

VIII - Performance and Social Intelligibility

In this concluding chapter we will summarize the development of our thinking up to this point and apply the model we have developed to human living suggesting implications for the human sciences' understanding of consciousness.

Our initial concern was to lay out the fundamental characteristics of a science of consciousness as a science. It is explanatory, empirically verifiable and factual in intent.

As explanatory, science regards relationships. These explain what something is or why it is. Explanation provides the "what" of reference. It is distinct from description in that the terms are related to one another while in description they may not be. We made the further argument that description as a scientific category should be replaced with data. In general, data regard what is understood and provide verification.

In dealing with verification we needed to address the issue of verifying unobservables. How do you verify what you do not experience? Put simply, I can verify that a horse exists if I can see it. However, I cannot see an electron. The best I can do is view images and mathematical data that are claimed to be related to electrons. The question is "are they?" To answer that question we need to understand the theory within which the data is meaningful. What is verified primarily is the theory or set of relationships. The verification is achieved when the data is understood to meet the conditions for knowing the existence of what is to be affirmed. The clearest example is the role of crucial experiments which either prove or disprove a theory. So detecting the curvature of light during a solar eclipse verified Einstein's theory of relativity. The key here is understanding that for science to be empirical does not mean that everything known through science needs to be experienced, but that the verification is empirical.

This provides an alternative to Kant's claim that we cannot know the thing in itself because we cannot have an intelligible intuition of it. A thing in itself is particular, but our understanding is universal. For him, we only know the particular via experiential intuition. However, we can know the thing in itself as particular without having it given as particular via intuition. We can understand it as particular via understanding and verify it via data we understand to be related to it. So the verification is empirical. At no time in this example is the thing in itself given, but it can be known. The implications for a science of consciousness is that there are relations that can be understood via an understanding of consciousness as experienced and others that require understanding what is not given for consciousness, such as individual neuronal activity or the patterning of cilia in the ear during hearing. This opens the possibility of linking consciousness explanatorily to what is not conscious as its conditions, enablers or "parts". By including what cannot be experienced within the knowable we also can situate experience within an explanatory model which transcends it.

Contrary to some schools of thought, a science of consciousness as experienced is publicly verifiable. This does not mean that everyone has access to the experiences of another, for *all* experience is private. We know that we have experiences in common when we have a common understanding of them. It is the understanding that is public since it is acknowledgeable as common. Whether that experience is of ourselves or something else is of no consequence in this context. For example, two people can be next to one another and experience a loud noise. They can confirm mutually that each heard the noise and was afraid.

Lastly, the science of consciousness is factual in intent. Most scientific "knowledge" is verified theory that likely will change as explanatory understanding develops. However, if it were true, it would be factual. That is, it is not true necessarily, but just happens to be so. This

contingency of knowledge happens to match the contingency of the known. Things are not as they must be, but as they happen to be. The account we gave of judgment as an assent given when the conditions for knowledge are met where the conditions are recognition of verifying instances or data illustrates the contingency of knowing.

This view is in contrast to Phenomenology which claims to be a descriptive science of consciousness. We illustrated how Phenomenology is implicitly explanatory and how Husserl's eidetic intuition and necessary assent is in fact illustrative of the grasp of the virtually unconditioned in judgment. By understanding the notion of truth we saw how Phenomenology and existentialism both approach an idealism where "to be" means to be related to consciousness in some sense. Our claim is that "to be" "for us" is to be related to consciousness, but that to be 'in itself' is not. Thus, something that is can be for us as it is in itself. Likewise, self knowledge implies that we are for ourselves as we are in ourselves. Since we can be ignorant or mistaken, self knowledge implies a self transformation in its emergence. The explanatory stance implies that self-knowledge can be situated with a broader explanatory context that is understood as conditioning it.

This self transformation is meaningful. The emergence of meaning via signs and the learning of language initially is pre-conceptual. Linking meaning with signs we were able to distinguish the intelligible from the meaningful with meaning being a subset of intelligibility. To understand the embodiment of meaning we introduced the operational situation and outlined the development of its spontaneity via the learning of skillful operations. This learning is both implicit and explicit.

Since consciousness is emergent, situational and conditioned by what is not conscious we turned to understanding emergence, the non-systematic and situations. From this came the

understanding of the organism as a non-systematic whole with a potency to change and develop. This understanding is in contrast to hierarchy theory, systems theory and structuralism. None of these fully incorporates the non-systematic. In contrast, we found the non-systematic to be essential to evolution, development and a flexible life cycle. In fact, the non-systematic, as potency, assumed a larger role as evolution proceeded.

This was illustrated in the previous chapter in the discussion of neural architecture and consciousness. We found that consciousness, as an unmediated immediacy, provides potency for simultaneity, distinctions, etc for the conscious organism which in turn provides for the emergence of conscious self control via conscious operations. Conscious states can be modeled as an embodied operational situation. Extroverted consciousness is a prime example.

Having reached this point it is now time to reincorporate meaning into the discussion and understand how the operational situation for humans differs fundamentally from that of other animals.

The Explanatory Value of Performance

Earlier it was noted that rather than being in a reductive or a hierarchical relation to one another, the sciences are complementary to one another. Fundamentally, reduction models the sciences as a series of levels of explanation where the lower level ultimately explains the higher. The higher level, then, is not really higher but a synopsis, simplification or abstraction of the lower level that would disappear if we had the lowest level of explanation delineated and preferred to go through the detail of dis-integrating the higher levels in terms of the lowest. Alternatives to reduction include considering the sciences as a series of levels of integration or

organization where the higher level cannot be reduced to the lower because it organizes it in some sense. In this characterization one may notice that reduction corresponds to analysis and the notion of higher organizations of lower levels of entities or parts corresponds to synthesis. However, both of these, as trading on the spatial metaphor of levels, tend to assume that a whole is something that can be disaggregated or built. While this may be true of things like houses it is not true of organisms. There is a complementary notion that the sciences stand in relation to one another as organizer/organized or as of lower to higher viewpoints as in the case of some of mathematics. In the case of the organism the sciences do not stand in the relations analogous to those of organizer and organized. Rather they are complementary to one another in understanding different aspects of a single thing. Philosophy, insofar as it is scientific, has a complementary role. We will indicate what this could be by focusing on Merleau-Ponty's notion of the primacy of perception using it as an analogy for moving towards a broader explanatory context of the primacy of performance.

In an argument explicitly analogous to Kurt Goldstein's in his classic The Organism regarding the non-existence of isolated reflexes, Merleau-Ponty contends that the notion of qualia is based on an abstract, empirically indefensible theory of perception. A quale, or sensory property such as a particular color as perceived, is abstract in two ways. First it can be considered independently of the thing of which it is a property. Second, and this is the sense that is important for Merleau-Ponty, it is considered independently of the perceptual field within which it is distinguished. The temptation is to consider perception as constituted by individual qualia just as some behaviorists considered performances to be constituted by reflexes or reflex-like operations. Merleau-Ponty weds the Gestalt theory of perception with phenomenological investigation to show that the opposite is the case. It is possible to abstract qualia because there

is a perceptual field of which they are a part. Rather than perception being constituted by qualia, qualia are what they are perceptually in relation to the whole field of which they are part. The field itself is given at once as a whole. It is not “constructed” or synthesized. The field consists of a figure and a ground. The figure is the focus of attention and the ground is the context or “background”. The figure is always a gestalt or a structure in the most general sense and qualia are aspects of the perceptual structure and the ground.

The perceptual structure is a structure of perception versus a perceived structure, such as a house, which is an object. Whereas the object is a whole, perception is open, incomplete or indeterminate. The object is never fully given, though it is intended as a meaningful whole. In contrast, naïve theories of perception assume a fully constituted world. This is one source of issues of trying to link up the inner and the outer, the real as objective with the subjective as perceived or experienced, and so on. Rather the world is not independent of consciousness. It’s givenness is analogous to the incompleteness of perception. He considers the world as the totality of possible perspectives. Perception, then, needs to be understood within the context of the conscious, situated person. It is the move into that context which is the phenomenological reduction. It is a move that existentially breaks with the world as already-out-there now. But as is well known, it brings its own issues with it.

Merleau-Ponty models knowing on the lines of perception. The analogy is with perceiving, not with the perceived. Knowing is in the context of the temporal structure of consciousness. The present is the intention of an indeterminate future with both partially contextualized by the past. The temporal modes form a whole which also is open and indeterminate. To get to an absolute truth which is independent of particular knowers is literally to try to get to the end of time; not linear time, but phenomenological time. Truth may be

absolute, but it always is relative to consciousness. At the root of phenomenology and intentionality is the paradox that reality is for us as it is in itself. Phenomenology lives with this paradox rather than explaining and resolving it.

What would the resolution be? As phenomenology makes a fundamental move into the context of consciousness to critique naïve realism and naturalism there is an additional move required to understand consciousness within an explanatory context. Phenomenology transformed to incorporate hermeneutics. But this was not a move into explanation but a detour into metaphor, analogy and interpretation. Rather both of these need to be understood as precursor's of existential explanation, where the free, responsible person doing the explaining is to some degree included within the explanation's domain. Whereas phenomenology situated being in itself in the context of being for consciousness, once being for consciousness is understood, it needs to be situated explanatorily in the context of being in itself. Otherwise, it cannot be understood how being can be for a consciousness that has evolved and has neural conditions. Merleau-Ponty's argument for the primacy of perception is an argument for understanding that an understanding of perception as experienced, or a phenomenological understanding, is key to understanding all modes of being in the world. It would be superseded by an analogous argument for the primacy of performance. There is a real sense in which all subsidiary elements or operations converge on performance and all human meaning and social structures proceed from it. As a dynamic whole performance is an efficacious locus for explanation in ethnology and the human sciences. We will lay this out indicating how mind can be understood both as for itself and in itself. As understood in itself it can be understood both as experienced and not experienced. The possibility of the primacy of performance is found in the relation of the performative components to the performance as a whole.

In his arguments against empiricism and naturalism Merleau-Ponty illustrates Husserl's contention that science which ignores the primary data of consciousness and the secondary data of the life world can lose its ground and thereby its relevance. An example is the model of perception as made up of elements or qualia. There simply is no evidence for any isolated qualia. They are an abstraction thinkable only on the basis of perception itself. Rather, as we noted, he finds ample evidence to perception being holistic and embraces the Gestalt theory for which there is ample scientific and phenomenological evidence. In this sense, naturalism, as embracing a particular type of explanation, becomes reductive and experience itself literally dis-integrates never to be even theoretically reconstructed. The issue is compounded by the experimental stance of viewing perception from the "outside in". In other words there is the assumption that the perceived is a complete object as is the perceiver. It is a matter of taking each apart, relating the parts to one another and reconstructing the whole scene. The imaginative, extroverted view is strong here. What we have in the philosophically unsophisticated scientist is the possibility of various forms of naturalism playing out within variations of naïve realism. This may work to some extent in the physical sciences, but it spells disaster, or better, triviality, in ethnology and the human sciences.

But phenomenology has its own contribution to make to the theory of perception. This is Husserl's notion of perception as perspectival, which Merleau-Ponty generalizes to a particular notion of being. But this notion of being does two things. First it leaves the paradox of intentionality unresolved. Secondly, it precludes the kind of viewpoint necessary to fully explain consciousness. One needs to somehow get beyond the horizon bounded by possible experience to understand its possibility. Thus, the primacy of perception has at least two meanings. The first is to phenomenologically attend to perception if you want to understand it. This challenges

naïve realism or the natural attitude. The second is that the perceptual stance is analogous to the relation of consciousness to being which precludes getting “out” of consciousness to understand being as fully independent of it. It precludes the famous “God’s Eye view”. So for Merleau-Ponty, just as any theory of consciousness needs to take the phenomenologically described view of temporality into account, any theory of knowledge needs to account for its temporal, human origins.

This, however, exposes one to idealism, for the meaning of being, in this case, is to be in relation to consciousness. Now, it may be that being is understood via an understanding of the relation of consciousness to being, but that does not mean that to be is to be in relation to consciousness.

We contend that this issue disappears in a fully explanatory account. In general we are considering three theoretically differentiated viewpoints, the naturalistic, the phenomenological and the fully explanatory. The first is explanatory, but not interior. The second is interior and only implicitly explanatory. The third is interior and fully explanatory in intent. They correspond to fundamental orientations. The first is based on an extroverted model of knowing. The second is based on the intentionality of the situated person. The third is based on the intellectual pattern of experience per se of a relatively mature scientifically oriented inquirer. Again, the first primarily regards the relations of things to us; the second the relation of us to things; the third the relation of things to one another. The first focuses on sense data and sensibly based observations as the primary form of our relation to being, the second on the data of consciousness as immanent in Husserl’s sense and the third on data of sense and consciousness, but also symbolic thought and expression.

Now we get to the understanding of the conscious performer. First we need to understand the general form of performance. Second, we need to understand the nature of wholes. Third we need a general notion of the complementarity of the sciences in understanding wholes. We can illustrate this in terms of understanding contexts in terms of iterative understandings using the secondary notion of the operational situation.

For humans, self actualization is the free, conscious, coordinating of operations and acts in a performance. A performance has a beginning and an end. Consider juggling, for example. Most of us can toss a ball in the air underhanded and catch it, but fewer of us can do this continuously with three balls as a juggler does. The juggling performance begins with the initial toss and ends with the catching of the three balls or it is interrupted with a miss.

A performance is the smallest concrete intelligible sequence (unit) of activity in terms of which operations and acts derive their functional meaning. As we develop, performances become more intelligent and meaningful. The body, and particularly the brain, enables performance via the flexibility of processes embodied in performance. In other words, operations are available which can be freely and creatively combined.

The most general definition of an operation is that it transforms itself or something else. For example, the operation of multiplication transforms the multiplicands into a product as addition transforms numbers into their sums. The operation of unscrewing a lid transforms an unopened jar into an open jar.

We know that there are conditions for my performance, enablers of my performance and aspects of my performance which are not for consciousness. Though they may in some sense be part of the operational situation in the broadest sense as the situation for the organism, they are not in the narrower sense of the situation for consciousness. Thus we know, for example, that by

inhibiting the reuptake of different neural transmitters we can cause particular types of changes in moods. There is a biological process occurring of which I am aware only in terms of changes in moods. Likewise, large scale neuronal group operations occur when I see. In one sense I am aware of a brain state via the visual experience, but I am not aware of the brain state per se. How do we explain consciousness, and in the broader case, performance, without “losing” it as conscious?

Again, there are “elements” that enable experience that are not experienced per se. There is a sense in which we experience a brain state when we see, but our seeing does not provide the images and symbols needed to understand neural functioning as such, which must be understood to fully understand seeing as a brain state. It is these elements that need to be understood without “losing” the experience. The understanding of the brain needs to be compatible with the fact that the brain enables experience.

We are in situations, but there are two senses in which we are. Instead of viewing the living being as simply within a situation as a third party would, we can understand situation in terms of the operations of the organism. This is the operational situation. We defined it as the complex of factors which can be organized to perform an act and the context for the organism in which this occurs. The context also is constituted in terms of the organism's operations. If we consider sensing in this context it means that there is a wider range of light and sound waves in the “objective” situation and that sensitivity is the neurological interaction with a subset of waves in the constitution of sensitive experience. Put simply, the neurological operations are partially constitutive of our operational situation. So to follow the lines of Merleau-Ponty’s argument for the primacy of perception, there is only a situation for us in the first place due to our somehow constituting it. So we cannot “lose” consciousness explanatorily in understanding performance because performance occurs within a situational context constituted by consciousness.

It is fruitful in understanding the operational situation to think of it solipsistically, for that is illustrative of how involved we are and is akin to a phenomenological reduction. What we really are doing is thinking of the situation in terms of our operations within the intellectual pattern of experience. But how do we avoid solipsism or idealism?

A first point is to note that there is a distinction between constitution and creation. We constitute the situation, we do not create it. Though the situation is what it is for us based on our subjectivity it is not created by us nor is it “merely subjective.” Thus, all life has the evolutionary homologue of intentionality implicit in its relations to what it is not. The other for the organism is there for it by virtue of its operations. Thus, there is a particular type of food, for example. Living things emerged not as closed systems, but as whole sets of schemes of recurrence that incorporate what they are not. The other, as what organisms relate to, evolves as a correlate of organisms’ evolution. Thus, in a sense, operational situations evolve.

There is a primordial possibility for objectivity in the difference of self and other. Until absolute explanatory objectivity is reached, there is an inadequate account of the distinction between the relation of things to us/our relation to things and the relation of things to one another. There is almost always an inadequate distinction between the relation of things to us and the relation of us to things performatively. Sensing and thinking are by identity though there is difference in the extroverted stand and in the fact we can think about things related to one another. With judgment the distinction becomes adequate implicitly, or operationally.

I am going to skip the intermediate discussion of different notions of objectivity and different ways of distinguishing ourselves and the other. Briefly put, “at the end of the day” we find differences within the unity of consciousness, not ourselves as a conscious unity within a field of differences. The archetypal case is reflective understanding which leads to the assent of judgment

of facts. All the key elements are arrayed for consciousness. Self and other are both operative in a sense, but kept structurally distinct. The key to understanding this is to distinguish the conditions for knowledge from the conditions for being. Any contingent being is conditioned. As existent the conditions for its existence have been fulfilled. For Lonergan it is a virtually unconditioned. Judgment, likewise is a virtually unconditioned. The conditions for a simple judgment of fact consist of the evidence which, if it is recognized to exist, would lead to the reflective insight linking the conditions with the conditioned yielding the assent of judgment. Now, the key here is that the conditions for knowing differ from the conditions for existence. Thus, evidence that a flower is beginning to bloom may consist in seeing the first hints of the unfolding of petals but this does not cause the unfolding of the petals. Thus, the other in this case is for consciousness in the conditioned. The conditions for assent can be separate from the other as conditioned, but they too may be other. We are there as conscious and as operative in the occurrence of the insight and assent. But within the process is the implicit recognition that we are assenting because of the evidence. This is illustrated when we try to convince another by getting them to attend to the evidence and the linkage between the conditions and the conditioned and not to our authority. If the judgment of fact illustrates the basic structure, there is reliance on antecedent events and conditions to get there. I do not want to reconstruct Lonergan's cognitional theory, but with respect to explanatory knowledge of unobservables we already have touched on the role of language. With language it does not matter if the other is experienced or not in understanding it. So the other can be for consciousness without being experienced. The flip side is that if the other is experienced, conceptualization transcends experience permitting intelligible linkages between what is experienced and what is not. Concomitantly, if we are understanding the relations of things to one another where we are not one of the things, we already have a clear incipient self-transcendence at

the level of understanding since we are not what is understood. When we get to this point, imaginal and experiential distinctions are transcended. As noted, they are needed for discovery and, in the latter case, for verification, but once these are achieved intelligibility comes to the fore. It is in this arena that we find the whole of organisms.

What the organism is, then, is constituted for us by understanding. The organism as a whole is never present experientially. Nor is it the set of possible perspectival perceptions, for these would need to be linked in some way and that linkage is intelligible, or understood, not perceived. This provides the context for understanding the complementarity of the sciences and the basic meaning of the primacy of performance.

I argued earlier for the need to switch from the notion of levels of organization to that of contexts. This is not simply a semantic shift or an attempt to make our terminology consistent within an explanatory framework. Rather it means that concretely there primarily is *one* level of organization in performance. The physics of performance and likewise the biology of performance are on the same organizational level as the performance itself. They are aspects of it.

But then how do we understand the functions of individual cells or other parts of the body in a performance? If what we are trying to understand operates via principles that are quasi-independent of the principles organizing the performance, we can understand it in terms of the secondary notion of the operational situation. For example, during neural development nerve cells migrate to muscles where they make the connections with them that permit the contraction and relaxation of the muscle. There is a context in which the cell operates based on its capabilities. Likewise, a neuron in a neural column is in a situation where the context is other neurons in the column. Its action is dependent on its ability to interact with the other neurons. If, as Edelman thinks, the basic neural unit is the column and not the individual cell, then we

have a recurrent situation with the column interacting with other columns via the massive coordinated firings of nerves within the columns. Thus we have the progressive nesting of contexts modeled on the operational situation. Though these contexts can be understood separately and imagined as separate, they are part of a single coordinated occurrence. A useful mathematical analogy would be a complex equation with operators and operands nested via parentheses.

The above gives us some way of understanding the parts of a performance, but how do we understand the relation of the parts to the whole? In some views, what we are terming the parts, i.e. the neurons, would cause the whole, i.e. consciousness. In our view the neurons are part of the performance itself, so they do not cause the performance as would an efficient cause. Rather as part of the performance they are part of the formal cause.

We can discover correlations between conscious activity and brain activity, muscle contraction, etc. Just as a muscle contraction in my arm is part of the performance of lifting, so are the neurological processes. They are not the efficient cause, but the formal cause. They are part of the efficient cause of the box being raised but not of the lifting. Analogously the firing of a neuron as part of a column of neurons is part of the process of seeing which can be part of the performance of playing a point in tennis involving, if we are any good, multiple instances of hitting a tennis ball.

What does the correlation mean? It is not a cause, as in cause and effect, but a functional part. So it is not a cause, but a part of performance. This is the primary meaning of the primacy of performance. Performance plays a central explanatory role as the basic whole of human and animal activity in terms of which the mind and body are understood on the one hand and social

interaction, institutions and so on are understood on the other. We discussed earlier how performance is also primary in evolution and central to evolution's self-driving nature.

Finally, the role of the sciences is complementary in understanding the performance. There is a physics of the performing organism which differs from the physics of the atom. This is not to say that we have two different sciences, but two different applications of them. In the application there are indeterminate specifications of general laws which distinguish the physics of the organism from that of the atom. Relations are possible, as events for example, in terms of the organism that are not in terms of the atom on the basis of the physics of the organism. The same is true of the other sciences. Since each science understands aspects of the performance, a single performance requires understanding by multiple sciences to be fully understood and the relationships among the sciences is neither reductive nor hierarchical but complementary.

Performance: Simple and Complex Groups

Just as we used performance by an organic whole to incorporate all parts of the organism within an explanatory context we will now utilize the role of performance as a part within social wholes to illustrate the primacy of understanding meaningful performance to understand personal and social action.

Durkheim develops the notion of a social fact which yields the primary distinction of sociological inquiry from the other sciences. First, there are performances of which an individual is a part, which would not exist if there were not more than one person involved. In this sense, virtually everything we do has a social aspect. Second, they have an element of meaning or interpretation which distinguishes them from the merely biological or ethnological.

Third, they have an independence of the person. That is, it is not merely that I am interacting with another, but that I am doing so within a set of relationships I find myself within. Obviously, to some extent I can choose to participate or not, but if I want to participate, I need to speak the language, follow the social mores, respect the rites and rituals and so on. There is a cultural aspect in the sense that these are passed from generation to generation, a historical aspect in that they have origins (sometimes veiled) and develop or decline. Clearly political and economic relationships also are social facts. Religions can provide an explanation of origin and continuance that legitimates and eternalizes an order or aspects of it.

It is reasonable to assume that meaningful social facts arose within preexistent intelligible, or mutually and tacitly understood, animal social behavior which renders sociobiology its explanatory power. The emergence of meaning and symbolic thinking enabled more effective ways of spontaneously self-organizing the group. The self organizing is done with respect to our relations with others, which makes it social. So the social whole, then, can be understood in terms of those who are in social relations to one another. Like all other instances in the universe these relations are neither fully systematic nor fully non-systematic. To be fully non-systematic is impossible for then there would be no relations at all. To be fully systematic is logically possible, but not factual. It reduces the probabilities for survival and development whereas extreme social engineers tend to think it would make society better by making it stable. It appears that societies, like life, need some instability to survive, otherwise they are less adaptive. In fact the non-systematic and its transformation is internally generated to a large extent by the ongoing self-constitution of the social situation. We deal with the effects of what we have done, many of which were not foreseen. Ways of regulating our own behavior and transforming the regulative rules as necessary to effectively meet social and political challenges

becomes a necessity. This leads to the notions of institutions as dynamic rather than static, developmental rather than merely transformative.

To illustrate the primacy of performance for explaining social wholes I will focus on two types of groups, functional groups and institutions. Both require a group or groups of cooperative individuals typically performing or contributing to complementary functions oriented to ends or goals.

Examples of functional groups are a sports team and an acting company. On any interval where the ball is in play in a baseball game we can consider the performance of the team as a whole. The relative positions and roles of the players change as the ball is pitched, hit, caught and so on. There can be a number of plays within one interval of the ball being in play. In a double play, for example, there can be a play at second and a play at first. The double play is a performance by the players executing it. We also can consider each player's role as a performance, though it gets its meaning from the wider context. As a performance it is initiated, sustained via operations and ended. Likewise with the double play itself. Similarly, in the performance of a play the interaction of all the actors contribute to the overall performance. As in team sports, we also can consider the role the actor plays as a set of performances where she enters a scene, acts, and then departs, for example. The performance of the group is understood via the interrelationships of the performers composing the group and among their performances.

The introduction of technology, particularly automation makes this more complex. Technology enables performance. It also can constitute operations within a performance by a company, for example. Finally, it can be part of the operational situation within which we perform. The example of using a word processor is a clear case. Clearly there is much more that can be said. The best I can do here is provide some fruitful indications.

Social Wholes

Typically a social whole is a non-systematic whole. Everything is not related to everything else, but everything is related to something that is related to something else, so that all the relations do not need to be interrelated. This permits an aggregate of elements and relations that in turn constitutes the potency of the whole. The social whole is non-systematic in this sense where the wholeness is one of common or linked intelligibility. The intelligibility takes two forms. It is intelligibility which constitutes the whole and is operative in its structures, but may not be explicitly acknowledged. We have ways of going about things which work, but which we do not fully understand. Part of the social whole is meaningful and part is merely intelligible. Part is explicit, and part is implicit or tacit. This means that there is an intelligible residue in social structure immanent in signs, symbols and behaviors. We find this in language where we can distinguish meaning as use versus meaning as conceptualized. (“It’s raining” – the “it” is a result of grammar “what’s the scuttlebutt?” – originated as gossip around the water barrel on sailing ships). Usage is skillful and the meaning emerges from the tacit in the non-systematic use of terms and relations. . The clearest instance of the intelligible residue is unacknowledged insights. Much of personal accommodation to social structure is an example, we learn how to get along without conceptualizing it. So the basic notion of the intelligible residue in social interaction is that part of the interaction that is meaningful – more or less explicit to some of the people in the social group and some of the interaction is both intelligent and intelligible, but not

meaningful in the sense of being expressed via signs or artifice (mise-en-scene and orchestrated actions) in the broad sense.

Like language, meanings can fall into disuse. We can continue to do the same thing but do it for different reasons or forget why we do it at all. The latter would be the weakest form of a social convention. Then it requires a type of cultural archeology to recover the origin and history of the practice and its meaning. However, there is a difference when this explicit understanding is achieved by someone within the culture versus an outsider. When we learn our history, for example, it is our living that is illuminated and it is our being with one another that is transformed. When we discover the meaning of our culture from the inside out, it takes on an existential dimension that someone outside the culture can only hope to approximate. It is a richer type of existential explanation. The notion that laws, social mores, etc are a matter of “convention” is true in the sense that they are what they are because people agree upon them, but it is abstract because it does not consider what they agree upon, which is a matter of history, circumstance and to on. There is a presumption by some that they could be anything. This is where historical analysis comes in. There is an understanding of the historicity of convention which is not a historicism.

The intelligible residue is an intelligibility immanent and lived but not conceptualized or, perhaps, even acknowledged. There are at least two other types of aggregates that result from social and collective behavior which result from intelligent performance and need to be understood formally, or as intelligibility resulting from intelligence, but are not intelligible residues. There is the “global” result from individual choices. This is the aggregate studied statistically mentioned above. There is the impact of social action manifest in unintended results. For example there can be a patterning of personal activity conditioned by the productive or

distributive process, or the social surd can become apparent in some political effort such as nation building. The preceding is potentially intelligible to some extent, but has not been constituted as a result of insights that have been adequately expressed meaningfully. The intelligible residue is what remains as understood post insight, but is not adequately acknowledged. It is the socially tacit. There is intelligibility in the emergence of the social structure or process which was yielded in the originating insights, but is not fully recognized as meaningful. This needs to be distinguished from elemental meaning immanent in signs and symbols which is understood by some sub-population of the social whole and some people happen to not understand. An example of the intelligible residue is unacknowledged insights. Much of personal accommodation to social structure is an example. We learn how to get along without conceptualizing it. So the basic notion of the intelligible residue in social interaction is that part of the interaction is meaningful, that is more or less explicit to some of the people in the social group, and some of the interaction is both intelligent and intelligible, but not meaningful in the sense of being expressed via signs or artifice in the broad sense.

Human Life is not a Narrative

Now let us turn to another way of understanding social facts, the narrative. Social process is often considered as rational activity in terms of means and ends type of thinking. Likewise, it is considered linearly with a beginning and an end. This is akin to a narrative where the hero of the piece is tracked through a set of related activities where actions not central to the plot are ignored. In effect, the author plots a path through the aggregate of human events that constitute the “event space” for a particular period. Likewise, we each have our own event

spaces where we do things and things happen to us or occur within our purview. Unlike the hero in a linear narrative, when we are busy we may be non-systematically bombarded with requests and demands. Likewise, we may have a set of unrelated tasks to perform to advance multiple goals. How do we make sense of this or can we?

. My event space is composed of those events to which I am adverting or to which I would advert if I knew they were occurring within my current pattern of experience. It is a subset of my horizon. It is what is operative for me now as an object of immediate or prospective concern. An analogy is Freud's notion of the conscious and the pre-conscious. Event space would be both in the sense of what I know is happening and what I can come to know next based upon what occurs within my purview. It is like being in the world, but explicitly explanatory.

The notion of event space allows us to dis-integrate performance into what it is – response to, or action in terms of, meaning and values. The impact of events is understood primarily in terms of our values, unless we are in the intellectual pattern of experience where they are understood in terms of what they are. The notion of event space allows us to take the notion of the operational situation beyond the immediate. It takes it beyond a model for understanding animal behavior to one of understanding behavior within a world mediated by meaning for the events in our event space are meaningful. They could be occurring anywhere so the operational situation transcends the immediate. I would not go so far as to equate it with the temporality of consciousness, since temporality is not the essence of consciousness but an aspect of it. It is very concrete. If I am a manager in a corporation my event space can encompass a set of unrelated events which are related to me because I have a set of unrelated projects in which

I participate. Likewise with the multitasking mother who is simultaneously managing an aggregate of concerns..

As the examples indicate, the mediation of events by meaning in our event space permits multi-tasking, something that animals rarely do and if they do, they do so to a much more limited extent. Thus, our notion of time, in terms of simultaneity is much different. Rather than doing one thing at a time within a behavioral cycle until we complete the cycle, we can engage in multiple cycles within the same time period, interrupt them at various points and resume them later if necessary. Thus, our behavior can be non-systematic to deal with the non-systematic occurrence of events we need to deal with.

We can, and typically do, think of the processes in which we engage as having a beginning and an end. We may do them repetitively, and they are schemes of recurrence, but linear. In fact they are parts of cyclic schemes which make up the social structures. They appear linear to us because we have a limited role in them. Our schemes of recurrence are not those of the institution but are constituted via interactions with multiple institutions. Some of these interactions are recurrent, other not. Some are continual, others intermittent. Where the animal has a flexible set of schemes to adapt to situations, we have a general set of operations to which we assimilate aspects of the institutional scheme. For example, we have a general set of purchasing skills (otherwise known as “shopping”) that we can use to buy a variety of things from a variety of stores. We do not buy a TV every day or every time we see one.

The general institutional organization is a set of recurrent, interlocking schemes. The time of the social is the time of an aggregate of cycles. If one is a participant in multiple cycles, the situation can seem chaotic unless one has a sufficient understanding of what is going on, and may be chaotic even then.

Social rhythms are tied to the rhythms of the institutions. You are either part of the institution that makes or enables other social participation or you are a client, parishioner, etc. It is the professionalization of society that has permitted more variation and opportunity via more efficient technology and organization. A large part of your rhythm is the rhythm of your professional or student life (what you do forty hours a week) and of your participations in other institutions.

When we are younger we are transformed more via our participation in social interactions and less from our “effort”. We cooperate (“do as we are told”) but do not know what is going on. We learn how to get along in the situation, but we are transformed according to “plan” with some statistical regularity. To determine what it is we are tested and prodded.(poked and prodded) This is the process of growing up in an institutional society. However as we get older we tend to interact with more institutions.

There is a sense in which we have inverted the natural ecological order. Animals engage in recurrent schemes of behavior that have a beginning and an end and typically are performed from start to finish before another behavioral cycle is initiated. They do so with respect to events that occur non-systematically, but with some statistical regularity that constitutes a relatively stable habitat. For animals the order is in their behavior, the disorder is in the occurrence of the events that initiate the behavior. For us, on the other hand, the disorder is in our lives when we interact with multiple ordered institutional schemes of recurrence within the same time period. It is the ordering of these larger orders that constitute our way of life: the how much and how often of “what” that corresponds to the “how much?” and “how often?” of the rhythm and standard of living.

Existential Considerations

Consciousness has been modeled in terms of an operational situation, As such, we consciously intend both ourselves and the other. Consciousness in the barest sense of the term is a quality of the intending and of operations in general. Spontaneously we live as extroverted persons in a world we find “already out there now”. That living is, for the most part, biologically conditioned and neurally mediated. This presents a series of issues to the scientist of consciousness since the world confronting this extroverted objectivity is somehow subjective. It is a correlative within the operational situation which relates to organic and conscious processes constitutive of it as being for us. The model of the operational situation provides a context for working this out. It follows that insofar as this is done successfully there will be some identity of the knower and the known which we have characterized as becoming for ourselves as we are in ourselves. The spontaneity of extroversion is complemented by the explanatory stance of a person situated in a world mediated by meaning. This takes us beyond the immediate situation to the universe in general within which we may be more or less comfortably situated. In turn, this permits us to situate our own and others operational situations in a universe transcending experience, which then permits us to explanatorily account for it. This enables us to understand ourselves as social beings in terms ranging from our own intersubjective experiences to their significance as instances of common social activities informing a culture, for example. Consciousness does not get lost in the explanation. It is neither ignored nor swept away. Rather it is understood. That understanding can be a surprising enrichment that reveals ourselves and

our history or culture simultaneously. It transforms our existential stance by changing both “self and other” for us. The model of the operational situation is based on facts like these.

The context for our performance is conscious and situational. Actual performance has a primacy in that the organism, you or me in this instance, is focused in terms of it. In peak performance it’s as if our whole being is the performing. We have an analogue in key achievements in our lives. We can see our lives as leading to those moments. In this case the earlier is understood in terms of the later. In performance the parts are understood in terms of the performative whole. Could it be then, that the brain is to be understood in terms of consciousness rather than consciousness being understood in terms of the brain? Could it be that meaning is to be understood in terms of how it informs our performance rather than simply in terms of semantics or neural centers? I have been contending that it is the performance that is primary. That is the case both scientifically and existentially.