

## Two Apprehensions of Man

The two apprehensions are the classical and the modern. Commonly they are referred to by contrasting subject and substance, or history and nature, or the normative and the empirical sciences of man. In Hegelian language there is the related distinction between Geist and Natur; in Thomist language there is the division of esse reale into esse intentionale and esse naturale; in everyday, if imprecise, language there is the difference between an abstract notion of man and a concrete apprehension of mankind.

The existence of the two apprehensions is a historical question but, fortunately, their existence does not seem to be in doubt. Accordingly, I feel absolved from the task of revealing the <sup>classical</sup> ~~classical~~ apprehension of man in Greek philosophy and history, in ~~the~~ Hellenistic and patristic writings, in the mediaeval theologians, in the humanists of the Renaissance, in the prose and poetry of the grand siècle, and in the revolutionary rationalism of the French Enlightenment. Similarly, I feel absolved from showing that a different apprehension of man appeared in G. B. Vico's Scienza nuova, in Friedrich Wolf's ideal goal for Philologie, in the ~~the~~ romantic revolt against the stilted rigidities of classicist literature; that it took form in conservative critiques of the Enlightenment, in Herder's A Philosophy Too for the ~~the~~ History of the Education of Mankind, in Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France, in von Savigny's historical doctrine of law; that it became philosophic when Hegel developed a logic in which history could be inserted; that it became concrete and multiform with Leopold von Ranke's views on the study of history, with Wilhelm Dilthey's Lebensphilosophie,

with Ernst Troeltsch's relativist Historismus, with Max Weber's efforts to bring together the Geisteswissenschaften and the behavioural sciences, and with the contemporary phenomenologies and existentialisms.

Still, besides existence, there is essence; besides verification, there is definition. If there have existed two ~~of~~ apprehensions of man, in what precisely do they differ? Is the difference reducible to the already noted difference between the logic of demonstrative science and the method of empirical science? Is it that history could not be scientific and demonstrative in the classical sense but can be scientific in the modern, empirical sense? Is it just that we know more history? Is it that we have new and better methods of ~~history~~ studying history? Is it that our literature is more refined, or our psychology more profound? Is the difference philosophic, some discovery of absolute idealism, of relativism, of Lebensphilosophie, of phenomenology, of existentialism? I think that a good deal can be said for ~~any~~ each of these answers, but I do not believe that any of them hit the nail on the head. Accordingly, I have a thesis to present. It is that there exists a component of human reality that classical thought tends to overlook but modern thought tends to emphasize. The discussion will fall into three parts. I shall attempt to indicate the nature of this component in a first section on Meaning and Community. I shall turn to the reality of this component in a second section on Meaning and Reality. I shall conclude a ~~flat~~ classical oversight of this component and a modern grasp of it in a third section on The Mediation of Meaning.

## 2.1 Meaning and Community.

When we speak of 'meaning,' commonly we think of the particular case of linguistic meaning and, even more concretely, of language. After all, there is something 'real' about language, for it includes spoken sounds or written signs. Still, the mere utterance of ~~t~~ sound or the mere marking of paper does not suffice for language. Besides the sounds or marks there must be meaning. For sound without meaning is, not language, but gibberish. Meaning, then, is constitutive of language: it is not the whole of it, for there also is sound; but it is a necessary part, for without it there is not language.

As meaning is constitutive of language, so common meaning is constitutive of a common language. In Alice in Wonderland Humpty-Dumpty paid words double and made them mean what he pleased. But by doubling his costs Humpty-Dumpty achieved, not a common language, but only a language of his own. To have a common language the same sounds in the same structures have to have the same meanings for different people. It is not enough for the sounds uttered by Mrs Smith to be the same as the sounds heard by Mr Smith; it also is necessary for the meaning intended by Mrs Smith to be the same as the meaning understood by Mr Smith.

We have proceeded from language and meaning through common language and common meaning to an instance of community, the community of Mr and Mrs Smith. But the last step, the step to community, may seem merely incidental, merely an example introduced to make a very dull subject slightly less dull. But if countless other examples might have been used, it remains that some example was needed. For we had moved from

'language' through ~~xx~~ Humpty-Dumpty's 'private language' to what we called a 'common language.' But there is not just one common language for the human race. It has been estimated that there are fifteen hundred dead languages <sup>and</sup> fifteen hundred living languages; and the wish has been expressed that there were nearly fifteen hundred more dead ~~languages~~ languages. There exist, then, linguistic communities: there are the well-known English-speaking peoples; there are also the Spanish-speaking peoples, the French-speaking peoples, and so forth. Within each of these communities the same words and structures tend to convey the same meanings; but to cross linguistic frontiers one has to be bilingual or trilingual or multilingual or else call in the services of an interpreter.

We have set forth three connections: meaning is constitutive of language; common meaning is constitutive of common language; and common language is constitutive of a linguistic community. Moreover, in each case the adjective, constitutive, has the same meaning: the constituent is not the whole of what is constituted yet it is a necessary part of what is constituted. There cannot be a linguistic community without a common language; but the community is not just the language; there are the people too.

Now the transition from meaning in words to people in community brings to light a further dimension of meaning. When the people cry for bread or civil rights, there is meaning in the word, bread, or in the words, civil rights. But there is also meaning in the people. They mean they want bread. They mean they are determined about civil rights. Moreover, the words and meaning of bread and civil rights are merely the expression of a prior meaning in ~~them~~ the people themselves.

The outward acts of saying or shouting, of marching or menacing, manifest inward acts of imagination and feeling, of intelligence and decision; and without these inward acts, the outward acts are ~~made~~ not serious but merely pretence.

~~Such inward acts are fall on different levels~~  
<sup>occur</sup>

Such inward acts are of many kinds, and they occur on different levels. There is a level of realization, when we evaluate, deliberate, ask advice, choose or decide, and act on our decision. There is a prior level of judgement: one is not or not yet concerned with what one is going to do; one is concerned to determine what the facts are; one reflects, envisages all the possibilities, marshals the evidence<sup>↓</sup> for each, and in the light of the evidence judges what certainly is so or certainly is not so, what probably is so or probably is not so. There is a still earlier level of understanding: it is mere arrogance to pass judgement on a matter one does not understand; there are, no doubt, many things we already understand; but there are others which, as yet, we do not. Then we have to study and to learn; we have to examine each element singly and gradually come to ~~see~~ see how they fit together; so, at present, we are slowly assembling the elements relevant to an understanding of meaning and community. Finally, there is no understanding without a prior given, without something to be understood: prior then to the level of understanding, there is the level of experience; it is the level of sensation and perception, of memory and imaginative anticipation, of the whole dynamic mass of emotion, feeling, conation.

Still, if there are many levels of inward acts, and many kinds of act on each level, still all the acts have two things in common. They are conscious and they are intentional.

As conscious, they are present to the subject and make the subject present to himself. I do not feel without being aware of my feeling, I do not understand without being aware of my understanding, I do not judge or decide without being aware of my own judging or my own deciding; and it is the same 'I' that is present to himself in his acts in each case. But, besides being conscious, the acts also are intentional: they refer the subject to objects. When I see, there is not merely the inner experience of my seeing but also the <sup>ulterior</sup> ~~interior~~ reference to the colours and shapes that are seen. When I understand, there is not merely the inner experience of my understanding, but also the ~~ulterior~~ <sup>ulterior</sup> reference to something understood. ~~say to the relation between meaning and common community~~ When I judge, there is not only the inner experience of my own judging rationally, but also the <sup>ulterior</sup> reference to what is affirmed or denied. When I make up my mind and decide, there is not only the inner experience of a responsible choice but also an <sup>ulterior</sup> reference to a course of action that has been chosen.

Because they are conscious, <sup>my</sup> inward acts are very much my own. For without them I hardly am myself: for my real self is not the self that sleeps profoundly and unconsciously, but the self that awakes, experiences, understands, judges, decides, acts, does something. At the same time, because the acts are not only conscious but also intentional, they not only let the subject be himself but also confront him with his world.

Further, by ~~the~~ <sup>their</sup> consciousness of themselves and their acts, subjects are alone in confronting each his own world. But subjects are not alone without the ache of loneliness. They come together, feel together, experience and understand and judge each other, and decide by common and complementary