of past feelings, emotions, and sentiments, still there remains to be determined some approximation to the insights and judgments, the beliefs and decisions, that made those words and deeds, those feelings and sentiments, the activities of a more or less intelligent and reasonable being. Interpretation of the past is the recovery of the viewpoint of the past; and that recovery, as opposed to mere subjective projections, can be reached only by grasping exactly what a viewpoint is, how viewpoints develop, what dialectical laws govern their historical unfolding.

If one cannot claim that the explanatory viewpoint is established in the human sciences, if there is a note of optimism in the assertion that its position is secure in the natural sciences, then the incompleteness of our own victory over subjective and anthropomorphic projections should make us understand how ripe, almost how inevitable, those fallacies were before science and philosophy existed as distinct forms to give a concrete meaning to the explanatory viewpoint. If counter-positions today lead men to refuse to distinguish sharply between experience and insight, between their own insights and those of others, at least there should be no difficulty in reaching another basic feature of primitive mentality. For the primitive not only lacks examples of successful implementation of the explana-

tory viewpoint but also lacks the techniques of mastery and control that the study of grammar imparts to the use of words, ^{and} the study of logic to the communication of thought. The primitive cannot begin to distinguish accurately between what he knows by experience and what he knows inasmuch as he understands. His understanding of nature is bound to be anthropomorphic and his understanding of man is fettered by his inability to conceive other men with a mentality different from his own.

Finally, as an adequate metaphysics demands sharp distinctions between positions and counter-positions and between explanation and description, so also it demands a firm grasp of the heuristic and progressive character of human intelligence. Before man actually understands, he anticipates and seeks to understand. That anticipation implies that there is something to be known by understanding. It is fruitful in the measure that it leads eventually through partial insights and further questions to an adequate grasp of the speculative or practical issue in hand. But the anticipation, instead of being fruitful, may be the source of illusions. Knowledge that there is a nature can be mistaken for knowledge of what the nature is. Socrates' great discovery that he did not know is not without its ambiguities, for it is one thing to understand in a concrete, common sense fashion, and it is quite another to be able to formulate one's understanding coherently in general terms. The victims of Socrates' persistent questioning could not find an adequate formulation for what they felt they understood; to be embarrassed by the

questioning, they must at least have understood how to employ the names of the objects that were under scrutiny; but between an understanding of verbal usage and an understanding of what names denote, there is a large and commonly obscure gap in which the heuristic anticipation of insight can pass muster for the occurrence of insight and the partial insight for mastery.

It is through this gap that there proudly march the speculative gnostic and the practical magician. They anticipate scientific understanding of what things are and how results are to be produced. They anticipate the pure scientist's preoccupation with numbers and the applied scientist's preoccupation with tools. They are necessary factors in the dialectical development of human intelligence, for without their appearance and their eventual failure men would not learn the necessity of effective criteria for determining when adequate insight actually has occurred. But because their efforts are prior to the discovery of those criteria, because their pure desire to know is not contrasted with all their other desires, because names and heuristic anticipations can be mistaken for insights, because partial insights have the same generic character as full understanding, because the satisfaction of understanding can be mimicked by an air of profundity, a glow of self-importance, a power to command respectful attention, because the attainment of insight is a hidden event and its content a secret that does not admit communication, because other

men worship understanding but are not secure enough in
their own possession of it to challenge mistaken claims,
the magician and then the gnostic have their day.

1.4

Myth and Metaphysics

As the foregoing analysis implies, mythic consciousness is the absence of self-knowledge, and myth is a consequence of mythic consciousness as metaphysics is a corollary of self-knowledge. Myth, then, and metaphysics are opposites. For myth recedes and metaphysics advances in the measure that the counter-positions are rejected, that the attempt to understand things as related to us gives way to the effort to understand them as related to one another, that effective criteria become available for determining the occurrence and the adequacy of understanding. As myth and metaphysics are opposed, so also they are related dialectically. For myth is the product of an untutored desire to understand and formulate the nature of things. That desire is the root of all science and philosophy. Only by the mistaken unfolding of that desire has man learnt how to avoid the pitfalls and guard against the dangers to which its unfolding is exposed. So it is that by a dialectical relationship, of which it is not aware, myth looks forward to its own negation and to the metaphysics that is all the more consciously true because it is also the conscious rejection of error.

Because myth has a permanent basis in the polymorphism of human consciousness, there is a permanent task of overcoming myth by metaphysics and it takes two forms. On the one hand, philosophic attempts to defend counter-positions cannot but regard the notion of being as the root of myth and the metaphysical analysis of being as an

extension of scientific techniques into the domain of myth: for if the real is not being or if being is not the intelligently grasped and reasonably affirmed, then being is mythical, the possibility of metaphysics is precluded, and the conclusions of Dr. Tillich unavoidable. (See Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, art. Mythos, 2nd ed., Tübingen 1930, 4: 367). On the other hand, outside the field of philosophy, there is the problem of human development that arises with each new generation. Because men do not develop intellectually or, if they do, because they become involved in counter-positions, they cannot be dealt with on the basis of intelligence and reason; but this makes it all the easier to deal with them on the sensitive level, to capture their imaginations, to whip up their emotions, to lead them to action. Power in its highest form is power over men, and the successful maker of myths has that power within his reach and grasp. But, clearly, if an adequate metaphysics can do something to overcome philosophic misinterpretations of the notion of myth, it needs to be extended into a philosophy of education and the education has to be made effective before there can be exorcized the risk of adventurers climbing to power through sagacious myth-making.

1.5

Myth and Allegory

In deference to the commonly pejorative meaning attached to the name, myth, we have identified mythic consciousness with the counter-positions, with the inability or refusal to go beyond description to explanation, and with the lack or neglect of effective criteria for passing judgments on anticipations and acts of understanding. But this is only part of the picture. Even within a highly developed culture it remains true that, as Quintilian remarked, paene omne quod dicimus metaphora est. Not only are words themselves sensible but also their initial meaning commonly is sensible. By an unperceived series of transformations this initial meaning gradually is changed until the primary reference to sensible objects and actions is submerged or forgotten and from that hidden stem there branch out, often in bewildering variety, a set of other meanings that to a greater or less extent transcend the sensible plane.

However, this process has its conditions. Words are vocal tools of communication. Their use occurs when a speaker or writer communicates his thoughts or judgments or decisions to listeners or readers. They are effective tools only in the measure that the speaker or writer correctly estimates the cultural development of listeners or readers and chooses just the words that have a meaning for them. So one can distinguish between philosophic language, a scientific or mathematical language, a

*[Foot-note to line 11: An accurate statement on initial meanings would be much more complex. See S. K. Langer. *Feeling and Form*. New York 1953. pp. 237 ff.

literary language, and a language of the people. One can go on to introduce subdivisions within these categories; for each philosophic school has its own language; different sciences in their successive formulations and different levels of mathematics have different technical terms; literary speech and writing vary in their wealth of overtones of allusion and suggestion, in their consciousness of commonly unconscious metaphor, in their esteem or contempt for univocal meaning and linear discourse; and the language of the people varies with locality, with occupation, with a proud sense of tradition or with a vital openness to change.

Now if a philosopher were required to speak to a literary group or a scientist to speak to the people, he would begin by insisting that the task was impossible. He would point out that the proposed audience did not share his interests; he would add that it took him years to learn what he knows and that the process of learning cannot be telescoped; he would complain that, once a philosophic or scientific notion has been communicated successfully, it seems absurd to continue to employ an enormous literary or popular circumlocution instead of introducing a single technical term; he would urge that the process of learning itself is clogged when combinations of technical terms are replaced by combinations of unwieldy circumlocutions. Still the first philosophers and the first scientists were under the necessity either of remaining silent or of communicating with ordinary people in ordinary language. They

had to excite interest and sustain attention. They had to command confidence. They had to impart the notion of learning and obtain willingness to learn. They had to bring about the transformations of meanings that change the reference of words from the sensible to the intelligible and the rational, and they had to do this not only without the aid of grammar and philology, rhetoric and logic, but even without the very names of those disciplines and so without the tools that would enable them to explain to themselves or to others precisely what they were doing.

It would seem, then, that to the contrasts between myth and metaphysics, mythic consciousness and self-knowledge, there must be added a further contrast between mythic expression and developed expression. For just as it is true that nearly all we say is metaphor, so also it is true that metaphor is revised and contracted myth, and myth is anticipated and expanded metaphor. If the philologist can take the words we use and work backwards from our meaning through a series of other meanings to the initial meaning of the root, there must have existed a series of discoveries of new meanings; as long as such discoveries were merely expansions of existing viewpoints, the new meanings could be communicated by employing old words outside their customary contexts; but whenever the discoveries ushered in new viewpoints, a more elaborate procedure was required to effect the communication. So the parables of the Gospels recall the experiences and propound the images that lead to insight into what is meant by the Kingdom of God. So Plato in his dialogues intro-

duces myths to convey insights and judgments and evaluations that would seem strange and novel. But the same technique can be employed for the same purpose without the technique itself becoming an object of investigation and analysis, of reflection and evaluation, and then its use is unaccompanied by the announcement that what is said is merely a parable or merely a myth, because it cannot be accompanied by an explanation of what is meant by the mere parable or the mere myth. Then the wise man speaks his riddles and thoughtful listeners are left to wonder and ponder what he means.

There is then an allegorical aspect of myth. It is an aspect that emerges when myth is conceived as a solution to a problem of expression. Moreover, it is an aspect that runs counter to those on which hitherto we have mainly dwelt. For a problem of expression arises inasmuch as the myth-maker is endeavoring to transcend the counter-positions, inasmuch as he is trying to turn attention from the sensible to the intelligible, inasmuch as he has reached a viewpoint that current modes of expression cannot convey. We have described myth as an untutored effort of the desire to know to grasp and formulate the nature of things. In the measure that such an effort tries to free itself from its fetters, myth attains an allegorical significance.

1.6

The Notion of Mystery

Besides myth there is mystery. Man's unanswered questions confront him with a "known unknown", and that confrontation may not be dodged. The detached and disinterested desire to know is unrestricted; it flings at us the name of obscurantists if we restrict it by allowing other desire to interfere with its proper unfolding; and while that unfolding can establish that our naturally possible knowledge is restricted, this restriction on possible attainment is not a restriction on the desire itself; on the contrary, the question whether attainment is in all cases possible presupposes the fact that in all cases attainment is desired. Moreover, this unrestricted openness of our intelligence and reasonableness not only is the concrete operator of our intellectual development but also is accompanied by a corresponding operator that deeply and powerfully holds our sensitive integrations open to transforming change. Man by nature is orientated into mystery, and naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret.

Though the field of mystery is contracted by the advance of knowledge, it cannot be eliminated from human living. There always is the further question. Though metaphysics can grasp the structure of possible science and the ultimate contours of proportionate being, this concentration only serves to put more clearly and distinctly the question of transcendent being. And if that question meets with answers, will not the answers give rise to further questions?

Moreover, the advance of knowledge is through anticipated or achieved explanation. But explanation does not give man a home. It reveals things in their relations to one another through the complex symbols of mathematics, the cumbrous technical terms of science, the bloodless ballet of metaphysical categories. Even if one does not revolt at the very notion that in that fashion man is to contemplate reality as explained, at least one has to admit

science | 1) that the world of pure science and of metaphysics is somehow very different from the world of poetry and of common sense, 2) that the apprehension of explanation stands in opposition and tension with the flow of the sensitive presentations, of the feelings and emotions, of the talking and doing that form the palpable part of our living with persons and our dealing with things, 3) that as explanation is reached through description, so it must be applied concretely by turning from explanation back to the descriptive world of things for us, and therefore

4) that man's explanatory self-knowledge can become effective in his concrete living only if the content of systematic insights, the direction of judgments, the dynamism of decisions can be embodied in images that release feeling and emotion and flow spontaneously into deeds no less than words.

The achievement, then, of full understanding and the attainment even of the totality of correct judgments would not free man from the necessity of dynamic images that partly are symbols and partly are signs. This necessity neither supposes nor implies the commonly pejorative meaning

of myth, for it remains despite complete and fully conscious rejection of counter-positions, of the attempt to confine explanation within a descriptive mould, of gnosticism and of magic. It is a necessity that has its ground in the very structure of man's being, in which intellectual activity is a higher integration of the sensitive flow and the sensitive flow is a higher integration of organic performance. To such images, then, let us give the name of mysteries. For if that is an ambiguous name, if to some it recalls Eleusis and Samothrace and to others the centuries in which the sayings and deeds of Jesus were the object of preaching and of reverent contemplation, still that very ambiguity is extremely relevant to our topic.

For our inquiry has swung around in a circle. We began from the compound category of mystery and myth. We isolated, first, a pejorative meaning in which mythic consciousness is the lack of self-knowledge and myth the opposite of metaphysics. We noted, secondly, a problem of expression that would arise inevitably in the process from ignorance to knowledge, and there we recognized the possibility of an allegorical aspect of myth. Thirdly, we have found that even adequate self-knowledge and explicit metaphysics may contract but cannot eliminate a "known unknown", and that they cannot issue into a control of human living without being transposed into dynamic images which make sensible to human sensitivity what human intelligence reaches for or grasps. But this brings us back to the compound category from which we began. Because human understanding and judgment, decision and belief, are the higher

integration of sensitive contents and activities, the origin, the expression, and the application of intelligent and rational contents and directives lie in the sensitive field. Because the integrating activities of the intellectual level and the integrated activities of the sensitive level form a dialectical unity in tension, it follows 1) that the intellectual activities are either the proper unfolding of the detached and disinterested desire to know or else a distorted unfolding due to the interference of other desire and 2) that the sensitive activities, from which intellectual contents emerge and in which they are represented, expressed, and applied, either are involved in the mysteries of the proper unfolding or distort these mysteries into myths. Because man develops in self-knowledge, he distinguishes between his sensitive and intellectual activities with increasing sharpness and exactitude and grasps with ever greater precision their interrelations and interdependence; and so ^{his} advance in self-knowledge implies an increasing consciousness and deliberateness and effectiveness in his choice and use of dynamic images, of mottoes and slogans. Finally, this advance implies, not any rationalist sublation of both mystery and myth, but simply a displacement of the sensitive representation of spiritual issues. Because counterpositions head to their own reversal and myths are grounded in counter-positions, sooner or later every myth is discredited. Because man cannot renounce intelligence or repudiate reasonableness, every occasion, on which a myth is discredited, is also an opportunity for man to advance

towards a profounder self-knowledge, a more exact grasp of science and metaphysics, and a more conscious use of mystery purified of myth. Because the union of sensitive and intellectual activities is a unity of opposites in tension, because the dominion of the detached and disinterested desire constantly is challenged, the elimination of one myth tends to coincide with the genesis of another and the advance of science and philosophy implies merely that the later myths will be complemented and defended by appropriate philosophies and made effective through the discoveries of science and the inventions of technology.

So we are brought to the profound disillusionment of modern man and to the focal point of his horror. He had hoped through knowledge to ensure a development that was always progress and never decline. He has discovered that the advance of human knowledge is ambivalent, that it places in man's hands stupendous power without necessarily adding proportionate wisdom and virtue, that the fact of advance and the evidence of power are not guarantees of truth, that myth is the permanent alternative to mystery and mystery is what his hybris rejected. *

* Foot-note.

Because of their consonance with the present analysis I would draw attention to Mircea Eliade's Images et Symboles (Paris: Gallimard, 1952) and his more ample Traité d'histoire des religions (Paris: Payot, 1948 and 1953).

2.

The Notion of Truth

The real issue, then, is truth. Though it has concerned us all along, it will not be amiss to bring together at least the main points made on different occasions and in different chapters. Accordingly, we distinguish 1) the criterion of truth, 2) the definition of truth, 3) the ontology of truth, 4) truth in expression, 5) the appropriation of truth and 6) the truth of interpretation.

2.1

The Criterion of Truth

The proximate criterion of truth is reflective grasp of the virtually unconditioned. Because it proceeds by rational necessity from such a grasp, the act of judgment is an actuation of rational consciousness, and the content of judgment has the stamp of the absolute.

Essentially, then, because the content of judgment is unconditioned, it is independent of the judging subject. Essentially, again, rational consciousness is what issues in a product that is independent of itself. Such is the meaning of absolute objectivity, and from it there follows a public or common terrain through which different subjects can and do communicate and agree.

Concretely, however, while reflective understanding grasps the virtually unconditioned, it itself is conditioned by the occurrence of other cognitional acts; and while the content of the judgment is grasped as unconditional, still that content either demands or rests on the contents of experiences, insights, and other judgments for its full clarification. This concrete inevitability of a context of other acts and a context of other contents is what necessitates the addition of a remote to a proximate criterion of truth.

The remote criterion is the proper unfolding of the detached and disinterested desire to know. In negative terms this proper unfolding is the absence of interference from other desires that inhibit or reinforce and in either case distort the guidance given by the

pure desire. A more positive account of the matter, perhaps, will be suggested by clarifying the differences between six terms, infallibility and certitude, certainty and probability, ideal and actual frequency.

A frequency is a numerical ratio of occurrences to occasions. An actual frequency is reached by counting both occurrences and occasions. An ideal frequency is a numerical ratio from which actual frequencies diverge but do not do so systematically. Finally, both actual and ideal frequencies may be affirmed or denied, and the affirmation or denial may be certain or probable. It follows that, while judgments are occurrences with actual frequencies, while in principle their ideal frequencies might be estimated or calculated, still the ideal frequency of a judgment is one thing and its probability is another. For certain judgments admit an ideal frequency no less than probable judgments; and if the ideal frequency of the probable judgment were its probability, then the probability of affirming that ideal frequency would be another ideal frequency, so that an infinite regress would result.

Accordingly, the probability of a judgment, like the certainty of a judgment, is a property of its content. If that content coincides with what is grasped as virtually unconditioned, then it is a certainty. But what is grasped as virtually unconditioned may be that a given content heads towards the virtually unconditioned, and then the content is a probability. On this analysis, every judgment rests on a grasp of the virtually unconditioned, and the probability of a probable judgment is a certainty. But the

content grasped as virtually unconditioned may be coincident with the content of the judgment or, on the other hand, merely with the approximation of that content towards an ideal content that would be virtually unconditioned.

However, there is a third sense of probability, that is reached by contrasting infallibility with a certitude that admits degrees. A subject may grasp the virtually unconditioned and yet may ask whether that fulfillment of the proximate criterion of truth has been vitiated by subjective bias. Then there arises the question of the remote criterion. The subject becomes more or less secure or anxious about the genuineness of his inquiry and reflection, and further inquiry and reflection will in their turn be open to similar questioning. What is in doubt is the subject himself, and all his efforts to remove the doubt will proceed from the same suspected source.

One component in this situation may be the subject's flight from the personal commitment involved in judgment; another may be a temperamental inclination to anxiety; but the objective issue is the habitual and actual disinterestedness and detachment of the subject in his cognitional activities; and in resolving that issue further considerations come into play.

Thus, one may call upon the judgments of others to support one's own. Detachment and disinterestedness are independent of circumstances, but bias, unless it is general, tends to vary with circumstances. Hence, certitudes may be strengthened by the agreement of others, and this strengthening will vary with the numbers of those

that agree, the diversity of their circumstances, the consequent virtual elimination of individual and group bias, and the absence of any ground for suspecting general bias.

Again, there are judgments that express the conditions of possible truth or error, certainty and probability, detachment or distortion. To call them into question is to presuppose their validity. To suppose that they will be revised is to postulate a fictitious reviser and to strip the name, revision, of its current meaning. In such cases the subject is confronted with limiting structures that carry their own guarantee. He may fail in his formulation of the less obvious limiting structures; he may expect others with greater penetration of mind and greater detachment of spirit to improve on the formulation at which he has arrived; but at least he has some grasp of the principle of limiting structures and so some firm foothold against the fear of general bias.

There are, then, degrees of certitude and their ground lies behind the proximate criterion of the virtually unconditioned in the more obscure region of the remote criterion. Only if this obscure region were to become completely clarified, either in fact, or more radically, as a matter of principle, would certitude reach the absolute of infallibility.

2.2

The Definition of Truth

The definition of truth was introduced implicitly in our account of the notion of being. For being was identified with what is to be known through intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation; but the only reasonable affirmation is the true affirmation; and so being is what is known truly. Inversely, then, knowing is true by its relation to being, and truth is a relation of knowing to being.

What is the relation? In the limiting case, when the knowing is identical with the known, the relation disappears to be replaced by an identity, and then truth consists in the absence of any difference whatever between the knowing and the known being. In the general case, when there is more than one known, and one of these is a knower, it is possible to formulate a set of positive and of negative comparative judgments and then to employ this set to define implicitly such terms as subject, object, and the principal notion of objectivity. Within this context there follows the traditional definition of truth as the conformity or correspondence of the subject's affirmations and negations to what is and is not.

2.3

The Ontological Aspect of Truth

The identification of being with the possible object of inquiry and reflection places a restriction on what being can be. From this restriction there followed the major premise² of metaphysical method, namely, the isomorphism that obtains between the structure of our knowing and the structure of its proportionate known. This isomorphism was elaborated in the chapter on the elements of metaphysics and it was clarified still further when, in discussing what precisely was meant by the elements, we concluded to the intrinsic intelligibility of being. For what is to be known by intelligence is what is meant by the intelligible; being is what is to be known by intelligence, and so it must be intelligible and it cannot lie beyond the intelligible or differ from it; moreover, one is confined to this view, for any other view involves one in the counter-positions that become incoherent when supposed to be grasped intelligently and affirmed reasonably.

Ontological truth, then, is the intrinsic intelligibility of being. It is the conformity of being to the conditions of its being known through intelligent inquiry and critical reflection. Moreover, it leads to a distinction between material and spiritual being, between the intrinsically intelligible being that is not intelligent and the intrinsically intelligible being that is

intelligent. Since the difference between matter and spirit can be shown to lie in the fact that the material is not intrinsically independent of the merely empirical residue while the spiritual is, there follows a closer determination of the possibility of knowledge in terms of matter and immateriality.

The general theorem is, then, the identification with intrinsic intelligibility of 1) being, 2) unity, 3) truth in its ontological aspect, and, as will appear in the next chapter, 4) the good.

2.4

Truth and Expression

As knowledge rises on the three levels of experience and imagination, understanding and conception, and reflection and judgment, so in expression there may be distinguished three components. For as affirmative or negative utterance, the expression corresponds to reflection and judgment. As a significant combination of words, the expression corresponds to insight and conception. As an instrumental multiplicity, the expression corresponds to the material multiplicity of experience and imagination.

This isomorphism of knowledge and expression is not to be mistaken for an identity. It is one thing to ^{assert} ~~say~~ and another to judge, for men can lie. It is one thing to understand experience and another to hit upon the happy and effective combination of phrases and sentences. It is one thing to be rich in experience and another to be fluent with words. To the judgment of knowledge, expression adds an act of willing to speak truthfully or deceitfully. To the insight of knowledge, expression adds a further practical insight that governs the verbal flow towards its end of communication. Finally, the manifold of the presentations of sense and of the representations of imagination is succeeded in expression by the manifold of conventional signs.

If we have emphasized the distinction between knowledge and expression, we have also to take into account their interpenetration. For coming to know is

a process: it advances by stages in which inquiry yields insights only to give rise to further questions that lead to further insights and still further questions. At each stage of the process it is helpful to fix what has been reached and to formulate in some fashion what remains to be sought. So expression enters into the very process of learning and the attainment of knowledge tends to coincide with the attainment of the ability to express it.

The interpenetration of knowledge and expression implies a solidarity, almost a fusion, of the development of knowledge and the development of language. Words are sensible: they support and heighten the resonance of human intersubjectivity; the mere presence of another releases in the dynamism of sensitive consciousness a modification of the flow of feelings and emotions, images and memories, attitudes and sentiments; but words possess their own retinues of associated representations and affects, and so the addition of speech to presence brings about a specialized, directed modification of intersubjective reaction and response. Still, beyond the psychology of words, there is their meaning. They belong together in typical patterns, and learning a language is a matter, first, of grasping such patterns and, secondly, of gradually allowing the insights, by which the patterns are grasped, to be short-circuited by a sensitive routine that permits the attention of intelligence to concentrate on higher-level controls. Just as the concert pianist is not thinking

of the place of middle C, so the speaker or writer is not thinking of the meaning of his words. Rem tene et verba sequuntur. But these sensitive routines, these typical patterns, are able to carry the meaning of words only because initially there occurred the insights that linked words intelligibly not only with one another but also with terms of meaning and with sources of meaning.

The relationships of words to one another is the easiest to formulate. Basic lexicography assigns each word its meaning by quoting from accepted authors the types of sentence in which the word occurs. The mathematician, the scientist, the philosopher employs the technique of implicit definition (or Aristotelian declaration by analogy) to fix the meaning of his fundamental terms and relations. Just as knowledge advances through accumulations of insights to higher viewpoints, so also language advances from a level of elementary meanings through higher viewpoints to ever more compendious vocal gestures. So we speak of Platonism and Aristotelianism, of Christianity and Islam, of Renaissance and Reformation, of Enlightenment and Revolution, of Science and Faith, but to say what we mean by such words would call for volumes of other words.

Were words related only to other words, their meaning would never be more than verbal. But the mere fact that a word can occur in a sentence that is affirmed endows it with a basic reference to the objective of intelligent and rational consciousness, to being. Moreover, this basic reference, which is the core of all meaning, admits

differentiation and specialization. There are many words: some are substantival because they refer to intelligible and concrete unities; some are verbal because they refer to conjugate acts; some are adjectival or adverbial because they refer to the regularity or frequency of the occurrence of acts or to potentialities for such regularities or frequencies. Finally, since the development of language fuses with the development of knowledge, the meaning of words not only depends upon the metaphysical matrix of terms of meaning but also upon the experiential sources of meaning. Prior to the explanatory conjugates, defined by their relations to one another, there are the experiential conjugates that involve a triple correlation of classified experiences, classified contents of experience, and corresponding names. The being to be known as an intelligible unity differentiated by verifiable regularities and frequencies begins by being conceived heuristically, and then its unknown nature is differentiated by experiential conjugates.

We are now, perhaps, in a position to come to grips with our problem, namely, the relation between truth and expression. We began by emphasizing the distinction between knowledge and its expression. But we followed up this contention with no less insistence on the genetic interpenetration of knowledge and language. Because of this interpenetration there arises the conviction that, while knowing and stating are distinct, still they run so much together that they are inseparable. What is known, what is meant, and what is said, can be distinguished; but the distinctions point merely to differences of aspect in

what inevitably is the same thing.

So it is that efforts to explain what we mean sooner or later, and sooner rather than later, and with the global assertion that what is meant is obvious and neither needs nor admits any explanation. However, it is not difficult to introduce a crucial experiment that re-establishes the gulf between knowledge and expression. For, after all, it is only a matter of common coincidence that this gulf disappears. Commonly it does happen that conversation occurs between people that share the same common sense, that writing is directed to readers that already understand in considerable detail the subject under discussion. But there also is communication between people with different habitual accumulations of insights, between teachers and pupils, between original thinkers and their contemporaries, between the great men of the past and their present readers. And then the greater the gap between the intellectual development of writer and reader, the more stupendous can become the distinction between knowledge and expression.

By way of illustration let us suppose that a writer proposes to communicate some insight (A) to a reader. Then by an insight (B) the writer will grasp the reader's habitual accumulation of insights (C); by a further insight (D) he will grasp the deficiencies in insight (E) that must be made up by before the reader can grasp the insight (A); finally, the writer must reach a practical set of insights (F) that will govern his verbal flow, the shaping of his sentences, their combination into paragraphs,

grasp

the sequence of paragraphs in chapters and of chapters in books. Clearly, this practical insight (F) differs notably from the insight (A) to be communicated. It is determined by the insight (A) as its principal objective. But it is also determined by the insight (B) which settles both what the writer need not explain and, no less, the resources of language on which he can rely to secure effective communication. Further, it is determined by the insight (D) which fixes a subsidiary goal that has to be attained if the principal goal is to be reached. Finally, the expression will be a failure in the measure that insights (B) and (D) miscalculate the habitual development (C) and the relevant deficiencies (E) of the anticipated reader.

It follows, then, that properly speaking expression is not true or false. Truth pertains to the judgment inasmuch as it proceeds from a grasp of the virtually unconditioned, inasmuch as it conforms to the being it affirms, and inasmuch as it demands an intrinsic intelligibility in being as a condition of the possibility of knowing. Expressions are instrumental. They are related to the truth of knowledge. Similarly, they are related to the moral truth of the will that communicates knowledge. But in themselves expressions are merely adequate or inadequate.

Moreover, in the general case, the adequacy of expression is not measured exclusively by its correspondence with the knowledge to be communicated. That knowledge sets a principal goal; it defines a central meaning. But besides the principal goal, there can be a subsidiary

goal: besides the central meaning, there can be a more or less peripheral meaning. For the speaker may be able to convey what he wishes to say only if he first conveys other insights that in one manner or another enable his hearers to grasp the message with which he is concerned.

Further, adequacy is a variable standard. If one has anything much to say, then one cannot say it all at once. If one has anything very significant to say, then probably one will not be able to express the whole of it except to a rather specialized audience. Such limitations restrict the adequacy with which even one's principal meaning is expressed. But there are further limitations on the adequacy with which subordinate and peripheral meanings are expressed. For one thing leads to another. If insights (D) must be ⁱⁿcommunicated in order to communicate insight (A), other insights (G) may be needed to communicate insights (D); in turn, insights (G) will need to be preceded by insights (H), until one has said all one knows and has discovered, perhaps, a few points that one needed to clear up for oneself. But human expression is never complete expression. It keeps its eye on the central meaning; it expedites subordinate and peripheral meanings by lowering standards of adequacy to a sufficient approximation to the purpose in hand; and, quite clearly, it cannot add in a parenthesis this somewhat involved account of the variable standard of adequate expression.

communicated

However, this account of the relation between truth and expression rests on the position that truth resides in the internal act of judgment, of assenting or

dissenting. But against every position there stands a counter-position. It can be maintained that truth and falsity reside, not in the judgment, but in the expression, that if judgments are true or false then that is so because they agree with true or false expressions, that the public or common field through which men can communicate is not an absolute, independent of all subjects because reached through the virtually unconditioned, but simply the atmosphere which, as we breathe it in common, so also we set vibrating in the various manners that carry our words from one to another.

Besides the basic counter-positions, there are minor oppositions. One can grant that truth and falsity reside in the judgment, yet one can conceive the relation between truth and falsity in terms of ^a mistaken theory of knowledge. Thus, the Scotist view that words correspond to concepts and that concepts are produced in us by the formal aspects of things involves a rigid correlation between knowledge and expression. If its inadequacy is not apparent when communication occurs in the simple case when speaker and hearer share the same intellectual development, it breaks down with a magnificent irrelevance to facts when one recalls the long and fruitless verbal debates of the fourteenth century or the oceans of commentary that ever flow in ever renewed interpretations of the greater works of human intelligence.

Finally, there is the popular fallacy.

If often enough the meaning of an expression is simple and

obvious, why should it not always be so? Why should honest truth ever hide in the voluminous folds of a lengthy, complicated, and difficult exposition? Perhaps we have done something to meet this objection. Once one has understood, the content of an insight is simple and obvious even though it is expressed poorly. Until one has understood, the content of an insight is as hidden as the far side of the moon. Accordingly, one finds the meaning of expressions simple and obvious when the speaker or writer is communicating what one understands already, and one finds their meaning obscure and difficult when he is stating what one has still to learn. In the latter case no amount of pedagogic and linguistic skill will eliminate the necessity of the effort to learn. For this reason only the man that understands everything already is in a position to demand that all meaning be simple and obvious to him.

2.5

The Appropriation of Truth

To appropriate a truth is to make it one's own. The essential appropriation of truth is cognitional. However, our reasonableness demands consistency between what we know and what we do; and so there is a volitional appropriation of truth that consists in our willingness to live up to it, and a sensitive appropriation of truth that consists in an adaptation of our sensibility to the requirements of our knowledge and our decisions.

The essential appropriation of truth sets a threefold problem. First, there is the problem of learning, of gradually acquiring the accumulation of habitual insights that constitute a viewpoint, and eventually of moving from lower to ever higher viewpoints.

Secondly, there is the problem of identification. By insights one grasps unities and correlations; but besides the unity, there are the elements to be unified; and besides the correlation, there are the elements to be distinguished and related. Until one gets the insight, one has no clue (apart from the directions given by a teacher) for picking out accurately the elements that are to be unified or related. But once the insight is reached, one is able to find in one's own experience just what it is that falls under the insight's grasp and what lies outside it. However, ability is one thing, and performance is another. Identification is performance. Its effect is to make one possess the insight as one's own, to be assured in one's use of it, to be familiar with the range

insight's

of its relevance. Aristotle remarked, I think, that if one understands, one can teach. But the understanding that enables one to teach adds identification to insight. By that addition one is able to select and arrange and indicate to others the combination of sensible elements that will give rise to the same insight in them. One is able to vary the elements at the demand of circumstances. One is able to put the questions that elicit from the pupil indications of his blind-spots and, then, to proceed afresh to the task of bringing him to the prior insights he must reach before he can master the present lesson.

Thirdly, there is the problem of orientation. Every discovery can be formulated either as a position or as a counter-position. But counter-positions both seem obvious and yet are destined to ultimate reversal. Inasmuch as we inquire intelligently and reflect critically, we operate under the drive of the detached and disinterested desire to know. But once we have reached the truth, we are prone to find it unreal, to shift from the realm of the intelligible and the unconditioned back into the realm of sense, to turn away from truth and being and settle down like good animals in our palpable environment. In the measure that we fail to orientate ourselves towards truth, we both distort what we know and restrict what we might know. We distort what we know by imposing upon it a mistaken notion of reality, a mistaken notion of objectivity, and a mistaken notion of knowledge. We restrict what we might know; for we can justify to ourselves and to others

the labor spent in learning only by pointing to the palpable benefits it brings; and the demand ^{stipulated} ~~set~~ by palpable benefits does not enjoy the unrestricted range of the detached and disinterested desire to know.

The reader will note that the three problems of cognitional appropriation run parallel to the three levels in our knowing. The problem of learning is met on the level of understanding and formulation. The problem of identification is met on the level of experience (where experience is used broadly to denote not only sense experience but also intellectual and rational consciousness). The problem of orientation is met on the level of reflection and judgment when at last we grasp that every issue closes when we can say definitively, It is so, or, It is not so, that the objective of knowing is being, that while being is a protean notion still its content is determined by intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation and, after affirmation, by nothing else.

We have cast our account of appropriation in terms of problems rather than in terms of results, and this purely dynamic viewpoint is of some importance. For it excludes all fetishism, all mistaking of means for ends. Clear definition, precise language, orderly arrangement, rigorous proof, and all the other paraphernalia of cognitional activity possess their value. They serve to mark clearly the successive stages of advance. They consolidate in masterly fashion what at any given moment appears to be attained solidly and more or less permanently. They provide

magnificent expressions of the truth that is to be appropriated. But of their very nature they are static. They shed no light either on the pupil's task of coming to appropriate them or on the investigator's task of going beyond them to the appropriation of further truth. Yet it is precisely that twofold task that an account of appropriation should envisage. The well-formulated system becomes mine in so far as I understand it, in so far as I can identify its empirical elements in my experience, in so far as I grasp the unconditioned or the approximation to the unconditioned that grounds a reasonable affirmation of it, in so far as my orientation permits me to be content with that affirmation as the final increment in my knowledge of the system and does not drive me to seek in the "already out there now" some imaginative representation of what, after all, it really means. Exactly the same procedure governs efforts to go beyond the well-formulated system and to generate the stresses and strains in knowledge that will lead it to its replacement by a more adequate account of reality.

It may be noted, further, that the three problems of appropriation are solidary. One cannot go far in understanding without turning to the problem of identification and, without understanding, one is unable to identify. Again, a mistaken orientation gives rise to pseudo-problems, but in the limit pseudo-problems bring about their own reversal and with it the correction of the mistaken orientation. Thus, contemporary physics finds

itself compelled to say that it deals with the entities that satisfy certain types of equations even though such entities and their processes defy our powers of imagination. Finally, unless one gives oneself to the effort to understand, one has no means of identifying in one's experience what precisely is meant by the proper orientation of the detached and disinterested desire towards the universe of truth and being.

In a somewhat looser fashion, cognitional appropriation of truth is solidary with volitional and with sensitive appropriation. Bad will makes truth unwelcome, and unwelcome truth tends to be overlooked. For the appropriation of truth even in the cognitional field makes demands upon the whole man; his consciousness has to slip into the intellectual pattern of experience and it has to remain there with the minimum of distractions; his subconsciousness has to throw up the images that lead to insight; his desire to know has to be sufficiently dominant to keep ever further questions complementing and correcting previous insights; his observation and his memory have to contribute spontaneously to the presentation and the recall of relevant data in which the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the unconditioned is to be found. Bad will, however, either prevents one from initiating an inquiry or, if that cannot be avoided, from prosecuting it earnestly and effectively. For the collaboration of all our powers towards the grasping of truth, bad will substitutes their conspiracy to bring forth doubts about truth and evidence for error.

Inversely, if the attainment of truth demands good will, still good will, as we shall see in the next chapter, is nothing but a willingness to follow the lead of intelligence and truth. So it is that man is boxed in; without the appropriation of truth, his will cannot be positively good; and without good will he cannot proceed to the attainments of truth. On this basic problem something has been said already in the account of genuineness as the operator of human intellectual development; and something more will be added in the chapters to follow.

Human intelligence and reasonableness function as the higher integration of the sensitive flow of percepts and images, emotions and feelings, attitudes and sentiments, words and deeds. It follows that as the cognitive and volitional appropriations of truth are solidary with each other so also they condition and are conditioned by adaptations of human sensibility. Here the basic problem is to discover the dynamic images that both correspond to intellectual contents, orientations, and determinations yet also possess in the sensitive field the power to [“]issue forth not only into words but also into deeds. On this problem we have touched in asserting the necessity of either mysteries or myths; and to it we shall return in attempting to analyze the structure of history. For the moment it must suffice to draw attention to the fact that, as intellectual development occurs through insights into sensible presentations and imaginative representations,

so also the intelligent and reasonable control of human living can be effective only in the measure that it has at its disposal the symbols and signs by which it translates its directives to human sensibility. Finally, unless one can carry out in deeds what one knows and wills, then the willing already is a failure and from failing will to bad will to disconcern for truth there are the easy and, unfortunately, familiar steps.

3. The Truth of Interpretation

3.1 The Problem

The problem of interpretation can best be introduced by distinguishing between expression, simple interpretation, and reflective interpretation.

As has been seen, an expression is a verbal flow governed by a practical insight (F) that depends upon a principal insight (A) to be communicated, upon a grasp (B) of the anticipated audience's habitual intellectual development (C), and upon a grasp (D) of the deficiencies in insight (E) that have to be overcome if the insight (A) is to be communicated.

By an interpretation will be meant a second expression addressed to a different audience. Hence, since it is an expression, it will be guided by a practical insight (F') that depends upon a principal insight (A') to be communicated, upon a grasp (B') of the anticipated audience's habitual intellectual development (C'), and upon a grasp (D') of the deficiencies in insight (E') that have to be overcome if the principal insight (A') is to be communicated.

In the simple interpretation the principal insight (A') to be communicated purports to coincide with the principal insight (A) of the original expression. Hence, differences between the practical insights (F) and (F') depend directly upon differences between the habitual insights (B) and (B'), (D) and (D'), and remotely upon

differences between the habitual developments (C) and (C'), and the deficiencies (E) and (E').

Now the simple interpretation gives rise to further questions. On an elementary level people ask why a faithful interpretation should differ from the original expression. If this issue is met by appealing to the fact that both the original expression and the interpretation are relative to their respective audiences, there arises the problem of settling the differences between the audiences and of incorporating them into the interpretation.

A reflective interpretation, then, is guided by a practical insight (F'') that depends upon insights (A''), (B''), and (D''). But now the insight (B'') is a grasp of the audience's habitual grasp (C'') of its own intellectual development (C') and of the difference between that development and the habitual accumulation of the insights (C) in the initial audience. Similarly, the insight (D'') is a grasp of the audience's deficiencies (E'') in grasping the differences between the habitual developments (C') and (C) and so in understanding the differences between the deficiencies (E') and (E) and between the practical insights (F') and (F). Finally, the principal insight (A'') to be communicated will be a grasp of the identity of the insight (A) communicated in the original expression and of the insight (A') communicated in the simple interpretation.

However, the reflective interpretation suffers from two obvious difficulties. In the first place, it is relative to its anticipated audience, and audiences are an ever shifting manifold. Each culture in each of the stages of its progress and decline is divided into a variety of schools, attitudes, orientations, and in each of these varieties there are numerous degrees of intellectual attainment. It would be a matter of considerable difficulty to work out a reflective interpretation that satisfied a single audience; but there is an enormous range of other audiences that will remain to be satisfied; and the single audience one does satisfy will not live forever. In the second place, it is all very well to talk glibly about the habitual intellectual development and the deficiencies of the original and the present audience and the determination of the differences in the practical insights governing the original expression and the simple interpretation. But it is quite another matter to set about the investigation of such obscure objects, to reach something better than a mere guess about them, and to find an appropriate and effective manner of communicating the fruits of one's inquiry. Reflective interpretation is a smart idea, a beautiful object of thought. But is it a practical possibility? Has it ever been achieved?

This brings us to the basic problem of interpretation. It may very well happen that any simple interpretation is correct, that it hits off for a contemporary audience the principal insight communicated by the

** new paragraph*

original document. It may also happen that the interpreter knows his interpretation to be correct, that he grasps the virtually unconditioned or, at least, that he grasps the approximation of his interpretation to the virtually unconditioned.[#] For analogous to common sense, there is a historical sense. Just as we by common sense can know how our contemporaries would or would not speak or act in any of a series of ordinary and typical situations, so the scholar by a long familiarity with the documents and monuments of another age and by an ever increasing accumulation of complementary insights can arrive at a participation of the common sense of another period and by this historical sense can tell how the men and women of that time would or would not speak or act in certain types of situation. However, just as our common sense is open to individual, group, and general bias, so also is the historical sense. Moreover, just as our common sense cannot analyze itself or criticize itself or arrive at an abstract formulation of its central nucleus, so also the historical sense is limited in a similar fashion; both are far more likely to be correct in pronouncing verdicts than in assigning exact and convincing reasons for them. But if interpretation is to be scientific, then the grounds for the interpretation have to be assignable; if interpretation is to be scientific, then there will not be a range of different interpretations due to the individual, group, and general bias of the historical sense of different experts; if interpretation is to be scientific, then it

has to discover some method of conceiving and determining the habitual development of all audiences and it has to invent some technique by which its expression escapes relativity to particular and incidental audiences.

3.2 The Notion of a Universal Viewpoint

By a universal viewpoint will be meant a potential totality of genetically and dialectically ordered viewpoints. Our present concern will be to clarify this notion. Though we believe it to be relevant to the problem of scientific interpretation, its relevance is a further question that can be discussed only later.

First, then, the totality in question is potential. A universal viewpoint is not universal history. It is not a Hegelian dialectic that is complete apart from matters of fact. It is not a Kantian a priori that, in itself, is determinate and merely awaits imposition upon the raw materials of vicarious experience. It is simply a heuristic structure that contains virtually the various ranges of possible alternatives of interpretations: it can list its own contents only through the stimulus of documents and historical inquiries; it can select between alternatives and differentiate its generalities only by appealing to the accepted norms of historical investigation.

Secondly, the totality is of viewpoints. Hence, it is concerned with the principal acts of meaning that lie in insights and judgments, and it reaches these principal acts by directing attention to the experience, the understanding and the critical reflection of the interpreter. Accordingly, it differs radically from such disciplines as phonetics, comparative grammar, the principles of lexi-

cography,^{or} linguistic and stylistic analysis, for though they ultimately are concerned with meaning, their attention is centered directly upon expression. In contrast, the universal viewpoint is concerned with the interpreter's capacity to grasp meanings: it would open his mind to ideas that do not lie on the surface and to views that diverge enormously from his own; it would enable him to find clues where otherwise he might look but would fail to see; it would equip him with a capacity to transport his thinking to the level and texture of another culture in another epoch. There are the external sources of historical interpretation and, in the main, they consist in spatially ordered marks on paper or parchment, papyrus or stone. But there are also sources of interpretation immanent in the historiographer himself, in his ability to distinguish and recombine elements in his own experience, in his ability to work backwards from contemporary to earlier accumulations of insights in human development, in his ability to envisage the protean possibilities of the notion of being, the core of all meaning, which varies in content with the experience, the insights, the judgments, and the habitual orientation of each individual.

Thirdly, the universal viewpoint is an ordered totality of viewpoints. It has its base in an adequate self-knowledge and in the consequent metaphysics. It has a retrospective expansion in the various genetic series of discoveries through which man could advance to his present knowledge. It has a dialectical expansion in the many formulations of discoveries due to the

polymorphic consciousness of man, in the invitation issued by positions to further development, and in the implication of counter-positions of their own reversal. Finally, it can reach a concrete presentation of any formulation of any discovery through the identification in personal experience of the elements that, as confused or as distinguished and related, as related under this or that orientation of polymorphic consciousness, could combine to make the position or counter-position humanly convincing.

However, as the totality is potential, so also is the ordering of the viewpoints. The totality is a heuristic structure: its contents are sequences of unknowns; and the relations between the unknowns are determinate not specifically but only generically. Thus, there are genetic sequences, but the same discoveries can be made in different manners. There are dialectically opposed formulations with their contrasting invitations to further development and to reversal; but the dialectical oppositions are not simply the clear-cut identifications of the real either with being or with the "already out there now", of the objective either with the intelligent and reasonable or with elementary extroversion, of knowledge either with inquiry and critical reflection or with the look that is prior to all questions; on the contrary, such extremes tend to merge in the ambivalence of the aesthetic, the dramatic, and the practical patterns of experience, to give rise to questions that not only are unsolved but also inadequately not conceived, to make their clearest appearance in the field

of knowledge but rather in the volitional tension between moral aspiration and practical living.

Not only is the ordering potential but also what is ordered is itself advancing from the generic to the specific, from the undifferentiated to the differentiated, from the awkward, the global, the spontaneous to the expert, the precise, the methodical. Our distinctions between mathematics, science, common sense, and philosophy are based upon the different manners in which insights can be accumulated. Since the manner in which insights are accumulated is simply a dynamic structure that can be utilized without conscious advertence, it is possible for us to ask whether primitives or children have any interest in mathematical, scientific, or philosophic questions. But even if such interests were to be ascribed to primitives or to children, it would be necessary to add not merely that they were uncomplicated by the divisions and subdivisions of later thought but also that they mingled indiscriminately with the questions of common sense and tended both to distort and to be distorted by common sense procedures.

Fourthly, the universal viewpoint is universal not by abstractness but by potential completeness. It attains its inclusiveness, not by stripping objects of their peculiarities, but by envisaging subjects in their necessities. There are no interpretations without interpreters. There are no interpreters without polymorphic unities of empirical, intelligent, and rational conscious-

ness. There are no expressions to be interpreted without other similar unities of consciousness. Nor has the work of interpreting anything more than ^a material determinant in the spatially ordered set of marks in documents and monuments. If the interpreter assigns any meaning to the marks, then the experiential component in that meaning will be derived from his experience, the intellectual component will be derived from his intelligence, the rational component will be derived from his critical reflection on the critical reflection of another. Such are the underlying necessities and from them spring the potential completeness that makes the universal viewpoint universal.

To approach the same issue from another angle, the core of meaning is the notion of being and that notion is protean. Being is (or is thought to be) whatever is (or is thought to be) grasped intelligently and affirmed reasonably. There is then a universe of meanings and its four dimensions are the full range of possible combinations 1) of experiences and lack of experience, 2) of insights and lack of insight, 3) of judgments and of failures to judge, and 4) of the various orientations of the polymorphic consciousness of man. Now in the measure that one grasps the structure of this protean notion of being, one possesses the base and ground from which one can proceed to the content and context of every meaning. In the measure that one explores human experience, human insights, human reflections, and human polymorphic consciousness, one becomes capable, when provided with the appropriate data, of approximating to the content and context of the meaning

of any given expression.

Fifthly, since what we have named the universal viewpoint is simply a corollary of our own philosophic analysis, it will be objected that we are offering not a universal viewpoint but simply the viewpoint of our own philosophy.

To meet this charge, it will be well to begin by distinguishing a universal viewpoint and a universal language. In so far as we employ names and epithets with laudatory or pejorative implications, such as "real" and "illusory", "position" and "counter-position", "intelligence" and "obtuseness", "mystery" and "myth", it is plain enough that we are not offering a universal language. For anyone that disagreed with our views, would prefer a redistribution of the implicit praise and blame. Still there would be in principle no difficulty in reaching a universal language, for any term that was offensive to anyone could be replaced by some arbitrary name or symbol that was free from all the associations of human imagination and human feeling.

On the other hand, we would contend that there is at least one particular philosophy that could ground a universal viewpoint. For there is a particular philosophy that would take its stand upon the dynamic structure of human cognitional activity, that would distinguish the various elements involved in that structure, that would be able to construct any philosophic position by postulating appropriate and plausible omissions and confusions of the

elements, that would reach its own particular views by correcting all omissions and confusions. Now such a philosophy, though particular, would provide a base and ground for a universal viewpoint: for a universal viewpoint is the potential totality of all viewpoints; the potential totality of all viewpoints lies in the dynamic structure of cognitional activity; and the dynamic structure of cognitional activity is the basis of the particular philosophy in question.

Finally, we would argue that the particular philosophy we are offering also is the particular philosophy that can ground a universal viewpoint. By this we do not mean that our views will not be improved vastly by more accurate accounts of experience, of insight and its formulation, of reflection and judgment, and of the polymorphic consciousness of man. Rather our meaning is that such improvements will not involve any radical change in the philosophy, for the philosophy rests, not on the account of experience, of insight, of judgment, and of polymorphic consciousness, but on the defining pattern of relations that bring these four into a single dynamic structure. Again, it is the grasp of that structure that grounds the universal viewpoint since, once the structure is reached, the potential totality of viewpoints is reached. For more refined accounts of the elements in the structure modify, not the potential totality, but the accuracy and completeness with which one can proceed from the universal viewpoint to the reconstruction of particular contents and contexts of meaning.

3.3 Levels and Sequences of Expression

As the notion of the universal viewpoint, so also some account of levels and sequences of expression is, we believe, a necessary preliminary to a treatment of the problem of scientific interpretation. The immediate task will be to classify modes of expression, not in terms of language or of style, but in terms of meanings. Only later shall we attempt to indicate the relevance of such a classification to a science of hermeneutics.

Already distinctions have been drawn between 1) sources, 2) acts, and 3) terms of meaning. Sources of meaning lie in the experiential, intellectual, and rational levels of knowing. Acts of meaning are principal or instrumental; principal acts are formal or full inasmuch as they are constituted by acts of defining, supposing, considering, or by acts of assenting or dissenting; instrumental acts are sensible manifestations of meaning through gestures, speech, and writing. Terms of meaning, finally, are whatever happens to be meant: they form a universe of meanings that includes not only the universe of being but also the totality of terms of suppositions and of false affirmations and negations.

Now the distinction between different levels of expression rests upon a consideration of the sources of meaning both in the speaker or writer and in the hearer or reader. Thus, the expression may have its source 1) simply in the experience of the speaker, as in an exclamation, or 2) in artistically ordered experiential elements,

as in a song, or 3) in a reflectively tested intelligent ordering of experiential elements, as in a statement of fact, or 4) in the addition of acts of will, such as wishes and commands, to intellectual and rational knowledge. In turn, the hearer or reader may be intended to respond 1) simply on the experiential level in an intersubjective reproduction of the speaker's feelings, mood, sentiments, images, associations, or 2) both on the level of experience and on the level of insight and consideration, or 3) on the three levels of experience, insight, and judgment, or 4) not only on the three cognitional levels but also in the practical manner that includes an act of will.

The intended response of the hearer or reader may be obscure. But as expression becomes specialized, the differences become more and more manifest. Advertisers and propaganda ministries aim at psychological conditioning; they desire neither adequate insight nor detached reflection nor rational choices but simply the establishment of types of habituation, familiarity, association, automatism,

that will dispense with further questions. In contrast, literary writing would convey insights and stimulate reflection, but its mode of operation is indirect. Words are sensible entities; they possess associations with images, memories, and feelings; and the skilful writer is engaged in exploiting the resources of language to attract, hold, and absorb attention. But if there is no frontal attack on the reader's intelligence, there is

reader's

the insinuation of insights through the images from which they subtly emerge. ^{If there is no} ~~Instead of a~~ methodical summing up of the pro's and con's of a judgment, there is an unhurried, almost incidental, display of the evidence without, perhaps, even a suggested question.

Direct concern with the reader's understanding appears in scientific writing. On the introductory level, it aims at provoking insights through illustrations and diagrams. On the advanced level, it becomes the treatise. Then all terms are defined implicitly or explicitly; all basic relations are postulated explicitly; all derived relations are deduced. Thus, the practical insight (P) that guides the scientific writer's verbal flow is reached by transposing from logic as a science to logic as a technique; the bulk of logic can itself be formulated in a treatise; and the only attention paid to the reader's habitual intellectual development and its deficiencies appears in a prefatory note that indicates the other treatises that must be mastered before tackling the present elucidation.

Direct concern with the reader's judgments emerges in philosophic writing. Just as the author of an introduction to a science uses any images that, he believes, will enable the reader to reach the relevant insights, so the author of an introduction to philosophy appeals to any insights within the reader's intellectual range. For as the scientist is indifferent to the images, as long as the insights are attained, so the philosopher is indifferent

to the insights, as long as the reader is made to mount to the level of critical reflection. Further, while advanced scientific writing aims at setting forth clearly and exactly the terms, relations, and implications that proceed from understanding and provide the materials for judgment, advanced philosophic writing is concerned, not to submit ordered materials to a reader's judgment, but to reveal to that judgment the immanent controls to which ineluctably it is subjected. So it is that the philosopher keeps repeating, either on the grand scale of the totality of questions, or with respect to particular issues, the break-through that brings to light the empirically, intelligently, and rationally conscious unity of the knower, the encirclement effected by the protean notion of being, and the confinement that results from identifying being with the intelligently grasped and reasonably affirmed.

Such, in outline, is the distinction between the different levels of expression. It envisages the expression as a flow of sensible events that 1) originates in the cognitional and volitional sources of meaning of a speaker or writer and 2) terminates in a reproduction of sources of meaning in a hearer or reader. It is a distinction that grounds not an actual but a potential classification of expressions for, while the original and terminal sources of meaning are conceived clearly and distinctly, there remains abundant room for the introduction of further differentiations and nuances. Because the classification is potential rather than actual, it does not impose upon the interpreter any a priori Procrustean

bed which his documents have to fit, but leaves him free to exercise to the full his ingenuity and subtlety in determining a writer's sources and intention. At the same time, because the differences between experience, understanding, judgment, and will are defined systematically, the determination of the level of expression has systematic implications which, even when they are mere generalities, at least will prevent interpreters and their critics from committing the grosser blunders. There is an intersubjective component to expression that emerges and is transmitted apart from insights and judgments. There is a supervening component of intelligence that admits various degrees of explicitness and deliberateness. There is a still higher component of truth or falsity that may emerge at the term of a series of insights as insight emerges at the term of a series of imaginative representations. Finally, there can be the entry of a volitional component, and its relevance is a fourth variable. To recognize the existence of levels of expression is to eliminate the crude assumptions of the interpreters and still more of their critics that take it for granted that all expression lies on a single level, namely, the psychological, literary, scientific, or philosophic level with which they happen to be most familiar.

Besides levels of expression, there also are sequences. Development in general is a process from the undifferentiated to the differentiated, from the generic to the specific, from the global and awkward to the expert and precise. It would simplify enormously the task of the

interpreter if, from the beginning of human speech and writing, there existed and were recognized the full range of specialized modes of expression. But the fact is that the specializations had to be invented, and the use of the inventions presupposes a corresponding development or education of prospective audiences or readers. Some early Greek philosophers wrote verse; Plato employed a highly literary dialogue; Aristotle proceeded in the manner of descriptive science; the medieval writers, in their quaestiones, developed a compound of the dialogue and the dogmatic decision; Spinoza and Kant moulded philosophy in the form of the scientific treatise; Hegelian dialectic seems the initial essay in philosophic writing that envisaged the totality of possible positions. If there is any truth in this hurried and rough indication of the evolution of philosophic expression, then there will be a complementary truth inasmuch as scientific writing will pass through a period in which its difference from philosophy will be obscure (so Newton's main work was entitled Principia mathematica philosophiae naturalis) and, similarly, literary writing will have its period of fusion or confusion with scientific and philosophic concerns.

However, our affirmation of sequences of expression must be confined to its proper generality. The one point that we wish to make is that specialized modes of expression have to be evolved. Thus, at the present time a narrative that opens with the words, "Once upon a time...", may be expected to be a fairy story, to offer a certain stimulus to imagination and feeling, and to be exempt from

reasonable criticism on the part of scientific intelligence and of philosophic reflection. In similar fashion, there exist other correlations between fields of meaning and modes of expression, but such correlations are not to be conceived as components of static systems, such as are illustrated by physical and chemical theories, but as components of dynamic systems, such as are illustrated by the genetic theories of biology, psychology, and cognitive analysis.

It follows that the problem of working out types of expression (genera litteraria) is to be met, not by assigning some static classification that claims validity for all time, but by determining the operators that relate the classifications relevant to one level of development to the classifications relevant to the next. Moreover, the most significant element in the theory of types of expression will be the operators. For the great difficulties of interpretation arise when the new wine of literary, scientific, and philosophic leaders cannot but be poured into the old bottles of established modes of expression. In such cases the type of expression, so far from providing a sure index to the level of meaning, originally was an impediment which the writer's thought could not shake off and now easily can become a misleading sign-post for the unwary interpreter.

3.4

Limitations of the Treatise

A little learning is a dangerous thing, and the adage has, perhaps, its most abundant illustrations from the application of logic to the tasks of interpretation. A familiarity with the elements of logic can be obtained by a very modest effort and in a very short time. Until one has made notable progress in cognitional analysis, one constantly is tempted to mistake the rules of logic for the laws of thought. And as all reading involves interpreting, there follows automatically the imposition upon documents of meanings and implications that "logically" they must possess but in fact do not bear.

It will serve 1) to bring home this point, 2) to illustrate in a particular case the significance of levels and sequences of expression, and 3) to indicate the relativity to an audience that commonly afflicts expression, if we add to our preliminary considerations a note on the limitations of the treatise. For the treatise is subjected legitimately to logical analysis and extension; it undertakes to define all its terms implicitly or explicitly, to prove all its conclusions, and to accept every conclusion that follows logically from its premises. Again, the treatise stands precisely and unambiguously upon a single level of expression, for its function primarily is to present clearly, exactly, and fully the content and the implications of a determinate and coherent

set of insights. Finally, the treatise approximates to freedom from relativity to an audience, for the practical insight that governs its verbal flow is an application of logic, and this practical insight depends simply on the principal insight to be communicated since the treatise mercilessly disregards the habitual intellectual development and the anticipated deficiencies in insight of its readers.

The first limitation of the treatise appears in the expression of logic itself. For it seems that the introduction and the first approximation to one's basic definitions and rules have to be expressed in ordinary language. Once one begins to operate under the guidance of the definitions and rules, everything will proceed automatically with perfect exactitude and rigor. But one has to take one's initial steps into this realm of automatic security without perfect exactitude and without perfect rigor through expression that is relative to an audience and successful when the audience happens to be sized up correctly.

The second limitation of the treatise appears in the field of mathematics. Any department of mathematics can be cast in the form of a treatise by the method of logical formalization. But as Gödel's theorem implies, for every set of mathematical definitions and axioms there is also a set of further questions that arise but cannot be answered on the basis of the definitions and axioms. Hence, mathematics cannot be included within a single treatise and,

no matter how long one's series of treatises may be, there always will be occasion for further discoveries and further treatises.

Further limitations appear when one turns from mathematics to such sciences as physics and chemistry. A logic of terms and relations, universals and particulars, is no longer adequate. There are needed distinctions between terms that specify experiential conjugates, explanatory conjugates, events, and things; there are needed relations between experiential conjugates, between explanatory conjugates, between things and such relations, and between conjugates, frequencies, and events. Moreover, the greater logical complexity is only the minor difficulty. For while static system constitutes the intelligibility of physics and chemistry, still our knowledge of such system is on the move. Its more or less definitive acquisitions can be cast quite usefully in the form of a treatise; but the contemporary state of the question in any science never consists simply in such more or less definitive acquisitions; there also are tentative solutions, tendencies, and unsolved problems that point to the lines of future development yet would be quite misrepresented if expressed in the form of the treatise. Accordingly, while the historical development of physics, chemistry, and allied sciences can be indicated by an unfinished series of treatises in each subject, still the series of treatises cannot represent adequately the series of states of knowledge in the subjects.

The limitations of the treatise become painfully evident when one shifts from the static systems of physics and chemistry to the dynamic systems of biology and psychology. Besides the previous limitations imposed by the more complex logic and by the development of our knowledge, there now appears a still further difficulty. For the treatise expresses system, and each biological species and, on the human level, almost each individual psyche is system on the move. Unfortunately, treatises cannot move; definitions and postulates have the eternal quality of Plato's ideas; their implications are perpetually the same; but the growth of an organism or the development of a psyche is a movement from a generic, rudimentary, undifferentiated system to a specific, expert, differentiated system; and the proper concern of the scientist in the field of genetics is not the several stages of the dynamic system but rather the operators that bring about the successive transformations from each stage to the next. Nor is one to entertain the hope that some day when such operators are well known there may be developed a more complicated logic that will handle the operators with the exactitude, the rigor, and the automatic security that now is enjoyed by the mathematical treatises. For neither the organism nor the psyche develops exactly, rigorously, and securely; it advances tentatively; it adapts to a non-systematic manifold of circumstance; it is what it is because exactitude, rigor, and automatic security are irrelevant to the problems that are to be solved only vitally and by consciousness.

Still further limitations of the treatise make their appearance when one turns to the human level. To the complexities of genetic method there have now to be added the graver complexities of dialectical method. For the sake of simplicity we have worked out our philosophic position in terms of simple contrasts: either the real is being or it is a subdivision in the "already out there now"; either objectivity is reached by intelligent inquiry and critical reflection or else it is a matter of taking a good look at what is "out there"; either knowing is mounting up the levels of experience, of understanding and formulation, of reflective grasp and judgment, or else it is the ineffable confrontation that makes the known present to the knower. Still these contrasts stand between extremes. Men live their lives not in the intellectual pattern of experience nor again in the elementary pattern of experience but, for the most part, in some alternation and fusion of the aesthetic, the dramatic, and the practical patterns. In this middle way they oscillate between tendencies to emphasize now the intellectual orientation and now the elementary; commonly they never settle outright for either view; their minds remain ambivalent and that ambivalence mocks all attempts to practise Socrates' maieutic art of definition in the hope of bringing them to clear and distinct knowledge of what they happen to mean. Not only must the treatise on human meanings dispense with precise terms, it also has to get along without definable relations. For, as we have seen, common sense

consists in a basic nucleus of insights that never is utilized without the addition of at least one further insight into the situation at hand. Not only does this nucleus vary with occupation, social group, place, and time, but essentially it is something incomplete; its content is not relations between things but a more or less invariant element in variable relations; and that invariant element not only is without precise terms, through which it might be defined, but also without verifiability through which it might be fixed by its correspondence with concrete situations.

Such, then, are the limitations of the treatise and they reveal rather convincingly the importance of the distinction between logic as a science and logic as a technique. Logic as a science may be deduced from cognitive analysis. Just as metaphysics rests on the major premise¹ of the isomorphism of the structures of knowing and of proportionate being, so logic rests on the major premise² of the parallel between the conditions of knowing and the conditions of possible terms of meaning. Thus, terms of possible meaning are subject to principles of identity and non-contradiction because judgment is an intrinsically rational act that affirms or denies. Again, terms of possible meaning are subject to the principle of excluded middle as long as the terms are regarded as acceptable; for if one is to employ the terms, one has no third alternative to affirming or denying them; but, of course, one commonly can anticipate the occurrence of further insights, a consequent modification of present

considering | terms, and so an elimination of the present alternatives and their replacement by other alternatives. Again, while the principles of identity, non-contradiction, and excluded middle primarily regard the act of judging and its full terms of meaning, still the act of thinking, supposing, defining, *considering* is preparatory to judgment and anticipatorily submits to its laws; and so the basic principles of logic hold for formal as well as full terms of meaning. Again, a study of the various kinds of insight provides the ground for the logical theory of universals and particulars, experiential and explanatory conjugates, descriptive and explanatory genera and species of things, and Aristotle's explanatory syllogism. Finally, the ground of judgment in the reflective grasp of the virtually unconditioned reveals the quite different basis of valid inference, which is of the form, If A, then B; but A; therefore B; where A and B are propositions or sets of propositions.

However, while logic as a science is quite well-established, it owes its universality and its rigor to the simple fact that it deals with unspecified concepts and problems. Hence it differs in an essential fashion from logic as an applied technique for, as an applied technique, logic deals not with indeterminate acts and contents of conceiving and judging but with the more or less accurately determined contents of some department of human knowledge at some stage of its development. On the supposition that the knowledge of that department at that stage is both fully determinate and completely coherent, logic as a

technique can be applied successfully. But, in fact, human knowledge commonly is in process of development and, to a notable extent, the objects of human knowledge also are in process of development. As long as they are developing, they are heading for the determinacy and the coherence that will legitimate the application of logic as a technique; but until that legitimacy becomes a fact, the utility of the technique consists simply in its capacity to demonstrate the commonly admitted view that further progress remains to be made.

3.5

Interpretation and Method

Let us begin by recalling the structure of classical empirical method. It operates as a pair of scissors. Its upper blade consists in a heuristic structure: thus, the nature to be known will be expressed by some function; this function will satisfy differential equations that can be reached from quite general considerations; moreover, the function will satisfy a canon of invariance and, in the case of full abstraction from observers, a canon of equivalence as well. The upper blade, then, is a set of generalities demanding specific determination, and such determination comes from the lower blade of working hypotheses, precise measurements, empirical correlations, deductions of their implications, experiments to test the deduced conclusions, revisions of the hypothesis, and so de capo.

Now with appropriate modifications the same method can be applied to the problem of interpretation. For the possibility of any interpretation whatever implies an upper blade of generalities; and the existing techniques of scholars supply a lower blade by which the generalities can be determined with ever greater accuracy. Moreover, the introduction of such a method meets the problem of relativism. For the relativism with which hermeneutics has been afflicted arises, not because scholars have been neglecting the lower blade that consists in the extraordinary array of techniques for dealing with the documents and monuments of the past, but because

there has not been available an appropriate upper blade. In consequence they either labored under the delusion that their inquiry was Voraussetzungslos or else operated on the assumptions that did not square with the single legitimate assumption, namely, that in principle and under appropriate reservations a correct interpretation is possible.

What, then, is the upper blade? It has two components which, respectively, regard meaning and expression. Both components are concretely universal, for they regard the potential totality of meanings and the potential totality of modes of expression. For the totality of meanings the upper blade is the assertion that the protean notion of being is differentiated by a series of genetically and dialectically related unknowns. For the totality of modes of expression the upper blade is the assertion that there is a genetic process in which modes of expression move towards their specialization and differentiation on sharply distinguishable levels.

In general, the meaning and the grounds of these two assertions have been indicated in the sections on the universal viewpoint and on levels and sequences of expression. But one may ask whether the content of those sections can be inferred from the necessary assumption mentioned above, namely, that in principle and under appropriate reservations a correct interpretation is possible. In favor of an affirmative answer, the following argument may be adduced. Since interpretation has no more than a material determinant in the spatially ordered marks found in documents, the experiential, in-

tellectual, and rational components of the interpretation have their proximate source in the interpreter's experience, understanding, and judgment. Hence if a correct interpretation is possible, it has to be possible 1) for interpreters to proceed from their own experience, understanding, and judgment to the range of possible meanings of documents and 2) for them to determine which of the possible meanings are to be assigned to each of the documents. Unless they can envisage the range of possible meanings, they will exclude a priori some meanings that are possible; and such exclusion runs counter to the possibility of correct interpretation. Again, unless they can connect possible meanings with actual documents, interpretation again becomes impossible. But the possibility of envisaging the full range of possible meaning lies in the universal viewpoint, and the possibility of connecting possible meanings with particular documents lies in the genetic sequence that extrapolates from present to past correlations between meaning and mode of expression.

However, one may grant readily enough that meanings form a genetically and dialectically related sequence of unknowns and that expressions develop from the undifferentiated to the specialized. The two basic assertions are sound, but where do they lead? Though the actual implementation of a method cannot be tucked into the corner of a chapter on a more general topic, still some sketch seems desirable. To meet this reasonable demand, let us first envisage in summary fashion the ultimate results that may be anticipated, let us secondly confront the

counter-positions that distort interpretation, and
thirdly let us endeavor to indicate the canons of a
methodical hermeneutics on the analogy of the canons
of empirical method in such a science as physics.

3.6

The Sketch

anticipate | The science of mathematics provides the physicist with a sharply defined field of sequences and relations and thereby enables him to anticipate the general nature of any physical theory. The purpose of the present sketch will be to perform an analogous service, not indeed for the actual task of interpretation, but at least for a consideration of the method to be employed in performing that task.

First, then, envisage the materials. They consist in the totality of documents and monuments. The documents may be divided into primary, secondary, and tertiary, where original communications are primary, interpretations of primary documents are secondary, and critical studies of interpretations are tertiary. Again, all the monuments and some of the documents are artistic; they provide materials or occasions from which we can reach insights; but they do not attempt to formulate insights after the fashion of the scientific treatise. Finally, in view of the limitations of the treatise, there are numerous gradations of documents from the purely artistic to ever more conscious and deliberate efforts to communicate a particular or universal viewpoint exactly.

Secondly, there are the immanent sources of meaning. They consist 1) in approximately reproducible human experience on all its levels, 2) orientated under approximately reproducible blends and mixtures of the elementary, the aesthetic, the dramatic, the practical,

the intellectual, and the mystical patterns of experience, 3) informed by the unities, distinctions, and relations grasped by accumulations of insights, and 4) actuated by sets of certain and probable acts of assent and dissent.

Thirdly, there are the pure formulations. They proceed from the immanent sources of meaning to determinate differentiations of the protean notion of being. Such differentiations may be either the contents of single judgments or the contexts constituted by more or less coherent aggregates of judgments. In either case they are pure formulations if they proceed from an interpreter that grasps the universal viewpoint and if they are addressed to an audience that similarly grasps the universal viewpoint.

Fourthly, there are the hypothetical expressions. Suppose P to be interpreting Q. From his immanent sources of meaning P will work out a hypothetical pure formulation of Q's context and of the content of Q's message. But the pure formulation of the content of Q's message proceeds from a universal viewpoint. It has to be transposed into an equivalent content that would proceed from Q's particular viewpoint. That particular viewpoint is assigned in the pure formulation of Q's context. Finally, inasmuch as this transposition is effected under the limitations of the resources of language and of the channels of communication available for Q, there results the hypothetical expression.

Fifthly, there is the control and it is three-fold. The totality of hypothetical expressions has to stand in a one-to-one correspondence with the totality of documents. The totality of pure formulations of contexts has to exhibit the sequence of developing human insights, the tendency of positions to unmodified survival, and the pressure on counter-positions to shift their ground or to accept their own reversal. Finally, the totality of assumptions on available resources of language and channels of communication has to exhibit the genetic sequence of modes of expression from the undifferentiated to the specialized.

Though this sketch claims to be no more enlightening than the assertion that physics is a mathematization of sensible data, it will serve to bring out the significance of the upper blade of method. For that upper blade forces out into the open the fact that the proximate sources of meaning lie in the interpreter's own experience, understanding, and judgment. It involves an explicit acknowledgement of the dangers of merely relative interpretation and a systematic procedure for circumventing such relativity by ascending to the universal viewpoint. It calls for a clear distinction between the interpreter's account of Q's context, his account of Q's content, his assumptions regarding Q's resources of expression, his inferred account of the manner in which Q would express his content in the light of his context through his resources of expression, and finally Q's actual expression.

It introduces multiple verifications; not only must hypothetical expression square with actual expression, but the totality of assumptions regarding resources of expression have to satisfy the genetic sequence, and the totality of pure formulations of contexts have to satisfy a genetic ^{and} dialectical unfolding of human intelligence.

3.7

Counter-positions

The foregoing sketch will call forth rather vigorous resistance and it is of some importance to distinguish between different sources of opposition. The introduction into physics of tensor fields and eigenfunctions raised a barrier between the theoretical physicists that grasped the mathematics but possessed no great skill in handling laboratory equipment and, on the other hand, the experts in experimental work for whom the recondite mathematics was sheer mystery. In similar fashion one may expect the diligent authors of highly specialized monographs to be somewhat bewildered and dismayed when they find that instead of singly following the bent of their genius, their aptitudes, and their acquired skills, they are to collaborate in the light of common but abstruse principles and to have their individual results checked by general requirements that envisage simultaneously the totality of results. Still, this is the minor resistance, and it should cause no greater difficulty in the field of interpretation than its analogue does in physics.

Major resistance will spring from the counter-positions, from the conviction that the real is a subdivision of the "already out there now", that objectivity is a matter of elementary extroversion, and that knowing another's knowledge is re-enacting it.

One of our basic assertions was that interpretation aims at differentiating the protean notion of being by a set of genetically and dialectically related determinations. But if the position calls for determinations of being by an explanatorily related set of terms, the counter-positions call for the exact opposite. If the real is the "out there" and knowing it is taking a look, then the ideal of interpretation has to be as close an approximation as possible to a reconstruction of the cinema of what was done, of the sound-track of what was said, and even of the Huxleyan "feellie" of the emotions and sentiments of the participants in the drama of the past. Fortunately, counter-positions bring about their own reversal. Just as Descartes' vortices violated the canon of relevance that obliges the scientist to add nothing to the data except the content of verifiable insights, so the ideal of the cinema and sound-track is the ideal not of historical science but of historical fiction. There is no verifiable cinema of the past nor any verifiable sound-track of its speech. The available evidence lies in spatially ordered marks in documents and on monuments, and the interpreter's business is not to create non-existent evidence but to understand the evidence that exists. Finally, if his understanding is correct, it will provide a differentiation of the protean notion of being, and it will provide no more. The artist and the teacher, no doubt, will endeavor to reconstitute the sights and sounds, the feelings and

sentiments, that help us to recapture the past; but such recapture is educative; it makes ascent to the universal viewpoint possible; it prepares us for an understanding, an appreciation, an execution of scientific interpretation; but in itself it is not science.

Secondly, as the counter-positions lead to a misconception of the goal of interpretation, so also they lead to blunders about the procedures of interpreters. If objectivity is a matter of elementary extroversion, then the objective interpreter has to have more to look at than spatially ordered marks on paper; not only the marks but also the meanings have to be "out there"; and the difference between an objective interpreter and one that is merely subjective is that the objective interpreter observes simply the meanings that are obviously "out there", while the merely subjective interpreter "reads" his own ideas "into" statements that obviously possess quite a different meaning. But the plain fact is that there is nothing "out there" except spatially ordered marks; to appeal to dictionaries and to grammars, to linguistic and stylistic studies, is to appeal to more marks. The proximate source of the whole experiential component in the meaning of both objective and subjective interpreters lies in their own experience; the proximate source of the whole intellectual component lies in their own insights; the proximate source of the whole reflective component lies in their own critical reflection. If the

criterion of objectivity is the "obviously out there", then there is no objective interpretation whatever; there is only gazing at ordered marks, and the only order is spatial. But if the criterion of objectivity lies in intelligent inquiry, critical reflection, and grasp of the virtually unconditioned, then the harbug about the "out there" and the simulated indignation about "reading into" are rather convincing evidence that one has very little notion of what objectivity is.

Thirdly, from the viewpoint of the counter-positions the introduction of the universal viewpoint will be denounced as a pretentious appeal to vain and empty theorizing. Even if some possible utility is conceded to this abstruse procedure, at least it will be asserted roundly and confidently that its value is highly hypothetical and its implications quite unreliable unless, of course, they are confirmed in some independent fashion. Now, no doubt, this view is very reasonable if meanings are "obviously out there". But if the proximate sources of all meanings are immanent, then either those sources make the universal viewpoint possible or not, and either that possibility is exploited or not. If they do not make the universal viewpoint possible, then objective interpretation of another's meaning is impossible; for if there is no possible universal viewpoint, there is no ^{general} possibility of rising above one's personal views and reaching without bias what the personal views of another are. Again, if the possibility of the universal viewpoint exists but is not exploited, then objective interpretation is

possible but does not occur. Finally, since ^{scientific} objectivity is to be reached only through the universal viewpoint, there is no question of a confirmation that is independent of the universal viewpoint.

Fourthly, commonly it is contended that an author has to be interpreted in his own terms. Plato is to be interpreted by Plato, Aquinas by Aquinas, Kant by Kant. This common contention possesses three indisputable excellences. In the first place it implements the lexicographical principle that the meanings of words emerge from the sentences in which they occur, so that the meaning of an author's words has to be settled by appealing, at least proximately, to his own usage. In the second place it implements the epistemological principle that an explanation forms a closed system; if one understands, then the content of one's understanding can be formulated only through a set of mutually determining and determined terms and relations; accordingly, if one understands Plato or Aquinas or Kant or anyone else, then the formulation of one's understanding will be some closed system, and both the elements of the system and the relations between the elements can be found in the original author's own statements. In the third place, the rule that an author must be allowed to speak for himself tends to exclude the intrusion of another's mentality into his meaning. Inasmuch as the author's usage determines his meanings, other meanings are excluded; and inasmuch as the author's system determines the relations between his meanings, other systems are excluded.

None the less, Plato and Aquinas and Kant keep on speaking for themselves each in ^{several} ~~several~~ widely different manners when they are allowed to do so by different interpreters. Nor is this surprising, for they are long dead, and their speaking for themselves is just a metaphor. Despite its excellences the rule contains an obvious piece of humbug, and the root of the humbug is the counter-position. A Platonic avatar and a repetition of the dialogues might solve some textual problems but, by and large, it would leave the understanding of Plato exactly where it was. The proximate sources of every interpretation are immanent in the interpreter, and there is nothing to be gained by clouding the fact or obscuring the issue. On the contrary, a methodical hermeneutics demands an open acknowledgement by the interpreter of his immanent sources of interpretation, of his formulation from a universal viewpoint of his hypothesis on the context and content of another's meaning, of his process from that pure formulation to the hypothetical expression, and of the introduction of multiple controls that check interpretations not only individually against documents but also as members of a totality with common or inter-related assumptions.

Fifthly, the counter-positions not only lead to misconceptions of the goal of interpretation and to blunders about the means to reach the goal; they also involve interpreters in systematic distortions of the authors that are to be interpreted. If one identifies the real with being, one can acknowledge the reality of the various

blends and mixtures of the patterns of human experience and one can grasp how these blends and mixtures generate confusion and error on the notions of reality, objectivity, and knowledge. Through that grasp one reaches the protean notion of being: just as being is the intelligently grasped and reasonably affirmed, so what anyone happens to think is grasped intelligently and affirmed reasonably, will be coincident with what he happens to think is being; and as human utterance, as distinct from gibberish, proceeds from putative intelligence and reasonableness, a grasp of the protean notion of being gives access to the universe of possible meanings.

But clearly enough the counter-positions block the identification of the real with being, of being with the intelligently grasped and reasonably affirmed, and of the protean notion of being with the objects of putative intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation. It follows that the counter-positions bar the way to the universal viewpoint and to an unbiased interpretation of an author with different views from the interpreter's. Thus, if one agrees with the logical positivists that meaning refers to sensible data or to signs that refer to sensible data, then one must conclude that the majority of philosophers have been indulging in nonsense; it will follow that a history of philosophy is engaged mainly in cataloguing and comparing different brands of nonsense; and it will be a matter of small moment just how much nonsense of what brand is attributed to this or that philosopher. If one agrees with existentialist opinion,

then one has no choice but to accept R. Bultmann's program of sifting out the existential elements in the New Testament and of naming the rest of its content myth.

If one takes one's stand on the ambivalence of average common sense that lives in some blend of the aesthetic, dramatic, and practical patterns of experience with occasional forays into the biological and intellectual patterns, then one can obtain a base of operations for entering into the mentality of another age and interpreting its documents only by some putative re-enactment in oneself of its ambivalent blend of the aesthetic, dramatic, and practical patterns and of its forays into the biological and intellectual patterns. So there arises the problems of determining, not differentiations of the protean notion of being, but imaginative and emotive reconstructions of the Nature Religions, of the Greek mysteries, of Eschatology and Apocalyptic, of traditional and Hellenistic Judaism, of the Christian Urgemeinde and Paulinism. So the many solutions to these problems give rise to problems of quite a new order: for within the protean notion of being the transition from one differentiation to another is the quite determinate and determinable process of changing patterns of experience, accumulations of insights, and sets of judgments; but the transition from one imaginative and emotive reconstruction to another is condemned by its very nature to be a mere transfiguration; people begin by perceiving and feeling in one manner; they end by perceiving and feeling in another; and there are no imaginable percepts or reproducible re-

vulsions of feeling that could link verifiably their beginning to their end.

Finally, if one agrees with Scotus that words correspond to concepts, and that concepts are the contents of fictitious spiritual acts of looking at the formally distinct aspects of things, then the meanings of words cannot vary without a corresponding variation in concepts, and concepts cannot vary without a corresponding variation in things. It follows that basic problems of interpretation simply cannot exist. One has only to define enough words clearly and exactly to arrive at the exact meaning of anyone else's words. The uniformity of nature guarantees the uniformity of concepts; the uniformity of concepts guarantees the uniformity of verbal meanings. All that is needed is a good dose of controversy, and then, all honest men will hold exactly similar opinions.

controversy/

3.8 Some Canons for a Methodical Hermeneutics

An interpretation is the expression of the meaning of another expression. It may be literary or scientific. A literary interpretation offers the images and associations from which a reader can reach the insights and form the judgments that the interpreter believes to correspond to the content of the original expression. A scientific interpretation is concerned to formulate the relevant insights and judgments, and to do so in a manner that is consonant with scientific collaboration and scientific control.

A methodical hermeneutics necessarily is limited to scientific interpretations, and so the canons to be suggested will not be of interest to interpreters that cast the results of their investigations in literary form. Inversely, there can be no valid objections against the canons on the score that they are not compatible with literary procedures, with the needs of the average reader, with the demand of the publishing trade for books that sell, and so forth.

There is a further limitation on the scope of the canons. Our problem has been the relativity of interpretations, and our solution has been to appeal to the upper blade of an empirical method. For this reason the canons will aim simply at summarizing the conclusions that already have been reached. Obviously enough, a complete method cannot be outlined in a subsection of a chapter

that deals with a quite different topic, and so no effort will be made to specify the numerous and complicated techniques of the lower blade of a methodical hermeneutics.

First, then, there is a canon of relevance. It demands that the interpreter begin from the universal viewpoint and that his interpretation convey some differentiation of the protean notion of being. By beginning from the universal viewpoint there is eliminated the relativity not only of the interpreter to his prospective audience but also of both interpreter and audience to places and times, schools and sects. By placing the meaning of the interpretation within the protean notion of being there are secured 1) a common field for all possible interpretations, 2) the possibility of an exact statement of the differences between opposed interpretations, and 3) a reasonable hope that such oppositions will be eliminated by further appeals to the available data.

Secondly, there is a canon of explanation. The interpreter's differentiation of the protean notion of being must be not descriptive but explanatory. It will aim at relating, not to us, but to one another, the contents and contexts of the totality of documents and interpretations. As long as interpretation remains on the descriptive level, it may happen to be correct but it cannot escape the relativity of a manifold of interpretations to a manifold of audiences: in turn, this relativity excludes the possibility of scientific collaboration, scientific control, and scientific advance towards

commonly accepted results.

The explanatory differentiation of the protean notion of being involves three elements. First, there is the genetic sequence in which insights gradually are accumulated by man. Secondly, there are the dialectical alternatives in which accumulated insights are formulated with positions inviting further development and counter-positions shifting their ground to avoid the reversal^s they demand. Thirdly, with the advance of culture and of effective education, there arises the possibility of the differentiation and specialization of modes of expression; and since ~~this development~~ conditions not only the exact communication of insights but also the discoverer's own grasp of his discovery, since such grasp and its exact communication intimately are connected with the advance of positions and the reversal of counter-positions, the three elements in the explanatory differentiation of the protean notion of being fuse into a single explanation.

To avoid confusion and misunderstanding, it will not be amiss to draw attention to the possibility of an explanatory interpretation of a non-explanatory meaning. The original writer's meaning may have its source in insights into things as related to him and, in all probability, he will have neither a clear notion of what is meant by insight nor any distinct advertence to the occurrence of his insights. Still, ex hypothesi, he had the insights and they provided a source of his meaning; moreover, the insights he had were or were not different from the insights of other earlier, contemporary, and

development

later writers; and if they were different, then they stood in some genetic and dialectical relations with those other sets. Now it is through these genetic and dialectical relations that interpretation is explanatory. It is through these genetic and dialectical relations that explanatory interpretation conceives, defines, reaches the insights of a given writer. Accordingly, it in no way involves the imputation of explanatory knowledge to a mind that possessed only descriptive knowledge. It is concerned to reach, as exactly as possible, the descriptive knowledge of the writers, P, Q, R, ... and it attempts to do so, not by offering an unverifiable inventory of the insights enjoyed respectively by P, Q, R, ... but by establishing the verifiable differences between P, Q, R, Because it approaches terms through differences, because the differences can be explained genetically and dialectically, the interpretation of non-explanatory meaning is itself explanatory.

Thirdly, there is a canon of successive approximations. The totality of documents cannot be interpreted scientifically by a single interpreter or even by a single generation of interpreters. There must be a division of labor, and the labor must be cumulative. Accordingly, the fundamental need is for reliable principles of criticism that will select what is satisfactory and ^{will} correct what is unsatisfactory in any contributions that are made. With such principles the end of even a stupendous task is already somehow in sight. On the other

hand, without such principles, even enormous and indefinitely prolonged labors may merely move around in an inconclusive circle.

A first principle of criticism is supplied by the demand for a universal viewpoint. Moreover, this demand possesses the requisite dynamic character. For though a contributor fails to present his results in terms of the protean notion of being, a critic can proceed from that notion to a determination of the contributor's particular viewpoint, he can indicate how the particularism probably would not invalidate the contributor's work, and on the other hand, he can suggest to others working in the contributor's special field the points on which his work may need revision.

A second principle of criticism is supplied by the conditions of the extrapolation of meaning. Proximate sources of meaning are immanent in the interpreter, and from them he has to reach the meaning of some other writer. The first condition of such an extrapolation is an adequate self-knowledge. Is he sufficiently aware of the diverse elements of human experience, of the different manners in which insights accumulate, of the nature of reflection and judgment, of the various patterns of human experience and the consequent varieties of philosophic views and pre-philosophic orientations? The second condition of the extrapolation is that it is to the meaning of a man at a different stage of human development. Because it is to the meaning of a man, there must be recognized

some general orientation in living, some measure of critical reflection, some insight, some flow of experience. Because it is to a meaning at a different stage of human development, there can be invoked a merging of the clear and distinct into the obscure and undifferentiated. Because all stages of development are linked genetically and dialectically, it should be possible to retrace ^{the steps that lead} ~~through that bridge~~ the gap from the past to the ^{present} ~~universal~~ viewpoint.

A third principle of criticism results from the genetic sequence of modes of expression and the recurrent gap between meaning and expression. For expression is an instrumental act of meaning; it results from principal acts of conception and judgment; the principal acts follow from the immanent sources of meaning; and so, once sources have been tapped, it is only a matter of normal ingenuity to develop appropriate modes of expression. It follows that once any stage in the development of meaning has become propagated and established in a cultural milieu, there will result an appropriate mode of expression to bear witness to its existence. But it also follows that new meanings can be expressed only by transforming old modes of expression, that the greater the novelty, the less prepared the audience, the less malleable the previous mode of expression, then the greater will be the initial gap between meaning and expression and the more prolonged will be the period of experimentation in which the new ideas are forging the tools for their own exteriorization.

A fourth principle of criticism is to be derived from the goal. It is truth and the criterion of truth is the virtually unconditioned. Because the proximate sources of interpretation are immanent in the interpreter, every interpretation is, at first, no more than a hypothesis. Because initially it is no more than a hypothesis, it can become probable or certain only by approximating to the virtually unconditioned or by reaching it. The question, then, is not how many people say it is obvious, nor how great is their authority and renown, but simply what is the evidence. Nor is evidence some peculiar sheen or convincing glamor. It ^{supposes} the coherence of the hypothesis with the universal viewpoint, with the genetic and dialectical relations between successive stages of meaning, with the genetic sequence of modes of expression and the re-
current gaps between meaning and expression, ^{It consists in} ~~and finally,~~ the fulfilment offered by the data of documents and monuments for this wide-ranging and multiply inter-locked coherence.

Fourthly, there is a canon of parsimony, and it has two aspects. On its negative side, it excludes from consideration the unverifiable. The cinema of what was done and the sound-track of what was said can be imagined but cannot be verified. They pertain not to science but to fiction. On its positive side, the canon of parsimony invokes the resources of critical reflection. Because the relativist fails to distinguish between the formally and the virtually unconditioned, he demands a complete explanation of everything before passing any

judgment on anything. On the other hand, precisely because a distinction is to be drawn between the formally and the virtually unconditioned, it is both possible and salutary to illuminate with intermediate certitudes the long way to complete explanation. When sufficient evidence is not forthcoming for the more detailed interpretation, it may be available for a less ambitious pronouncement. When a positive conclusion cannot be substantiated, a number of negative conclusions may be possible and they will serve to bracket the locus of future, successful inquiry. Moreover, in the measure that the universal viewpoint is reached, radical surprises are excluded; in the measure that extrapolation is not to future but to past meanings, the relevant insights do not call for the discoveries of genius but simply for the thoroughness of painstaking and intelligent analysis; in the measure that eventually there was closed the gap that once existed between original meaning and available resources of expression, it is possible to begin from the later, more adequate expression and remount to the origin of the ideas in the initial, transforming stresses and strains in linguistic usage.

Fifthly, there is a canon of residues. Just as the field of physics contains a non-systematic component, so also do the fields of meaning, of expression as related to meaning, of expression as grounded in dynamic constellations of the writer's psyche, and of documents in their origins, their production, and their survival.

Just as the physicist deals with the non-systematic by combining inverse with direct insights, so also must the interpreter. Finally, just as the actual frequencies of physical events are to be known only by observation and counting, so also the interpreter has to acknowledge a residue of mere matters of fact.

On the level of meaning it is important not to confuse the genetic with the dialectical. An intelligent writer advances in insight as he writes. At times, his fresh insights will be so basic that he is forced to destroy what he has written and to begin afresh. So it comes about that paragraphs, sections, chapters, series of chapters, even volumes are rewritten. But there is a limit to human endurance, and so it also happens that the rewriting is not done, that the shift in viewpoint is unnoticed or that it is noticed but corrected inadequately. Again, the intelligent reader advances in insight as he reads, and this advance of the reader may be anticipated by the writer. So the present work has been written from a moving viewpoint: earlier sections and chapters do not presuppose what can be treated only later; but later sections and chapters do presuppose what has been presented in the successive, ever broadening stages that precede.

Now from the viewpoint of the electronic computer, which coincides with the viewpoint of logic as a technique, such a procedure is illegitimate. System has to be static system. System on the move has to be outlawed. The dynamism of life and of intelligence may be facts but the facts are not to be recognized. If it is indisputable

that the same author has written in the light of a moving accumulation of insights, then he is to be named not intelligent but incoherent. On the other hand, if the identity of the author is not indisputable, then in the name of logic as a technique the alleged incoherences are to be removed and the one author is to be divided up into a number of different men. Plainly with such conclusions we are not inclined to agree. As was argued in the section on the limitations of the treatise, the relevance of logic as a technique is extremely restricted. What the interpreter has to grasp is the meaning of a man, and, in the measure that men are intelligent, in that measure they can be expected, unless the contrary is demonstrated, both to write in the light of ever accumulating insights and to address intelligent readers.

Not only does human meaning have its source in a moving system but also it is subject to the stress and distortion of the counter-positions and, in the limit, of mythic consciousness. It is here that the interpreter has to deal with the dialectical, with the intrusion of the non-systematic into moving system, with the ambivalent tendency of the counter-position and the mythical either to bring about its own reversal or to attempt to save itself by perpetually shifting its ground. But on this aspect of the problem of interpretation enough has been said already in insisting upon the universal viewpoint and in defining the work of interpreting as differentiating the protean notion of being.

When one turns from meaning to expression of meaning, similar problems arise. There is a genetic absence of static system in expression when new ideas have to be exteriorized through a gradual transformation of prior modes of expression. Then the tension between meaning and expression will be at its maximum at the beginning of the movement: images and words that previously bore an established significance appear in strange collocations; they struggle under a burden of meaning that they do not succeed in conveying; quite suddenly they pass out of currency to be replaced by fresh efforts, and these in turn may have their day, only to yield, so to speak, to a third generation of words and images: finally, if the movement endures, the transformations of language do not end until a technical vocabulary on an explanatory basis is established. In contrast with the foregoing genetic process, there is the ambivalence of allegory: the intelligible is being communicated through the sensible; the known unknown of intellect is manifested through the images and feelings associated with the operator on the sensitive level. But from the nature of the case, critical reflection is hampered and so, while the basic content of the allegory may be mystery, very easily it is mingled with myth. Thus, the Iranian contrast of light and darkness corresponds to our own contrast between the detached and disinterested desire to know and the interference of other desire; but while the Iranian allegory expands into the personification of a cosmic dualism, into a pantheon,

and into an extrinsicist theory of history, our corresponding contrast has led to a conflict immanent in the dramatic individual and expanding into a dialectic of social and cultural life. So it is that Iranian thought may be said to begin in mystery only to end in myth.

Expression not only is an instrument of the principal acts of meaning that reside in conception and judgment but also a prolongation of the psychic flow from percepts, memories, images, and feelings into the shaping of the countenance, the movement of the hands, and the utterance of the words. In childhood we learnt to speak; in youth we were trained in letters; but in neither procedure did we come to grasp just where our words come from or why they are just what they happen to be. In brief, our speech and writing are basically automatisms, and our conscious control supervenes only to order, to select, to revise, or to reject. It follows that expression bears the signature not only of the controlling meaning but also of the underlying psychic flow, and that painstaking study will reveal in the automatic part of composition the recurrence of characteristic patterns to which their author, in all probability, never adverted.

Now this fact possesses its significance, but its proper appreciation calls for a distinction between the systematic, the genetic, and the incidental. There is a systematic component inasmuch as expression proceeds automatically from the dynamic structures of the psyche. There is a genetic component inasmuch as the dynamic structures of the psyche satisfy not a static

system but a system on the move. Finally, there is an incidental component inasmuch as the sensitive automatism may be interrupted at any moment by the intervention of the principal acts of meaning and, for reasons that cannot be reconstructed and, still less, verified, give rise to a different usage or an unexpected turn of phrase. To illustrate these points, one may take Lutoslawski's well-known study of Plato and observe that the systematic component grounds the possibility of the investigation, the genetic component grounds the concluded relative chronology of the dialogues, and the incidental component requires that the argument should be based, not on rigid criteria, but on relative actual frequencies.

Finally, there are non-systematic residues on the level of the documents themselves. An unverifiable host of accidents can enter into the decisions that led to their production, into the circumstances under which they were composed, into the arbitrariness that governs their survival. Much that is obscure, ambiguous, unexplained, would be illuminated, were it not for the lamented hand of destructive time, were we more familiar with former modes of compilation and composition, were our information on authors and origins more complete. Much that is unknown to us may yet be discovered. But, perhaps, it will not be amiss to recall that a profound difference exists between general and particular hypotheses. For the general hypothesis has general presuppositions and implications and so it can be tested in a variety of manners; ~~In contrast, the particular hypothesis is an~~

manner; in contrast, the particular hypothesis is an ad hoc construction; it might be true but it also might be mere fiction; and, unfortunately, there is not the available evidence that would enable one to decide which of these alternatives is correct. It follows from the canon of parsimony, which restricts scientific pronouncements to the verifiable, that holes in their evidence at times force interpreters to prefer a frank confession of ignorance to plausible guesses that head beyond the confines of science.

3.9

Conclusion

As our study of insight began from an analysis of the procedures of mathematics and of the natural sciences, so the present endeavor has been to draw upon the consequent theories of objectivity and meaning to outline the possibility of a general heuristic structure for a methodical hermeneutics. While the practical significance of such a structure can hardly appear before it is complemented with the array of concrete techniques familiar to the historical inquirer, at least it is once apparent that the present account of insight into the insights of others possesses peculiar relevance at a time when theoretical differences of a philosophic character so frequently constitute the principal cause of divergence not only in the conclusions reached but also in the methods employed by otherwise competent investigators. However, while readers, perhaps, will be more interested in such possible applications of the proposed method, it will not be amiss for us to draw attention once more to the fact that our primary intention is somewhat different. Metaphysics has been defined as the integral heuristic structure of proportionate being, and so the existence of a heuristic structure for interpretation brings under metaphysics the interpretation not only of less general utterances but also of every possible philosophy and metaphysics. A similar claim would be made, of course, by Hegelianism, but between the Hegelian view and our own there exists the important difference that the idealist position with its alleged dialectical necessity has to pretend to be complete independently of non-systematic matters of fact,

while our realism permits us not only to respect but even to include every valid conclusion of empirical human science.