

9. Ideal Stages of Meaning

As the four realms of meaning arise through successive developments of human consciousness, they serve to define stages of meaning. There is a first a stage, then, in which only common sense is operative. There is a second when there occur both commonsense and theoretical operations. There is a third in which interiority is added to common sense and to theory. There is a fourth in which interiority, transfere^md by religious conversion, supplies theology with its foundations.

just ideal constructs.

These stages, as defined, are ideal. They serve to illustrate some of the implications of our analysis of meaning. From that viewpoint they may select signifi They may also select historical figures and movements that, from the viewpoint of our analysis, are found significant. On the other hand, our analysis is far too general to provide a basis

9. Ideal Stages of Meaning

As the four realms of meaning arise through successive developments of our conscious and intentional operations, they serve to define stages of meaning. These stages, as defined, are just ideal constructs. They serve to illustrate a little more concretely the implications of our analysis of meaning. In the measure that that analysis is accurate, they will also serve as first approximations to actual historical stages. In the measure that that analysis is accurate, they will also serve as ^{or remote} first approximations to actual historical stages. But our present purpose is not to sketch cultural history but to draw theoretical contrasts. In particular, there is nothing in our analysis to preclude endless anticipations or reversals, slow processes of change with advance on one point matched by relapse on another