

1.

## The "quarters" of speech.

The Spartans had a famous warrior song by Tyrtaios, sung by three chorusses, the old, the mature and the adolescents, which ran as follows ....\*

In these stanzas, more is revealed than some marching song. It has often been said that in speech, the three essentials are the speaker, the listener, the object of which they are conversing. I am convinced that this observation is very fruitful. Emphatic speech, however, preceded this conversational situation. And without first dealing with it, we fail to grasp the structure and aim of language. Emphatic speech assigns roles to various people. And for this reason, Tyrtaios' song penetrates into a deeper and more original layer of speech than mere conversation. Here, the speakers themselves, we might say are "articulated", by their plain chant. We moderns use the Greek word "organised" whenever we speak of people, and the Latin term "articulated" whenever something grammatical is meant. This division is unfounded in reality. In the real world of society, / the people themselves who speak get organized by the articulate phrases which are assigned to them or which they contribute to the whole action. For this reason, in the linguistic group speech is action, and action is speech. And Faustian division between Logos and Praxis, word and deed, in his monologue would never (have) been understood by an ancient tribesman. The word made man act and acts made man speak. Man articulated for the purpose of getting organized.

2.

The grammar of articulated speech and the political organisation of the tribal group should not be considered as two disjointed orders. I have been able to show, in the case of the Teutonic tribes that from their political status as warriors of the Frankish army they acquired the hitherto inexplicable name as Deutsche, as sharing the army's language.<sup>1)</sup> This proves that Speech is a political power. Austria-Hungary's existence as a state rested on the 60 German words of army-language which the Magyars had to tolerate even for their contingent.<sup>2)</sup> /

3.

We are handicapped in linguistic discussions because this identity of political and linguistic order is ignored by the official philology.

1) A. Goetze in Kluge Dts. Wtb. s.v. Deutsch

2) see my essay Unser Volksname Deutsch, Mitt. der Ges. für Schlesische Volkskunde 1928, pp. 1 - 65

A magazine like "Language" is fifty years behind the anthropological treatment of language as used by the Dutch Wil or the Austrian Wilhelm Schmidt or the Hungarian Marot.

The latter has a very beautiful passage in his essay, Religion and Language, which I translate from the French.

More than anybody else has he recognized the central point that language is so solemn because it was found (?) to be the only way of survival. Language is not a question of take it or leave it. It is a way of life, out of certain death.

4. It would be hard to find a historian of the modern world who could think of his contemporaries / as living without books, laws, plays, songs. The legislation of Congress, the hymnbooks of the Church, the theatre of the last 350 years, the literature of Europe all together, are mere branchery of the original grammar of Indo-european.

The Imperativ 2. person and law

The optativ 1 person sg. and poetry

The historicus 1. person plural and traditions

The indicativ 3 person and science

are one and the same attitude, each time, in the life of the group.

5. Innumerable mixtures have produced a tremendous complexity which beclouds the principles. But the most primeval speech and the most elaborate civilisation, both, are complete; they cannot help being both one and the same organizing power of human grouplife, conquering for man's part-time existence as much time and space as possible, placing man in the light of eternity, by declaring his functions in the universe. The whitish animal by being called a baby, a boy, a pupil, / a soldier, a husband, an elk, a voter etc. etc. is put under a cone of light which interprets his relations to the universe, which actually reveals to him the world and him to the world.

When the Quilente boy, near Vancouver, sings "I am going to be a great warrior, because the crows have given me medicine to make me so,"<sup>1)</sup> we still can realize the suspense between the expectations of his elders, their challenge to him, their charms prepared for him, and the far away future. The song swings in between. The challenge and charms of the old and the future historical moment of record. The sentence: I am going to be a great warrior, gives orientation towards the goal. The clause because the crows have given me medicine, shows him endowed with the blessings from those who told him that he would be and would have to be a warrior. / . . . . .

1) see Nootka and Quilente music No. 123 p. 225

by Frances Densmore

= Bulletin of Am. Ethnology 124 (1939)

6. What does this boy know of "warrior"? It is all hearsay, the past in form of order, challenge, charm, myth of the crows, the future in form of a promised title, warrior.

This orientation is spiced by the lyrical participation, by the naive one word "great" before warrior which betrays his own excitement.

The wave length on which this song rides, may be calculated as lasting ten or fifteen years.

- Linguists investigate and compare usually dialogues and conversations which find their solution within minutes or hours. And they try to deduce the phenomena of speech from such shortlived experiences as the question: Where does this road lead to? And the answer given, or similar processes. This starting point is as arbitrary as it is improbable. On all these momentary processes, language is quite unnecessary if it were not to refer to the longrange / processes of decade and wide distances.
- 7.

The pronominal area has served throughout as reservoir for the examples of grammatical structure. But in this "close touch" area, language may completely disappear or be disfigured. In Japanese, with its worship of space, this has happened in conversation to the persons. "We" is expressed simply by a reduplication of the pronoun for here, we = Here here. You is expressed by calling the listener "the person with a name", "I" has to pass as "the fool". The obfuscation of the real effort of fullfledged speech in this "private" area of two or three people is quite obvious. Speech, plain song, is true, direct, emphatic, eloquent, in public, at great occasions. When it sinks down into the intimate circle, it becomes hypocritical, in Japanese: ashamed of himself, the speaker cannot say what is true, but must disguise it. And how / significant is it that the addressee you, is the person who carries his official and public quality of "having a name", into the conversation. We have seen that the name is the animal's investiture with a meaningful function, in the group inspiration, in the acoustical figure cut by the tribe. The Japanese preserves for his listener his namedness, his nobility, although he himself, in the private conversation, is nameless, a decamisado, or sansculotte, inarticulate, disorganised.

8. The eternal truth is more readily expressed by language than the passing things of the moment. God is a "truer" and more efficient name (than) "it is warm here" because language was created lest man ignored God; and it would not have been created for talks about the weather. One may make many words and yet never come to know language at its full power. / 1000 words of basic English enable waiters and students to get along. But let us hope that they dispose of a second language of infinite range, besides.
- 9.

One's language is that idiom in which the names given to oneself give him orientation and direction. Not words but names organize people. The difference between words and names lies in the fact that we speak of the world through words, but to the world through names. A Name is the term under which I address you; a word is the term under which I speak of you.

10. As everybody knows, there is great danger when the names used to my face and the words used in my absence, differ too widely. Normally, they coincide. Words are residues of names, carried on in the named person's, flower's, animal's, star's absence. God is the only name which can never become a mere word. The very moment / that the name of God is nothing but a word, God himself is extinguished. Atheism has killed the inspiration, then. All the theologians who have spoken of God in the third person during the last century, have killed him. God is not absent. We cannot speak of him unless we believe that he is present. If so, we must use his name as a name; and the perusal of the name of God as a word does away with God's spirit and with speech which was created to distribute the spirit among the partakers of the common inspiration.

\* In The Origin of Speech, Argo Books, Norwich Vt. 1981 p. 58

Rosenstock-Huessy gives the following distich, which might be meant here also: "Stranger, go and bring the message to the Lacedaemonians  
That we are lying here in obedience to their laws."

In the translation for the German version, which has not been published, but remains in the Archive in Bethel near Bielefeld it runs:

"Wanderer, kommst du nach Sparta, so berichte,  
du habest uns hier liegen gesehen,  
wie das Gesetz es befahl. (S. 74 Logik vor Gericht )

Manuscript of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, found at Four Wells, Norwich Vt. There is a longer commentary on the Tyrtaios song in Die Sprache des Menschengeschlechts I, in the part Die Kopernikanische Wendung der Grammatik, especially on the pp. 367ff. This article is from 1944. The date has to be somewhat earlier, about 1943.

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