Language And "Sense of Reality"

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0. Introduction

"Language" has various faces. For example, there are many differences between language for literary works and language for scientific reports. We don't write a scientific report in a literary style nor a novel with mathematical formulas. This means we know the appropriate use of language.

Today, we can say that there are two language styles ; these are *"scientific language"* and *"everyday language"*, which are bipolar. This polarization involves some problems, such as, how to recognize phenomena and express them.

Today we might say that our daily life is based on science, but the language for science lies on another side of our everyday life. If we think of it in this way, it is sure that we lose *"the sense of reality"* in today's world depending on scientific language.

With this in mind, I claim the following three points in this paper ;
① Language is the field of cognition and expression
② *"the literary language"* makes *"Aufhebung"* of that polarization
③ the literary language recovers our *"sense of reality"* and expresses our *"life"*.

1. Language as The Field

(..., indem) sie (*gegenwärtige Welt*) an unser Denken anzunehmen beginnt, daß es auch Weisheits- und Wissenstraditionen anderer Kulturkreise gibt, die sich nicht in der Sprache der Wissenschaft und auf der Basis der Wissenschaft formulieren. (Gadamer 13)

(..., weil) die Wissenschaft sich selbst von der Sprache emanzipaziert hat, indem sie eigene Beziehungssystem und symbolische Darstellungsformen entwickelt hat, die sich nicht mehr in die Sprache des alltäglichen Bewußtseins übersetzen lassen. (Gadamer 21)

From these extracts from Hans-Georg Gadamer (1976) it is clear that science emancipated itself from *"everyday language"* to form *"scientific language"*, which has its own symbolical system. It causes language polarization, and as a result :

(..., indem) ihr (*Wissenschaft*) Wiedereingreifen in das Leben nicht durch den

gemeinsamen Gebrauch allgemeinverständlicher Sprache vermittelt wird, ...
(Gadamer 21)

therefore, there is a wide gulf between "daily life" and "science". However, what does Gadamer mean by "language"? He thinks that "language" is the medium and the field where it reveals itself. First, I would like to consider "the language as the field".

1.1. Language as The Field of "Cognition" and "Expression"

Language has two faces : one is the field of "Cognition" and the other is that of "Expression".

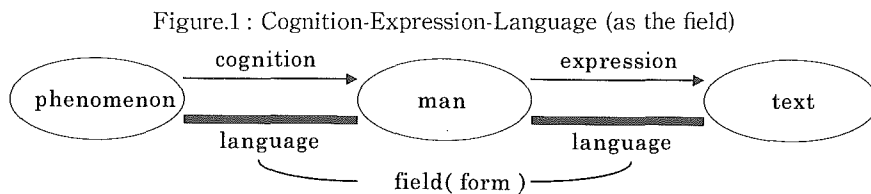Figure.1 : Cognition-Expression-Language (as the field)

Figure.1 shows a process from "cognition" to "expression".

- *"Cognition"* means that man perceives phenomena. Here the language forms the field of cognition. That is, we cut-off phenomena with "language" when we recognize them.
- *"Expression"* means that man expresses the phenomena, what he recognized. In other words, it is our own phenomena. Also in that case, the language forms the field of expression.

What has to be noticed is that both aspects of "languages" are not always the same things, while the world occurring in the expression depends on that cut-off when it is recognized. That is : the expressed contents depend on how the world is cut-off ; in other words, it depends on the language.

1.2. The Conversion of Language

Now, we have to think about what kind of process we deal with between "cognition" and "expression" in Figure. 1. After recognizing phenomena, we express them in language. Thereat we *use* other languages. It might be explained by the process that we convert the language-form : the language-form at recognizing into that at expressing. When we recognize some phenomena, at first, we interpret them. After that we express the result of interpretations. This interpretation we do between "cognition" and "expression" means that we make a conversion of languages, on which "cognition" and "expression" are based. (Even if both of these language-forms are the same, we make this conversion.)

From the point of view of *philosophical hermeneutics,* especially that of Gadamer, one

can safely say two things : (1) "cognition" and "conversion of language" correspond to *"Verstehen"* and *"Auslegung"* ; (2) and "expression" to *"Anwendung"*. Thus the process of understanding is based on "language".

From Gadamer's hermeneutics, *"Verstehen"* is a form of existence, not that of cognition. That is : we exist in the way of *"Verstehen"*. And *"Auslegung"* is to evolve what we have already understood. After that, *"Anwendung"* is to relate what we have already understood to our own situation. All of them are governed by the form of "language". That is to say, "language" is the field where we exist or our existence comes out.

It may follow from what has been said that the process from "cognition" to "expression" is equivalent to "coming out of our existence" on the field of "language", which functions as the medium. Figure.2 illustrates the process of "coming out of our existence".

Figure.2 : Cognition-Expression-Language (as the field)
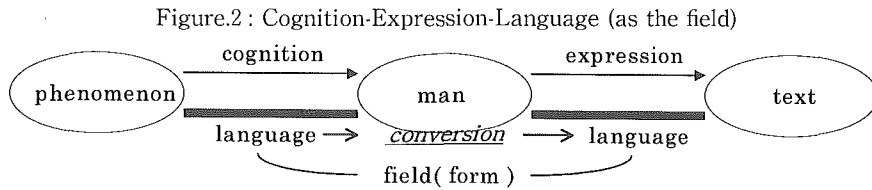
1.3. Sense of Reality

We have seen in the above that the field where our existence comes out has been constructed on "scientific language" which is not translatable into the language with *daily consciousness (alltägliches Bewußtsein)*. It also shows, on the other hand, that we have lost the *"sense of reality"* which always should accompany that field where we exist.

Figure.3.1. : Cognition with "everyday language."
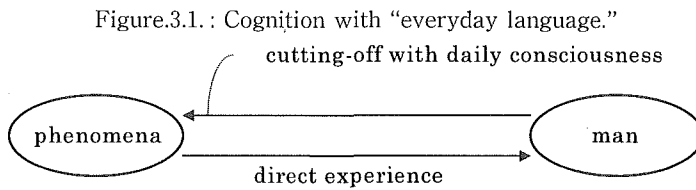
It can be said, "cognition with everyday language" is a direct experience, recognized with "daily consciousness". In this case, phenomena are real for us, even if they are like dreams or illusions. And by experiencing them directly, we can get a sense of reality.

Figure.3.2. : Cognition with "scientific language"
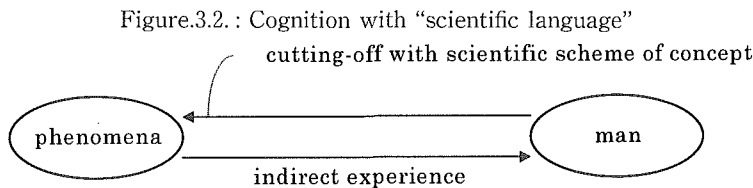
In "cognition with scientific language", we cut-off phenomena with "scientific concept-

scheme". This may be an approach to phenomena without dailiness. Such an experience is indirect to the object and a cognition without the sense of reality. Because we recognize phenomena with a filter, that is, with "scientific concept-scheme".

Today we objectify phenomena by such a scientific cognition. But, with doing so, we perceive the world to be abstract. In other words, while the science makes an analysis more closely, we have an indirect cognition to an object with the language which cannot be translatable into "everyday language". That is : our view of the world through science is not concrete, but abstract. And it is only an object in the structure of a scientific system.

With such a scientific cognition, we can get an abstract world-view differing from a visible-direct one with Goethe's cognition which we'll see later. In the scientific cognition, there is a dualistic opposition between us as the concrete existence and the world which should include us. We break off relations with the world where we should exist. Therefore, we have lost the sense of reality that we exist in the world. In the process perceiving the world to be abstract, we lose the nature of phenomena. In the age of science, when our existence depends on such a scientific cognition, we might lose the dynamic sense of reality.

2. Literary Language

What we have already seen in the above will lead us into a consideration of *"literary language"*. Let us look at especially J.W.Goethe's "literary Language" ; in particular *"Symbolik (symbolism)"*. He always recognizes objects with this language-form. In this chapter, therefore, we would consider his cognition with "Symbolik", especially the relation between how he recognizes nature and what kind of language he uses.

2.1. Literary Language

First, it is necessary to describe the general "literary language", before turning to Goethe's "Symbolik".

Figure.3.3. : Cognition with "literary language"
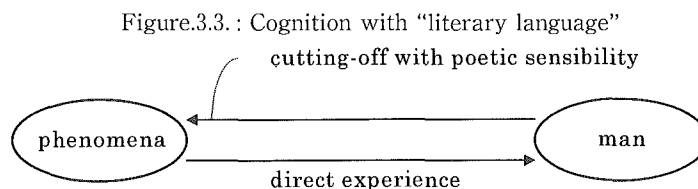
Recognizing phenomena with "literary language", one can safely say that a poet cuts-off phenomena with "poetic sensibility". This form of cognition is very natural for the poet, and therefore his experience is a direct one. That's not all : this cognition is *"life"* itself and goes hand in hand with "sense of reality" dynamically.

2.2. Goethe's Cognition of Nature

It should be said with some emphasis that Goethe's cognition, not only for the literary acts but also scientific, depends on immediacy of the experience : the immediate experience to phenomena. For Goethe, what appears before us immediately is the very reality, and what appears through such an experience immediately is the very appearance of nature. *The colored shadow* which he saw on Mt.Brocken covered with snow is the typical example. (Goethe XII 348) He saw the green-colored shadow on the mountain. From the point of view of a physicist, this colored shadow is the wavelength of "white", and Goethe's green-colored shadow is only an optical illusion. But it is very real for Goethe, because he emphasizes the immediacy of experience. This green-colored shadow, for him, holds reality and really exists, which is causing the "sense of reality" dynamically. He recognizes this shadow to be reality as it comes out right before him, while the physicists understand the shadow indirectly with "scientific concept-scheme".

Goethe considers that the "color" is, so far as it is a sense to the eyes, subjective ; but objective, so far as it is a natural phenomenon. That is to say, the idea of "color" is not only subjective but also objective and stands in the middle of both features.

As compared with Goethe, modern science has the high-precision of observation with conversion of the subjective sense into the objective "scientific language" like a numerical value.

> Aber nun ist als höchst wichtig zu beachten eine solchen bei Galilei sich vollziehende Unterschiebung der mathematisch substruierten Welt der Idealitäten für die einzig wirkliche, die wirklich wahrnehmungsmäßig gegebene, die je erfahrene und erfahrbare Welt unsere alltägliche Lebenswelt. (Husserl 48-49)

As Edmund Husserl mentions in the above, the experience with scientific cognition has replaced our everyday life, which we experience immediately and with reality, with that based on scientific language.

Let me say reiterate the points that have been made above. Science, especially natural science, observes nature, trying to fit it to the scientific scheme as the language system prepared in advance ; whereas Goethe relates to nature in a dialogical way. That is : he accepts directly the "language of nature" and recognizes its "common language". This is surely his "literary language" in the cognition.

Such an opposition between modern scientists and Goethe shows another one between the subject-object dualism of modern science and the subject-object combining of Goethe. In other words, Goethe regards nature not as a dual object, but as a monistic one like Spinoza.

2.3. Goethe's literary language - *Symbolik*

Goehte, as mentioned above, sought the language which lets nature appear dynamically. He named such a language "Symbolik". What is "Symbolik"?

He looks at an object in the way that "intuition *(Anshauen)*" conforms with "thought*(Denken)*", and the latter with the former at the same time.

> (daß) mein Denken sich von den Gegenständen nicht sondere, da die Elemente der Gegenstände, die Anshauuungen in dasselbe eingehe und von ihm auf das innigste durchdrungen werden, daß mein Anshauen selbst ein Denken mein Denken ein Anschauen sei ; ... (Goethe XIII 37)
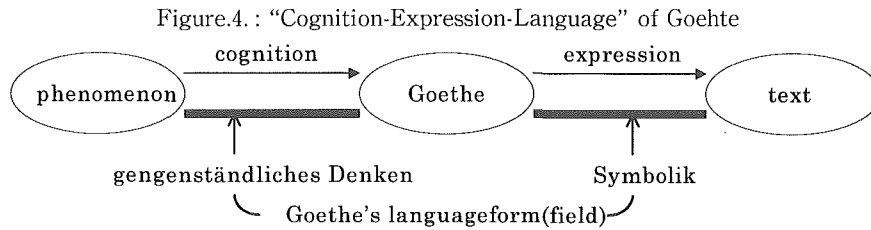
Goethe thinks on *(in German "an")* the appearing object (this way of thinking is named *"gegenständliches Denken")*, so that he can regard nature as a dynamic, concrete object, that is, "image *(Bild)*", not as an object abstracted by science. Therefore he does not need an abstracted language which is far from real consciousness, but a concrete and general one.

> Die Notwendigkeit und Schicklichkeit einer solchen Zeichensprache, wo das Grundzeichen die Erscheinung selbst ausdrückt, hat man recht gut gefühlt, ... (Goethe XIII 493)

As mentioned in the above, the "(sign) language *(Zeichensprache)*" must not be separated from phenomena themselves, in order to recognize them dynamically. He named such a language "Symbolik".

> Die Symbolik verwandelt die Erscheinung in Idee, die Idee in ein Bild, ... (Goethe XII 470)

"Symbolik" is language transforming idea to phenomenon, on the other hand phenomenon to idea. Our eyes find out the essence of nature, which can be done only through "gegenständliches Denken" in the first moment. Thereby we can look into the depth of phenomena, "symbol", from which each phenomenon is reflected out as a part of the essence of nature. Such a phenomenon itself is the very symbol for Goethe. He needed "Symbolik" not only in order to recognize the idea whose nature is expressed in each phenomenon but also to express it.

Figure.4. : "Cognition-Expression-Language" of Goehte

cognition   expression

(phenomenon)   Goethe   text

gengenständliches Denken   Symbolik

Goethe's languageform(field)

3. Literary Study and Cognition of Nature

Now, we must consider what kind of relationship there is among "scientific language", "everyday language" and "literary language".

3.1. Position of "Literary Language"

The daily consciousness of "everyday language" and the scientific scheme of "scientific language" polarize as the relationship between dailiness and not dailiness. Though "poetic sensibility" looks daily because it is the *life*-form of a poet, it's too special on dailiness, so we may say it is not daily. But the "literary language", in fact, reflects a direct experience.

Goethe's "green-colored shadow" is a good example of such a "literary language" which has both features of the two formers. That is, the phenomenon "shadow" involves *the idea of color. Whereas the words like "green", "color" and "shadow" belong to the* everyday language-system. A shadow, of course, is a everyday phenomenon. The expression "green-colored shadow", therefore, is of "Symbolik" which expresses a scientific idea "color" through the dailiness. So the composite feature of "literary language" appears clearly.

3.2. "Literary Language", "Sense of Reality" and "Life"

In addition, the expression of such a literary language calls a reader's attention to a concrete figure involving the idea of color. Only this expression leads us to this idea in this phenomenon. That is caused by the dynamic "sense of reality" appearing out of the depth of "everyday language". To unify our *life* and the *idea* with the "everyday language" as the field where our *life* appears, thereby we can get our own *life* as the total. Such a "life" consists of inner and outer nature, and also "sense of reality" of our own *life* totally.

The "literary language" awakens us to "sense of reality" of our own *life*. And it is, therefore, the field of our existence.

3.3. Literary Expression and Cognition of Nature

Let us look at the literary act based on what we have seen.

Figure.5. : Process of writing a poem
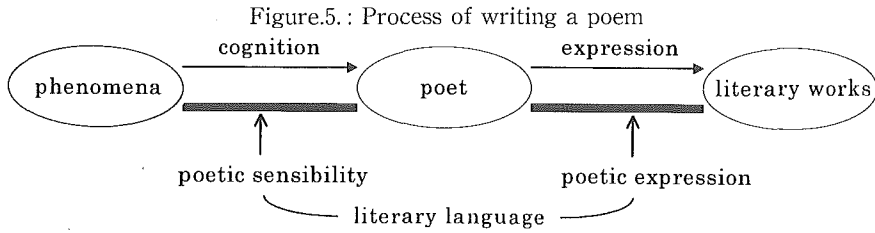
At first, a poet cuts-off some phenomena and recognizes them with "poetic sensibility". This is a direct experience with the "sense of reality". And then he transforms an object and expresses it as a literary work with "sense of reality". There are some differences among poets on the transforming, however we won't mention them now.

We shall focus on the nature which is described in the literary works. The description of nature is an expression of the image of nature which is cut-off by the poetic sensibility. This description involves not only an idea of the phenomena appearing to the poet, but also some kinds of prejudice caused by the transforming. Judging from the above, the literary study on such a point enables us to recognize the dynamic image of nature, which cannot be done only by modern science, and a view of nature of the period when the works were written.

To study literary works from such a view could be effective in studying the contemporary thought of nature, when environmental issues come into question.

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