

Essay on the Communication in the World as Will and Representation through Art

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"293. If I say of myself that it is only from my own case that I know what the word "pain" means — must I not say the same of other people too? And how can I generalize the one case so irresponsibly? Now someone tells me that he knows what pain is only from his own case! Suppose everyone had a box with something in it: we call it a "beetle". No one can look into anyone else's box, and everyone says he knows what a beetle is only by looking at his beetle. — Here it would be quite possible for everyone to have something different in his box. One might even imagine such a thing constantly changing. — But suppose the word "beetle" had a use in these people's language? — If so it would not be used as the name of a thing. The thing in the box has no place in the language-game at all; not even as a something: for the box might even be empty. — No, one can 'divide through' by the thing in the box; it cancels out, whatever it is."

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*.

"If the worlds of living creatures are similar, could this be because living creatures are similar, with similar origins and structures? (Our picture is not the only picture. "there could be as many worlds as there are ways of perceiving)"

Alexander Guesswein, *Mind*, Pg 57.

"Language cannot grasp perception"

Alexander Guesswein, *Mind*, Pg 75.

This is the Language Game equivalent of the Schopenhauer's world as Representation. Even though each one of us (subjects) may have a different representation of what it is that we mean for what it is being referred to (objects) in language, what it really matters when communicated to one another is that it is being communicated, not what it really is.

What it really is is of no importance and even impossible to be known as what it really is it is as Kant's thing-in-itself or Schopenhauer's world as Will. Therefore what is important is what it is in relation to the subject. "But isn't that some form of solipsism? How can we know, for example, that the distance between two places is for me 1km and for another 5km? Or that my blue is the same as your blue? i.e. that a given object is for one subject the same as for another subject?" We can't. What we know is that we as a species overall share the same sense and decoding apparatus, so from what we experience as the world as Representation (what we mean by something, language meaning) we assume (sometimes wrongly) that others experience the same as we do. And from the use and shared rules of the language game we live in (different language games different meanings for 1 km, 5 km, blue, or any other object), we can cross reference (language game) and come to an approximate meaning for each object. That means that, even though we won't ever know exactly what each meaning (object) is to one another, from our shared apparatus and rules, we can have some idea of what is being referred to means (1 km means approximately 1 km for most of us).

From that we can take that what is important is not that 1km is exactly 1 km for each one of us, but rather that when we communicate that we mean something is at 1 km distance, we make sure that the other understand that we are referring to their notion of 1 km, and not 2 km, or 5 km or blue or something different altogether. From the triangulation of two similar apparatus and the rules of the shared language game, both sides can be almost entirely sure that they are referring to the same thing, being that the same distance, colour, or anything else, with greater or smaller precision to what the sender of the message really means.

From there we fall into the problem of this greater or smaller precision. How can you know that what I refer to as exactly 1 km is not for you 900 m or 1,1 km? Or that the green I'm talking about is Pantone 329C and not Pantone 362C or any other green, maybe more yellowish or bluish? You can't. No one can but me. And this is why we have measuring tools such as measuring tapes or the Pantone scale. Or on the very opposite spectrum of precision, I can refer to something as very far away or very close, or just as green or greenish. In the greater precision scenario we do not refer directly to what we mean as 1 km or as blue, we use measuring tools to translate what we mean. So a measuring tape or the Pantone scale are not just measuring tools, but also translating tools, just like dictionaries. "What do you mean for 1km or Pantone 329C? Well I mean what is in the scale." In such cases it is not me that is communicating the idea, in fact I'm communicating the idea to use a translating tool to communicate the idea of 1 km or green. The precision of the message I'm trying to communicate is so great that without the use of a translating tool I'd never be able to communicate it in the precision needed or desired.

The problem of less precision is different because from the starting point I cannot be totally sure of what "far away" or "greenish" really means. I may think I do, or I might have a clear image of such in my mind, but when I communicate "far away" or "greenish" I'm communicating a very loose idea by definition. Using the very same language games that we used to be able to have a clearer understanding of the message, the recipient of such message would understand that what I'm saying is "I may or may not know precisely what distance or colour I'm thinking of, and as such I'm unable to communicate that to you, therefore you have greater freedom in understanding the message."

If the highly precise or imprecise messages are difficult or even impossible to communicate without the use of tools, how are we able to communicate at all? Because most of our communication relies on moderately precise messages, or if precise or imprecise, the implications of such precision is irrelevant to the final understanding of the message. In most cases in our day to day communication, it does not matter if some distance is precisely 1km and not 950m or 1,1km. What is important is the message that the distance is around 1 km. The same way that it does not matter when we say that plants are green and not some specific Pantone green. And for all intents and purposes that is all that matters. In order to pay taxes on your apartment, it does matter if it is 67,5 m² or 64,3 m². But when you are advertising it to rent you can say that it has 65 m² and the message will get through that it can house so many people, with such and such furniture, etc.

The problem so far is that all we are talking about are messages that can be referred to in the world outside our minds, and not in our inner personal world (our inner world is not the world as Will, it belongs to the world as Representation, but I will talk about this later), or a message that needs to be highly precise but does not find a reference in the world as Representation outside our

mind our minds and/or a translating tool to be used. We can take pain and colour to use as examples for this elaboration. As we have talked above, when referring to our inner world, mostly feelings, in our everyday life we can get through with no major problem dealing with them as moderately precise messages. A good example is the pain chart in hospitals, that goes from 1 to 10 using loose descriptions and symbols of faces with such and such expressions and colours going from green, yellow, orange to red. For all intents and purposes it does not matter if the pain you are feeling is exactly this such intensity that would be 1,8 in the pain scale. All that matters is that you are feeling a pain around 2 and you will be treated accordingly. You may say that it is the pain equivalent of the apartment for rent.

Our communication problems arise when we are to communicate a specific message that can only be referred to in our inner personal world or that can be referred to in the world as Representation but it does not have a translating tool to be used.

Let's take first the problem of communicating a specific message that can be referred to in the world as Representation but it does not have a translating tool to be used. This problem is very much like trying to write all algorithms in Pi. Impossible. Without the use of a translating tool we will never be able to communicate in words or picture exactly what or how something is for two main reasons. First that by definition the world as Representation is not a perfect rendering, if you will, of the kantian thing-in-itself, the world as Will, it is rather a construct of our sense and nervous apparatus, i.e., each one of us will have at least a slightly different rendering of the Will, that in most cases is close enough but not exactly the same. Second, because as I quoted Protagoras above, "man is the measure of all things." It means that we can only render (I could have said make sense but it's the problem is not just making sense of something) something that is within our range. That means that we can only render the Will into Idea that which our apparatus can work with. Look around your world right now, you may see a table, a chair, look out the window and even see the horizon, the blue sky in the day and in a clear night some stars in the night, birds flying and cars running down the street. Now let's say that your table measures in its length 1,5 m. Does it matter that in a more precise measurement it has in nanometers? No it does not. If you are making another table with the same measures you may go down to the millimeters. But that is as far as it matters. The same goes to the distance to the horizon and the stars in the sky. We can fathom large distances only to what we can within our own bodies deal with. What I mean is, it would be a waste of energy to make sense of the distance of an entire country or even a continent if what we can walk on a day is less than 50km (except in rare cases of course). For migrating birds, such as the geese that has been seen crossing the Himalayas, it sure makes sense for navigation purposes. If we go even smaller or bigger, such as the quantum or large cosmic scales the world as Representation starts to break down. Science is how we explain and describe the world as Representation. In dealing with such small and large scales, is not that the quantum seems strange and sometimes unpredictable, or that it doesn't seem to agree with the physics laws of large scale objects. It's just that our apparatus cannot create a coherent world as Representation down to such a small or large scale. We did not evolve for that. We can develop and use the most advanced math possible, we still won't be able to describe and explain them because math belongs to our world as Representation. And nothing that belongs to the world as Representation will ever be enough to explain the thing-in-itself because everything that exists in the world as Representation, exists on as object to

the subject and not in-itself and as such cannot be used to describe and explain the world as Will. It follows that if we can't even measure, describe or explain the thing-in-itself to such small and large scales into our world as Representation, and that each of us as subjects has its own world as Representation, how are we communicate to one another with such great precision anything without the use of translating tools, specially if even these such tools belong to the world as Representation and as such are unable to measure, describe or explain the world as Will? We can't and as explained above, it does not matter. Not even scientists need Pi down to more than a few decimal places, then why should we in our everyday life? We don't.

We now move to that which can only be referred to in our inner personal world and has no translating tools in the world as Representation. Depression is a good example be be used. Depression is a very specific feeling. One can mistake it for sadness. To be sad is akin to to the feeling of pain we talked earlier. There are many levels of sadness for many reasons. But depression is a very specific feeling that we cannot point to something in the world as Representation outside our mind and say "I feel this" on a scale of feelings from happy to sad. This is Wittgenstein's beetle in the box. But here we need to describe the beetle, we need to generalize what one feels. At first the answer seems pretty obvious, we use the language game tools we have to give the best description possible. But such tools will never be enough to describe the beetle in the box because they only refer to the world as Representation outside our mind, and as such, in them we don't find words to describe the "beetle." The "beetle" can be referred to as either our inner world and as the world as Will. And here is where language falls short, because we don't have access to each other's inner world to establish the parameters of a translating tool, or at all to the world as Will, and our languages games only describe the world as Representation outside our minds, we will never have words to precisely describe our inner worlds and the world as Will.

I feel that we need to stop here for a second and try to clarify something. Do I mean that emotions belong to the world as Will? As I warned my reader at the beginning of this essay, I take it for granted that you are already at least acquainted with Schopenhauer's philosophy. He discusses this topic in the first book of the World as Will and Idea, and his conclusion is that, just as concepts, feelings and emotions belong to the world as Representation, but I feel that it is necessary step for us here to first go over communication regarding the world as Representation outside our mind, to the world inside our minds, to only then go on to the final and most important part that is the communication of the world as Will. These, as I see, are necessary steps that, I hope will help make things clearer at the end.

Since in dealing with both our inner worlds and the world as Will our language falls short, and we need to communicate them somehow, we have found two solutions. First we can try and use language games in describing them as best as we can with the language tools we have. In using language we have two options, we can describe them directly, such as in academic books or documentaries, or we can use analogies and metaphors, such as in stories, romances, movies and myths. The second option is the most interesting one for us here, specially myths. From the dawn of humanity, when we first looked into ourselves and out to the sky and asked who we are, where do we come from, why are we here, that we use language to best answer these questions. And, since it would be hundreds of thousands of years until the greeks first tried to explain it objectively, we had to make use of metaphors to best explain them. And these analogies and metaphors do a good

job, that we still use them today, more than two thousand years after the greeks, five hundred of years after Galileo first used the scientific method to objectively describe motion and three hundred years since the enlightenment, when we thought that we could use reason to explain everything. In fact it's being about a hundred years since we first tried to explain our inner world in a objectively way with Freud, and here are our romance books, movies, and mythologies, as strong as ever. What makes them so powerful is that we see ourselves in these stories. We look at these characters, be they other people, magical beings or even gods, and we can relate to what we go through in our lives. We see all the troubles, the anguish, the joy, hopes and fear, and we see ourselves in them. As Joseph Campbell explains us, these stories and myths play an important role in our lives as guides, as references to what's going on in our inner world. Not only we can say to each other "I feel just like that character in that story" when communicating our inner world, but most importantly we can tell that to ourselves. We need to understand what we are feeling and why are are feeling that, and when we see a character in one of these stories going through the same emotions as us, not only it helps us understand what we are going through, but also that we are not alone in feeling that way and that it is a normal part of a human life. This process of identification is crucial to our psychic wellbeing.

Here I want to discuss something that will be of crucial importance to my exposition. From all these ideas that I've put forward, it may seem as if all of humanity share the same stories, the same myths, or even the same language games. This is the point to introduce two very important ideas by the anthropologist Adolf Bastian, *Völkergedanken* and *Elementargedanke*, folk and elementary ideas, myths, respectively. *Völkergedanken* are the ideas of each people or civilization, and *Elementargedanke* are the shared ideas of all humankind, which led to the development of C. G. Jung's theory of archetypes. The languages games we spoke of at the beginning of this essay fall into this broader concept of *Völkergedanken*. Each group or civilization has its own language game. One could say that *Völkergedanken* refers to each group's interpretation of the world as Representation, i.e. how they relate to the geography, climate, crops, social structure, an so on. No wonder the Inuits will have a different *Völkergedanken* than the egyptians. And therefore a different language game.

But I'm not here to talk about particulars. I'm here to talk about all of humanity. As we talked at the beginning of this essay, we as a species share the same sense and decoding apparatus. That means, not only that our world as Representation are similar, so much so that we can say that something is real because other people see the same thing, but also everything that comes along with such apparatus. That means that, just like other species, we all share some of the same behavior, some of the same understanding of the world as Representation, and some of the same physiological needs and psychological needs and characteristics. And it is about these psychological needs and characteristics that *Elementargedanke* is about.

I feel that the best to introduce *Elementargedanke* is with Kant's synthetic a priori knowledge. I'm not going to dwell much on Kant, but this is important. Synthetic a priori knowledge means that we can come up with novel knowledge prior to experience. That means that Locke's idea of a Tabula Rasa was wrong. He uses geometrical space to prove that we must know space a priori in order to make sense of the world, i.e., to create the world as Representation. Most important for our discussion here, I think, is the knowledge that we exist, of our own individuality.

Individuality only exists in space. We don't learn that we are we. I am me. You are you. We know. And this is the synthetic a priori knowledge that gave rise to those questions in the dawn of humanity. We see the world. We see ourselves. We see ourselves in the world. This must be the strangest of feelings. No wonder asked such questions and develop all this knowledge to answer it. From myths to science. Science is much too modern, and as such does not belong to the dawn of humanity. Myths were our first attempt to make sense of such questions. This is the realm of *Elementargedanke*. *Elementargedanke* comes from the synthetic a priori knowledge. From *Elementargedanke* we developed *Völkergedanken*, and from it language games.

Here we have reached the most important point of this dissertation: where does synthetic a priori knowledge comes from? The biological answer would be that it comes from our instincts, from our genes. That maybe be a good answer if we were dealing only with science. But as we have established, science only explains the world as Representation. And genes belong to the world as Representation. Since it does not come from the world as Representation, it must come from the world as Will. As both Kant and Schopenhauer showed us, it is useless trying to understand the world as Will, the things-in-themselves. But what is important here is that we have a priori synthetic knowledge, we know it, we feel it, and we know that it must come from somewhere we cannot reach or explain. The most basic a priori synthetic knowledge must be space-time. Kant has already proved how space is an a priori synthetic knowledge, and time must also be, as change only happens in time. No time, no change. You're in the womb, you're out of the womb. Time.

Here I want to make a parenthesis as this will be important for us later. Instincts may come from our genes, but since genes belong only to the world as Representation, it does not fully explain where instincts come from. Schopenhauer explain that, since everything in the world as Representation is an objectification of the world as Will, genes and instincts are objectification of the world as Will. Genes objectify as molecules, and instinct as action or as a willingness to act, a drive, a need to act that we do not know where it comes from because it comes from the Will. And this very need to act that we do not know where comes comes from because it comes from the Will is what Schopenhauer call the Will to Life. The Will to Life will be important for us later. Now back on track.

From space-time knowledge we can reach to the conclusion that we exist and we are individuals, as Schopenhauer proved that individuality only exists in the world as Representation, or what he calls principium individuationis. And it is from this very knowledge that all troubles and anxieties and suffering of the human being comes from, or as it became cliché, it is the human condition. And in fact, it's no wonder that it is such a powerful knowledge. From not-being, suddenly we are, and because of our knowledge of time, we know that we will not be again soon. And since we know that we did not come from the world as Representation, it only exist because the subject exists, we know we came from the world as Will, which we cannot reach much less understand, and there is absolutely no reason for us to exist.

We have reached the Will. The Will is the end of the road for our understanding. There is no point trying to go further. As we have learned so far, we all come from the Will, we all share the same a priori synthetic knowledge, that gives rises our individuality, that is the source of many of our sufferings and anxieties, to which we have develop myths to help us understand and share with others how we feel and in doing so we have a healthier psyche. We may not be happy, but at least

we won't suffer as much, since these issues, although subsided, will not go away. We also learned that we used language games to communicate amongst ourselves these myths and anxieties. This may not be the reason we developed language, but it is the reason we created stories using language. And we have established that language will never be able to precisely describe such feeling, much less where they come from. The best language can do are analogies and metaphors. But, in order to subdue the suffering caused by the knowledge of our existence and individuality, we need to communicate how we feel to one another. Or the very least, know that we are not alone in this suffering. How do we do that? Art.

There are three major forms of art, music, visual arts (paintings, drawings, etc), and sculpture (the discussion of what is art and what is not art is for another time). All other form of art have some or all of these elements combined. The difference between these art forms are the dimensions in which they live in, music in one dimension, time, visual arts two dimensions, sight, and sculpture three dimensions, space. Our three dimensional world as Representation. But why is art able to communicate the suffering caused by knowledge of our existence and individuality and language is not? Because art belongs to the same space-time dimensions as we do, it belongs to the world as Representation as we do. Language belongs to the intellect and space-time does not apply to our intellect as Schopenhauer already proved. The same principium individuationis that apply to us, also applies to everything in the world as Representation, trees, mountains, the ocean, animals, and also everything that we make including art. We see our individuality in everything in the world as Representation the same way we identify ourselves with the characters in myths, the reason why nature can awake emotions in us. We are individuals as everything in the world as Representation is an individual, because everything in it belongs to space-time (this is the basis of anthropomorphism, as we see them as individuals humans as we). But nature is not an art form. Art is only made by humans.

Here we can make some conclusions. Art comes from us. We come from the Will. The human condition comes from the Will and does not belong to the world as Representation outside our minds. We know that identifying and communicating our human condition alleviates our suffering, and one of the ways we do so is through language in myths and stories. Language has shortcomings when communicating what does not belong to the world as Representation outside our mind. From experience we know that we also communicate through art. Art belong to the world as Representation as we do. We see our individuality in everything in the world as Representation, including art. Now, if we do communicate through art; and art belongs to the world as Representation; everything that is possible in the world as Representation, must be possible to art; we can conclude that art as a means of communication does not have the shortcomings that language does. This means that we can communicate so much more through art than we ever could with language. This is of great importance.

Since we can identify ourselves in our human condition with the characters in myths and stories that are communicated using language games; we see our individuality in everything in the world as Representation, including art; and art does not have the shortcomings of language; that means that we can communicate and identify our ourselves in our human condition much more comprehensively with art, or "silence is so accurate" in the words of Mark Rothko. Here comes the most interesting part. I've mentioned earlier this drive to action, which we call instinct, and that in

fact comes from the Will, the Will to Life is what makes us create art. This is why every single human group that ever existed has created art. And not any art, but an art that places us in the world as Representation, that portrays our individuality, the human condition, which, as such, intends in trying to lessen our suffering. This is *Elementargedanke*.

But what's the difference between the making of art and other creations of mankind, and the answer is purpose. Indeed we do communicate through every single of our creations, buildings, clothes, etc, but while these other creations have other purposes, the only purpose of art, and the only intention of the artist is the communication of the Will to Life. I've said earlier that I wouldn't go into what is and what is not art. Now I will. Art is every human creation whose one and only intention and purpose is the communication of the Will to Life to other people. Art is useless to anything else. Painting, sculpture, music, are all useless outside such purpose. But what a grandiose purpose. And when such communication is successful we call it great art.

If I may say, as an artist myself, it is not every artist that has such intention. It is an intention that has to come from deep down into the artist, beyond the intellect, beyond the psyche. It comes from the very connection the artist has with the Will to Life. A great work of art is the Will to Life in the artist and transferred to the artwork as an individual objectification of the Will in the world as Representation making it self be felt by the Will to Life in the spectator. It is Will to Life connecting with Will to Life. It is the Will connecting with it self.

This is aesthetical arrest. This is beauty. Beauty is not a 'what,' it is a 'when.' It is when such connection happens. Beauty, aesthetical arrest is not, as Schopenhauer thought, to experience the world as pure Idea, it is when the objectified Will as the artwork connects with the objectified Will as you. The Will connects with it self, in which there is no individuality, no suffering, only one Will. In art we are one.

"You've got sadness in you, I've got sadness in me — and my works of art are places where the two sadnesses can meet, and therefore both of us need to feel less sad."

Mark Rothko