A famous quote: *the limits of my language are the limits of my world.*

My theme is **situated semantics.**

1

Signs are qualitatively present "empirical" events/entities that "signify" or "radiate." I chain these words together, for instance, which "radiate" what I "want to say." As I reread them, I judge them "good enough" as articulations of "the world as I find it." I presuppose that I share this world with you. I hope that these words will "radiate" for you in a way not too unlike the way they radiate for me. I judge that many other inscriptions would accomplish approximately the same purpose. The "meaning" I want to "convey" in traditional passenger-vehicle terms is the blurry equivalence class of these concrete speech acts. This "equivalence class" is itself a compact way to indicate a "concrete" or "qualitative" conception of "meaning." There is an "it" that I want to communication *only* because there are many ways to say this "it."

2

My ontology is an *emphatically situated* logical positivism. Perhaps its radical crux is a questioning of what I mean by the word "true." I have come to believe that the use of words like "true" and "truth" and "verification" is essentially an expression of **belief.** Such a belief has serious consequences. The notion of "what *really* happened" becomes questionable.

Those who have strong beliefs about an event will *present* these beliefs as an articulation of What Really Happened.

The notion of truth as correspondence seems to me to presuppose the essence of dualism, which is perhaps expressible in terms of belief and truth.

This dualism of belief and truth almost forces us into an elaboration of such dualism. The situation-as-articulated-by-Joe becomes an epiphenomenon, a lossy uncertain approximation.

The object-as-experienced-by-Lucy tends to become a psychical entity, essentially disconnected from the object's genuine being, which transcends not only Lucy but *all* "experiences" of the object.

The object-as-it-really-is has an "absolute solidity" understood to be independent from all belief and all qualitative presence. The object-as-it-really-is — a perfectly External object — functions as a truth-maker — as what distinguishes some beliefs from others as more "true" or less "false."

3

But I "live" in *my* belief. I understand others to "live" in their belief.

Here I use "belief" as the articulable "structure" of world-from-point-of-view. In other words, belief is the "intelligible form" of a "face" of the world. This "face" is an "ontological ego" not because it is in any way "inside" the subject understood as a container of epiphenomenal representations but *only* because its form is the "belief" of the associated liguistic-empirical ego.

I "live" in my belief because articulated beliefs are my own descriptions (as empirical-linguistic-normative ego) of the world we share.

4

When I say that an object like a fire-hydrant is "real" in the pragmatic sense, what do I mean ? What do *I* mean ? *The limits of my language are the limits of my world.* From this alone, you might say, we get something like Mill's phenomenalism.

I have seen and leaned on and photographed this fire-hydrant. I may think that my daydreams are in the world, also, but I don't currently think they are accesible to others like this fire-hydrant is accessible to others.

I just this fire-hydrant to a publicly accessible (traditionally) empirical object. But what do I mean ? Anyone could see it. Anyone could touch it. I believe that any human could see it, touch etc. They need only get their sense organs close enough.

I also believe, for instance, that *if* someone's car collided with it, *then* their car would be damaged, and that those around would hear the crash.

5

Kant used an example for humans had landed on the moon. If I claim "empirically" that the moon is inhabited by humans, then I mean that such inhabitants *would* become qualitatively present to explores. I can make such a claim before such an investigation is possible. The qualitative signs I use to do so already involve the "signitive" and vague imaginative presence of these inhabitants as conditionally also perceptually present.

6

Many philosophers have postulated Matter as "under" or "behind" qualitative presence as its obscure "cause." If they were only positing something like electrons, their claim would be physical rather than metaphysical. It would be explicitly subject to empirical investigation. Scientists could debate whether or not these postulated electrons helped them build a coherent and economic nomological-deductive model.

But postulations of "matter" in the non-physical, ontological sense tend to demote experience to a secondary status. Experience, once the criterion, becomes secondary — less "real" than

the invention postulated to explain it.

This is a forgetting of our situatedness. *Experience is world is reality.* My own existence is "immediate." I don't just call apples "red." That redness is present with the apple. I have to personally appropriate the tradition of physics or mathematics. All "objective" knowledge is interwoven with the rest of my situated existence.

What I may come to call a "hallucination" is real in the sense of qualitatively present. But I have come to categorize it as not available perceptually to others.

7

As a practical, cooperative animal, I learn to call "real" only what I take to be reliably available to others. We all learn to do this. We learn the concept of What Really Happened. We learn the concept of The Truth.

It is in our practical interest to *forget and ignore* our situatedness.

We learn to think of a Public True Reality in terms of the ideal belief ("Truth") of an omniscient narrator.

We come to believe in The Past, What Really Happened. We come to believe in a reality that is conceptually articulated without an articulator. We come to believe that our own sense-making is "outside" of "the made sense." This "made sense" is the belief that structures a "face" of the world.

8

Because I believe that there is only situated belief, my entire ontology is **owned** ("authentic") as indeed "just my belief." But I develop this belief (this ontological system) within the constraint of philosophical norms as they manifest themselves to **me.**

This kind of approach is often accused of anthropocentrism. I don't exactly plead guilty to that charge. But I ask my fellow human accusers whether the "sin" of "anthropocentrism" isn't itself an issue between humans ? I wouldn't mind meeting friendly non-human philosophers, but I take myself, for now, to address my fellow humans. How are we to understand the empirical except in terms of the qualitative presence of the world, which we understand in terms associated with human eyes and ears ?

If I imagine a puppy or an alien "having the world" through such quality-presence, then I project some analogue of the world as present for me. I "work outward" from what is most immediate and real. I could say most immediate and real for me, but that's redundant.

Truth talk tends to *hide* from the implicit "I believe" that could be attached to every always-situated claim.

9

If I doubt the concept of Truth and What Really Happened, I do not mean : *the truth is there is no truth.* I do not mean: *what really happened is that nothing particular really happened.*

Early perspectivists and phenomenalists were sometimes incoherent or used awkward paradoxical expressions. I think that "truth dualists" also couldn't help but interpret their speech acts except with the "regime of truth."

If one assumes that philosophical speech is necessarily an attempt to speak The Truth, then even criticisms of this assumption are easily misread in terms of the criticized assumption.

I speculate that Protagoras was a radical redundancy theorist. Only fragments are left, and this seems like a coherent interpretation to me. "Everything is true." This is perhaps an awkward attempt to say that there is only belief, and that we "live" this belief. One is tempted to add "as truth," but this "truth" is exactly what causes confusion.