

## Preface to Volume 2

What a writer's block I have, knowing that few, if any, would ever publish the work that I do. For it is a dream, you say; an artistic vision of a future that could be but for the ignorance and willful blindness of the present. It is a hope born out of laborious painstaking detail, the long accumulation of little insights that compound their meaning over decades of solitary reflection. It certainly is not the work of a scholar, though it may be read as the work of a poor student not yet settled within the passage of time. It is not even a work of art, unless one considers the artist his own form.

It is above all a way of being, of living in such a way that one transcends the experience of common ways and lays and says that combined offer a welcoming banquet laid out before us by those whose search for wisdom has often been diverted into channels best suited for animals than true men. For such is the mystery of life, one that can never be bound by mere words; a state of being in which all is illuminated by an inner glow that gives life to all one is and will ever be.

Yet even in the face of this fearful awe and majesty of life—of being and consciousness itself—there surfaces the need, a deep species compulsion perhaps characteristic of Western civilization's preoccupation with theory, to share, to explain, to give heed to, to agree and argue over the most minute shades of theology and philosophy. Here we encounter perhaps the deepest problem of all, the problem of meaning. For meaning becomes problematic when—having taken up residence in a Tower of Babel—we seek a common interest, a common goal that will unite our fragmented selves into one being, the manifestation of a deep longing for the transcendent. But the very fragmentation of meaning makes this impossible.

Volume 1 led to a self-identification not with the world mediated by meaning that one creates over a life-time of work but with the real self that creates such a meaningful world in order to strive and thrive in the sensate world. In Volume 2 the focus shifts to one's foundational stance that creates such a world mediated by meaning, in particular the set of emergent concepts and operations that fills and defines one's intentional horizon. The interesting twist is that this intentional horizon now incorporates a transcendental realm of meaning, i.e., seeks to understand and adopt as far as is humanly possible the universal perspective of God within the context of human proportionate understanding.

This work did not arrive full-blown with this project. Rather it involves a long period of gestation that as far as I can tell started with a specific question: What would a cave-man see if he was plucked up in an instant from his natural habitat and plonked down by a busy highway? My high school mind grappled with what he would make of a "car" if he had no notion of a "car"? Would he see a flaming dragon? Or perhaps experience a mythological entity from his world mediated by meaning, a being with a great roaring voice, searching glaring eyes, and an exhaust-ridden breath ushering in death itself?

## ii Common Language

It is quite possible, indeed highly likely, that the confusion and turmoil we “see” happening in the world is a result of being conditioned to a way of thinking that no longer fits with what we experience. So like the caveman plonked down beside an expressway, we too have been plonked down in a transition period with only the conceptual tools of a past to safely guide us across this busy road before us that leads into the future. But this chaos may be artificial, may only be the consequence of an inadequate world mediated by meaning that cannot apprehend the positive, creative, and dynamic changes now taking place. We literally cannot “see” what is before us for we lack the insights that would give meaning to our experiences. We see flaming dragons all around us when future generations with a far better conceptual framework and foundational stance may wish they had lived in such dynamic times when something magnificent and grand was springing into being.

Such is the experiential reality of unfolding of meaning, the quest for insights in a world that demands understanding and yet is most fearful of it. However it does display an insight into the use of language itself as a means of anticipating what there is to be known. The thing is, meaning has its roots in insights and insights lead to definitions—be they of common usage or explanatory in range. Like a blind man who forgets he’s using a cane, we literally “see” the world as being real out there, where in fact it is a creation of the mind that we project as if our insights were real out there in reality. Change our concepts and we change what we “see”, or in other words the concepts we use allows us to anticipate what it is that we need to know and when we have new concepts, new words, the “reality” we seek changes.

This is especially important when it comes to laying the foundations for moving into an unknown and perhaps unknowable future. If what we anticipate is grounded in a limited set of concepts and operations then our understanding not only of what is going forward is changed but so too is our understanding of potential futures that currently do not exist. Any homogenous expansion of our horizon only builds upon dated insights; what is required are such radical shifts in being that lead to a higher perspective on what it means to be human.

This is especially true when it comes to the intellectual contamination brought about by intelligent people of common sense as they rationalize and justify their plans and policies on the bases of a limited understanding of reality. After all, power holders have an interest in continuing their elite status with all the perks it provides, and if this means restricting future developments—then so be it. It is our task in this volume to propose a common language that involves a shift to a higher perspective. Such a shift not only enhances our ability to truly anticipate what is or is not significant in the flood of signals bombarding us but provides a common framework for the specialized work involved in any cosmopolis project.

The interesting thing is that all that follows has a wider implication than just the formation of a cosmopolis institute: it provides a blueprint for Christian living in a process-orientated society that tends to shun absolute universal truths. In a sense, this proposed institute is the equivalent of a Benedictine monastery where like-minded individuals can come together to form an “intentional” group that can be of

great help to those who have neither the opportunity nor the interest in joining such a group. The basic horizon, intentions, and methodology can be applied in any number of situations.

But perhaps the greatest shift is away from a self-identification with the world mediated by meaning that we create for ourselves as the primary symbolic means of living in the sensate world, and to the realization that our true self is the being who goes about creating such worlds mediated by meaning. Driven by the transcendental injunctions of being open to experience, intelligent in understanding, reasonable in judging, responsible in deciding, and above all loving and cherishing, we seek and in this seeking find God. When this happens, a strange shift takes place, for no longer can we rely solely on our own wit and wisdom but instead face the reality that a universal perspective grounded in the realm of the Divine does exist and that our own proportionate understanding is conditioned by the fact that we are human beings.

As should be clear by now, we need to pay special attention to the language we use and the foundational language within which we use it. The reason for this is very simple. What happens when trust in our institutions is gone? When you cannot believe the statements of politicians, governments, financial managers, scientific researchers, and professionals of all sorts? Trust is especially important these days when the elite are being held to standards that did not exist when all believed they had the right to rule and all others were obliged to obey without question.

And this is perhaps the one greatest question that has emerged in our age is whether or not the elite, these rulers with their entire privileges, act for the benefit of those they rule? They are being held to new standards, and as recent events show the one thing elites don't care for is being held to any standards other than their own. Perhaps trust boils down to the control of meaning, of language. Perhaps all that follows is simply one option to restoring trust at a time when trust is in short supply.

The question remains, Whom *can* you trust? *Really*? The fact is that we are all prone to think we are being reasonable, that our own judgments are sound when others are questionable. But how do you know you can trust your own judgment, especially if the "judge" has a poor record when it comes to making sound judgments?

Now *that* is a most interesting question.

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