PERSPECTIVES ON Q METHODOLOGY: II.

MONISTIC PROTOPOSTULATE OF COMMUNICABILITY

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The theory of communicability (Stephenson, 1980) is based on the conversational viewer-perceptiveness of people at a level of everyday experience: It replaces "consciousness" as the foundation of subjectivity. It is applicable at very practical levels, of a person in everyday conversation with another, or within oneself as rumination, wishing or dreaming. But it is also applicable at the most profound levels of our knowledge of nature. Wittgenstein could state that objective science is about *facts* and not *things*; ours in Q is about the reverse, that subjective science is about things and not *facts*. It is the difference between a science *without* self-reference, and one *with* it.

Objective science is not all reason, but belief as well. Belief has "tacit knowledge" associated with it, in which self-reference is at least implicit, as with Polanyi (1958) and Stephenson (1980). There is not *one* science, however, in which reason and belief are conjoined as Polanyi taught, but two distinct sciences which differ fundamentally only in the way measurement is made, and in what it consists. In objective science measurement is in terms of uni-

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versal units of length and time, and in principle anyone can make the measurements--as indeed machines and instruments do, constructed for the purpose by the scientist. In subjective science the universal unit is the quantsal, a pure number with a statistical definition, and the only person who can make measurements with it is the subject himself--each and every individual the only measurer of his or her own subjectivity. However, no one is conscious of the unit or the measurement--a child can make the measurements without the slightest idea that measurement is being made.

In this respect communicability is protopostulatory in both objective and subjective science. As I indicated in "Postulates of Behaviorism" (Stephenson, 1953), spatial and temporal assumptions are protopostulatory in science. In subjectivity, traditionally considered, the space in which a person's experience is placed is isolated from the space in which he moves about among things and people: it was described by Egon Brunswik (1949) as "encapsulation" of experience. Self-psychologists also put "private worlds" in each of us with a world of real things around us. Everywhere, I wrote...

> ...these spaces or worlds or the like are isolated from one another by impossible barriers placed there by definition, implication, or postulation. (Stephenson, 1953: 116)

A psychologist whose work I greatly admire, J.R. Kantor, grasped the need for a monistic space, the same for all empirical propositions (Kantor, 1933); and A.F. Bentley (1954) was saying that psychology was unlikely to prosper unless it could "formulate or accept non-isolationity as its basic postulate in this matter of spatial representation." It was from this standpoint that our theory of communicability took shape. In both objective and subjective sciences there is commonality of communicability--both use the same language to touch reality. *The language is quantum, or factor, theory for each.* Reality has to be grasped in both sciences by submission to what

Polanyi called "personal knowledge," meaning that "self" can be rendered nugatory in subjective and objective science alike.

The commonality is supported by the basic theories involved in the two sciences, quantum theory in physics and factor theory in subjective science. Quantum theory prepared the way for atom-smashing accelerators, where there was no possibility for probing the structure and function of subatomic particles except to acknowledge that, though no doubt lawful, so many possibilities exist in the heart of atoms that only technique can penetrate what goes with what. So it is for subjectivity. Its theory of communicability is the line of advance Sir Cyril Burt (1940) presaged, but ignored as metaphysics: Its key, and the way into advanced knowledge of subjectivity, is operant factor structure.

For this, operant factor structure, we had to forego a natural tendency, in factor theory, to place the onus of operancy upon purely mathematical considerations. But, as for nuclear physics, where the mathematics merely opens the way to nature, so it is for operant factor structure; it opens the way in this case to communicability for all matters self-referent. We had to admit that mathematics alone, i.e., factor theory alone, cannot solve the problem of what is real in subjectivity. Recourse has to be made to the acceptance of a lawful condition, that of *schemata: Operant factors are schematical, and this is the first law of subjective science.* Thus, an interpretative process continues as essential in Q methodology, and indeed as of primary importance in it in this respect, that no operant condition could be accepted without approval of it as schematical.

Communicability makes possible a monistic space for science, objective and subjective alike: Interpretation is merely one function in a monistic space.

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How can continuity be realized? Without which the greatest achievements lose much of their value. I agree that the immutable church does not solve the difficulty. Again I think the solution must be within, not without, but how to envisage this correctly I do not know, except that we are to some extent, all of us, what the great minds of the past have made us. (Kurt Koffka)