

IN THE FOOTPRINTS OF A GIANT: THE HEURISTIC PHILOSOPHY* OF MICHAEL
POLANYI AND HUMANISTIC SCHOLARSHIP IN SOCIOLOGY

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Reflexive Statement

I discovered Polanyi's work via the circuituous route of others' footnotes. The authors of these footnotes displayed a clarity of thought and passion of conviction that I admired. However, the inherited wisdom of my sociological education proscribed emulation. Gathering courage from precedent I gradually traced my way back to Polanyi who offered an epistemological shelter consonant with my "personal knowledge." This shelter had an immediate impact: expanding my horizon of inquiry and endowing my prose with a surer voice. Further, since rancor and true reflexivity are mutually exclusive, it offered deliverance from the bitterness of the internecine battles within our discipline. But my home is not yet a community. Without dialogue, my understanding of Polanyi must remain shallow. Polanyi himself had few kind words for sociology which he regarded as thoroughly jaundiced by objectivism. Satisfactory standards of verification or validation for humanistic studies in sociology can only be articulated within a community of commitment. This essay must therefore be regarded as an incomplete preface.

The "New Humility" Within the Philosophy of Science

The desirability of humanistic approaches to understanding and resolving social problems has been widely affirmed on both humanitarian and pragmatic grounds. However the recent emergence of a "new humility" within the philosophy of science also provides an epistemological warrant for the development of humanistic social sciences (cf. Koch, 1964; Roche, 1973). Constructive readings of Winch, Kuhn, Feyerabend, and parts of Toulmin and Lakatos; and cautious re-readings of Vico, Dilthey, and the latter Wittgenstein may be seen as immediately relevant to the quest.

The intent of the present essay is modest. It confines itself to an examination of selected aspects of the work of an acknowledged titan in contemporary efforts to reconstruct the firmaments of metascience: the late Michael Polanyi. No definitive exegesis of texts is promised. Rather, the

*Description of Polanyi's theory of knowledge as "heuristic philosophy" is adopted from Gelwick (1977).

footprints of this giant are traced in the hope of opening a forum for continuing sociological dialogue.

With few exceptions, even those sociologists who enthusiastically celebrate the liberative potential of "the Kuhnian thesis" (cf. Kuhn, 1970) evidence little familiarity with Polanyi's heuristic philosophy.¹ This is especially puzzling since Kuhn (1963) freely acknowledges that his notion of the centrality of paradigms is a derivative of Polanyi's analysis of the "tacit dimension" of knowledge.² Like Kuhn, Polanyi amasses extensive historical and biographical data on the processes of scientific discovery which discredit the objectivist assumptions of Baconian methodology. However, whereas Kuhn is reluctant to extend the implications of his findings beyond the realm of the natural sciences, Polanyi is less timid. He explicitly rejects the ideal of scientific detachment. He contends that the influence of this false ideal upon the exact sciences has been negligible because scientists have disregarded its dictates. However he maintains, "it exercises a destructive influence in biology, psychology and sociology and falsifies our whole outlook far beyond the domain of science" (1958:ii). Contra Kuhn, Polanyi (1961) asserts that it is not enough to disprove the objectivist ideal. A new theory of knowledge must be formulated to explain what it is in the nature of scientific knowing that allows the creative intellect to grasp a reality which is incongruous with existing paradigms. Polanyi's conception of "personal knowledge" and his explorations of the "tacit dimension" outline the constituents of a new ("Post-Critical") epistemology.

Richard Gelwick portrays the scale of change in the theory of knowledge sought by Polanyi as itself "paradigmatic": "As much as Copernicus changed the former worldview by making the earth revolve around the sun, Polanyi is changing it by making all knowledge revolve around the responsible person" (1977:56). The old paradigm separated logic and psychology and tried to understand the nature of reasoning and inference without reference to the cognitive skills of the scientist. Gelwick suggests that it is precisely the revolutionary character of Polanyi's departure which makes the task of understanding his work "at first difficult and demanding" (1970:xv). Some prominent philosophers have failed or refused to understand Polanyi's work because it evolved outside (and in violation) of established conventions of academic philosophy.³ However even sympathetic readers are not spared. Describing his first encounter with Personal Knowledge, William Poteat writes,

. . . the text keeps intimating a new kind of sense. It is a sense which we distrust, which perhaps we even fear insofar as we rely on our inherited models of intellectual probity or existential stability, yet a sense which, insofar as we have already begun, however tentatively, to slip moorings to these inherited models,

resonates with moral and intellectual passions . . . the confusion is not a superficial one, not merely an intellectual non-confrontation, not a loss of direction upon paths, which however new, have familiar signposts, but rather that kind of deep disorientation that cuts to the very heart of one's personal existence . . . if one does not find it exasperating one has not really read it! (1968:3-4),

Jaded by the unnecessary entanglements of Parsonian transmogorifications of language, humanistic sociologists may be suspicious of a perspective which requires so many prefatory qualifications, ammendments and disclaimers. However what we encounter here is not a problem of jargon. Polanyi's lexicon of special terms is small. The disorientation results from the challenge that each reader faces in confronting his or her own residual, but deeply entrenched, positivistic assumptions. And this is also the essential prefatory challenge of all versions of humanistic sociology.

Discovery as a Model for a Humanistic Theory of Knowledge

The inadequacy of the prevailing assumptions of the behavioral sciences to the task of analyzing the phenomena of discovery has been widely demonstrated (cf. Chomsky, 1969; Koestler, 1964). In his neglected classic, The Measure of Man (1953), Joseph Wood Krutch describes the tyranny that the "Idol of the Laboratory" has exercised over the social sciences. The underlying assumption of this idol is that all social phenomena which are not amenable to measurement and experimentation by the same methods which have demonstrated their utility in dealing with mechanical phenomena must be dismissed as illusionary. Krutch contends many psychologists and sociologists denounce as anthropomorphism "every attempt to interpret even human behavior on the assumption that men are men" (1953:106). Behavioristic methodologies require that they proceed as if humans were "animals at most, even if not mere machines in the end" (1953:106). Polanyi inverts the idol of the laboratory. Responding to the methodolatory of the behaviorists, he writes,

Behaviorists teach that in observing an animal we must refrain above all from trying to imagine what we would do if placed in the animal's position. I suggest, on the contrary, that nothing at all could be known about an animal that would be of the slightest interest to physiology, and still less to psychology, except by following the opposite maxim of identifying ourselves with a center of action in the animal and criticizing its performance by standards set up for it by ourselves (1958:364).

Polanyi's theory of knowledge is frankly anthropocentric. Further, Polanyi asserts that all systems of human knowledge--even those which proclaim objectivist epistemologies--are also anthropocentric:

For, as human beings, we must inevitably see the universe from a center lying within ourselves and speak about it in terms of a human language shaped by the exigencies of human intercourse. Any attempt rigorously to eliminate our human perspective from our picture of the world must lead to absurdity (1958:3).

Within the space-time continuums of truly objectivist perspectives, the existence of the human species would hardly be acknowledged. On the scale of evolutionary time, the entire span of human existence is equivalent to only a second. Rigorous objectivism would therefore prohibit the study of the human species on the grounds of triviality. Similarly if the criterion for the objective study of the universe was mass, scientific study would be almost exclusively devoted to the study of interstellar dust and humankind would not merit notice even in a thousand million lifetimes of scientific research.

Polanyi dismisses the objectivist separation of fact and value as untenable. He contends every act of knowing includes priorities and appraisals, and all intelligible statements presuppose evaluation and judgment. But he does not regard these personal constituents of knowing as imperfections. To the contrary, Polanyi believes they form the intelligent center of knowledge. Whether manifested on theoretical or practical levels of discourse, all knowledge is an extension of faculties that are prelinguistic in origin and guided by personal and communal satisfactions such as beauty, elegance, and conviviality which are only semi-articular. It is this "tacit dimension," the sub-lingual gestalt, that is the foundation upon which the articular structures of mathematics, art, ritual, and science are built. Yet in Polanyi's view, the personal participation of the knower in all acts of understanding does not make that understanding subjective. Understanding is not an arbitrary act or a passive experience. It is a responsible search for universal validity: "Such knowing is indeed objective in the sense of establishing contact with a hidden reality; a contact that is defined as the condition for anticipating an indeterminate range of yet unknown (and perhaps yet inconceivable) true implications" (1958:vii). Subsidiary awareness (enlisting the tacit powers through which "we know more than we can tell") guides the knower to the integration of a coherent pattern, an "indwelling." Thus personal constituents shape all factual knowledge: our knowing is always a form of indwelling. Consequently the traditional dichotomies of Western philosophy which separate mind and body, reason and evidence, subject and object, the knower and the known, are unnecessary and misleading. "Personal knowledge" is a fusion of the personal and the objective which "implies the claim that man can transcend his own subjectivity by striving passionately to fulfill his personal obligations to universal standards" (1958:17).

Scientific knowing, like other forms of knowing, is a value-laden social enterprise. Its distinctive character is largely due to the fact that it is

embedded in an articulate framework--a tradition. Young people who are socialized into the scientific tradition accept it by submitting to its authority and by living the emotions it teaches them to feel: "They transmit these emotions in their turn to succeeding generations, on whose responding fervour the edifice relies for its continued existence" (1958:173-174).⁴ The acceptance of a particular form of articulate framework as a mental dwelling place is arrived at gradually. All such acceptances are based to some extent upon the content of personal experience. However the relation of the articulate system of the natural sciences to the facts of experience is more specific than that of mathematics, art or ritual. It is not a scientific excess to speak of the relationship of the articulate structure of science to experiential facts as "verifiable"; while the method through which articulate systems other than science are tested and accepted can be described as "validation":

Our personal participation is in general greater in a validation than in a verification. The emotional coefficient of assertion is intensified as we pass from the sciences to the neighbouring domains of thought. But both verification and validation are everywhere an acknowledgment of commitment: they claim the presence of something real and external to the speaker. As distinct from both of these, subjective experiences can only be said to be authentic, and authenticity does not involve a commitment in the sense in which both verification and validation do (1958:202).⁵

Thus verification involves satisfying the prevailing standards and practices of an established scientific community. These criteria (or paradigmatic structures) are subject to change over long periods of time. Therefore the truth claims of all scientific statements are contingent upon the judgment of the scientific community. Within objectivist perspectives, existential definitions of scientific truth result in a hopeless nihilism:

Then law is no more than what the courts will decide, art but an emollient of nerves, morality but a convention, tradition but an inertia, God but a psychological necessity. Then man dominates a world in which he himself does not exist. For with his obligations he has lost his voice and his hope, and been left behind meaningless to himself. (1958:380).

In contrast Polanyi's heuristic perspective asserts that it is in the creative capacity to establish articulate systems of knowledge that humankind manifests its evolutionary supremacy as well as its highest moral achievement: "It is the image of humanity immersed in potential thought that I find revealing" (1966:91). Polanyi describes science as a "republic" which is bound together in a commitment to values: loyalty, common traditions, and a sense of ethical responsibility (1962:54). He defines human greatness as the acceptance of a

"calling" within a "society of explorers" who believe in the possibility of discovering hidden aspects of reality: "for human greatness can be recognized only by submission to it and thus belongs to the family of things which exist only for those committed to them" (1958:380).

Re-Opening the Neo-Kantian Debate

Polanyi's position eliminates the sharp distinctions that have been drawn between the natural and social sciences by the great humanistic sociologists of the past, Dilthey, Znaniecki, Sorokin, and MacIver. These thinkers argue that human meaning and intention elevate cultural facts to a transcendent level which cannot be fully penetrated by the assumptions of mechanist or objectivist philosophies. They do not dispute the appropriateness of these philosophies as guides to probes of physical phenomena. Their primary interest is to defend the integrity of cultural facts. However Polanyi establishes that neither field is wholly objective nor wholly subjective in its knowledge and methodological assumptions. On this point Polanyi explicitly expresses his position vis-a-vis the hermeneutic methodology Dilthey outlined for the human studies. Whereas Dilthey sought to defend only the human studies against the absolutist pretensions of objectivism; Polanyi's program is more radical. Acknowledging his debt to Dilthey's verstehen philosophy, Polanyi nevertheless points out that Dilthey's program "was based throughout on the exclusion of the natural sciences from its scope" (1959:102). Thus where Dilthey asserted that Comte and the positivists and J. S. Mill and the empiricists "mutilate historical reality in order to adapt it to the ideas and methods of the natural sciences" (1944:32); Polanyi would respond that the ideas of these objectivist philosophers also mutilate scientific reality. Further, Polanyi would contend that this mutilation (or "moral inversion") lies at the root of the sense of anomie which characterizes scientifically advanced cultures throughout the world.

Polanyi re-opens the neo-Kantian debate which established the distinction between nomothetic and ideographic knowledge and provided the auspices for Max Weber's articulation of the ideal of value-neutrality in sociological inquiry. Polanyi contends that the prime architect of the debate, Wilhelm Windelband, has been misread (1959:100-102). According to Polanyi, Windelband never claimed that reality could be divided into the subjects of nomothetic and ideographic knowledge as the organizational conventions of academic departments now assume. To the contrary, Windelband maintained that the two forms of knowledge are logically distinct parts of all knowledge. Thus Polanyi (like Dilthey and Simmel) rejects the outcome of the neo-Kantian compromise.⁶ Polanyi asserts contra Rickert and Weber that the ideal of value-free social science is false. He aligns himself with thinkers like Troeltsch, Meinecke, and Collingwood who contend that the study of humankind necessarily includes moral valuation.

In essence, Polanyi argues that the critical path outlined by Kant and the empiricists has been so successfully pursued that it has undermined its own grounding:

We have plucked from the Tree a second apple which has for ever imperilled our knowledge of Good and Evil, and we must learn to know these qualities henceforth in the blinding light of our new analytical powers. . . . Innocently, we had trusted that we could be relieved of all personal responsibility for our beliefs by objective criteria of validity--and our own critical powers have shattered this hope (1958: 268).

The critical tradition equated belief and subjectivity, knowledge and objectivity.⁷ The post-critical perspective outlined by Polanyi recognizes belief as the root of objective knowledge. It is not merely a form of emotionalism. Belief is a legitimate cognitive power: the essential mooring of all demonstrable knowledge. And, scholarship embedded in values is not defended in a vocabulary of emotion. It is affirmed on logical grounds--"in the blinding light of our new analytical powers."⁸

Objectivism and Authoritarian Politics

Polanyi's philosophical studies were not born within the halls of ivy. They evolved in response to the threat to free thought that he tacitly perceived in the prospect of state planning of scientific inquiry--a prospect that was encouraged by proceedings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science and the Association of Scientific Workers in Britain during the early 1940's. Polanyi attributes the depth of his conviction to an earlier exchange he had with Bukharin in which the Soviet theoretician predicted that successive five-year plans would ultimately lead to the total eclipse of "pure" or speculative forms of scientific research. Polanyi was far too sensitive to the limits of his own scientific foresight and that of such eminent colleagues as Einstein, Russell, and Haber to entrust the planning of scientific inquiry to the caprice of political authorities.

He regarded the intellectual horizon produced by objectivism as not only philosophically incorrect; but also politically dangerous. The fusion ("dynamo-coupling") of this mistaken conception of the laws of scientific achievement with laudable moral passions toward social reform provides the groundings for the establishment of authoritarian social systems. Impelled by moral passions, scientific ideologies declare themselves immune from moral criticism: "Any criticism of its scientific part is rebutted by the moral passions behind it, while any moral objections to it are coldly brushed aside by invoking the inexorable verdict of its scientific findings" (1958:230). Objectivism undermines the moral restraints which generate social solidarity and provide a basis

for self-criticism within social systems. Attempts to objectify values mute their resonance: beauty and love become emotions; justice and honor become forms of conformity; and truth becomes the measurement of quantities (cf. Gelwick, 1977:12-13). Polanyi maintains that only a new theory of knowledge which recognizes the weight of cultural traditions but also the possibility of transcendence can release humankind from the deformations of the yoke of objectivism.

Some Implications of Polanyi's Perspective for Sociological Scholarship

The conceptual rigor and exhaustive documentation which Polanyi marshals to demonstrate the moral and intellectual dangers of scientism is sufficient warrant to recommend his work to humanist sociologist. In this respect, he has no peer. Polanyi's perspective allows us to retain our commitments to such scientific ideals as coherence, relevance, intellectual rigor, and truth; but it endows us with a radical awareness of the existential contingency of knowing, viz, that all articulate frameworks (including our own) are necessarily partial, incomplete, and subject to rejection or revision. Further, he teaches us that since no articulate framework is ever without presuppositions or fully demonstrable, all forms of scientific dogmatism are perversions of the ideals of science. Within the articulate framework of sociological studies proper, Polanyi's heuristic philosophy allows us to:

- (i). acknowledge that we reside in an "hermeneutic circle";⁹
- (ii). dispense with the fictions of value-free inquiry;¹⁰
- (iii). celebrate human consciousness as an active and passionate form of being, instead of treating it as a passive pawn of external forces;
- (iv). re-define the relationship between the sociologist and his or her subject as "an encounter," perhaps even "discipleship," thereby relinquishing the arrogant objectivist fiction which cast the sociologist in the role of omniscient observer;¹¹
- (v). discard all theories, analogies, and metaphors involving physical reductionism;
- (vi). re-evaluate the importance of analogies, metaphors, and metonymy as constituents of knowledge;
- (vii). replace the impersonal narrative voice of scientific rhetoric with reflexive prose structures;¹²

- (viii). openly embrace the "interesting" rather than the "demonstrable" as our primary criterion for selecting problems;¹³
- (ix). demonstrate the absurdity of debates in which mathematical descriptions of social phenomena are asserted as 'hard' data while descriptions rooted in the universal intent of verstehen are dismissed or diminished by appending the tag, "soft" data;¹⁴ and,
- (x). rebuild bridges to the humanities which can now be regarded as allied rather than alien disciplines.

However Polanyi's perspective also poses some hard questions regarding prevailing practices within the social sciences. The linguistic bind which Polanyi describes (much in the vein of the latter Wittgenstein) raises serious questions as to whether a search for universal verification or validation of personal knowledge can succeed in the social sciences.¹⁵ Polanyi's sociology of knowledge suggests that all sociologies (conservative or radical) bear the scars of their genesis, and that they are therefore always "declarations of loyalty" to the particular nexus of values which provide their auspices (1958:219). Although the value of the search for universal intent is affirmed, the "new humility" with which we must assert our claims is sobering. Acceptance of Polanyi's perspective requires us to drastically modify and perhaps ultimately relinquish our claims to scientific authority. In 1968 Polanyi described "scientific" sociology as an emperor with no clothes and proposed a ten-year moratorium on the word, "scientific": "let us not attribute merit to something by saying, 'This is scientific.' Let's describe its value, its reliability, its penetration and its creativity" (1968a:20).

The "Calling" of the Humanist Sociologist

Polanyi's perspective has been described as a philosophy of reconciliation and hope (cf. Lanagford and Poteat, 1968, see especially Aron:341). Polanyi maintains that a growing number of people in the West and within the Soviet Bloc are beginning to recoil from the moral inversion of objectivism. The most dramatic expressions of this revisionism have occurred in Communist nations: beginning with the rejection of historical materialism by devoted Stalinists in the Petofi Circle precipitating the Hungarian Revolution. It continued to assert itself in various briefs for "socialism with a human face," and has culminated in the heroic sacrifices of individuals like Orlov, Schransky, Bukowsky, Solzhenitsyn, and Sakharov. In the West, it has produced no clear doctrine but nevertheless manifests itself in a general decline of utopianism, in the sporadic emergence of populist movements, in the resurgence of religious sentiments, and in the renewal of interest in national cultures. Recently, it too has assumed a more dramatic cast: in the

revisionary fervor the impact of the Solzhenitsyn affair has excited among young leftist intellectuals like Bernard-Henri Levy, Andre Glucksmann, and Jean-Marie Benoist. And most significantly, at present we are beginning to see the emergence of a revisionism with a truly international character in the programs of groups like Amnesty International and Writers and Scholars International whose agendas are shaped by opposition to the arbitrary acts of oppression committed by hegemonic powers on both sides of the ideological spectrum. Polanyi contends such humanistic revisionism is progressively undermining the resonance of all absolutist ideologies, and may contain the seeds for "a new flowering of Europe" (1969a:38).

Since science remains the most reliable form of intellectual authority in the world today, Polanyi maintains a "humanistic revision can only be secured by revising the claims of science itself" (1969d:46). He regards the "republic of science," when it is functioning at its best, as the most satisfactory model yet devised for a free society. But he acknowledges that even at its best, the republic is imperfect. It sustains orthodoxy, requires a form of censorship, and is susceptible to error (1969b:53). It is saved only by the tension inherent in its dual commitment to conformity as well as discovery, orthodoxy as well as originality.

My own view is less optimistic. A child of the sixties, I am preoccupied with the dark side of the dialectic--what Arthur Koestler refers to as the "blackout shutter" through which even the most original minds see only by not seeing (1958:14). Our limited perceptual capacity seems to require suppression of aspects of reality: to sustain a "Janus-headed" view of the universe and to contain an opening to the disciplined double-think which tempts all orthodoxies.¹⁶ Consider how this blackout shutter allowed nineteenth century humanists to retreat from the radical implications of their own doctrines by shielding their racist and imperialist lapses with elitist abstractions, and rendering the sexist exploitations of their daily lives invisible.

The minimal challenge a Western humanistic revision must fulfill is to articulate the groundings for what Merleau-Ponty has described as a "humanism in-extension" (1969:176). The constituents of this revision transcend European culture and require phrasing of the vocabulary of reconciliation and hope in the highly problematic terms of a flowering of world culture(s). Although I believe Polanyi has cleared the path for a humanistic revision, I am less confident that we will find the collective wisdom and courage to confront the future "in the blinding light of our new analytical powers." Nevertheless I, too, affirm the value of the search: the struggle for a viable revision.

Santayana contended, "The humanist would not deserve his name if he were not in sympathy with the suppressed sides of human nature; . . . and he must

change his aversions as the ruling convention changes its idols" (1968:129). Polanyi describes himself as a "scandal-monger bringing to light a history and interpretation of discovery suppressed by the objectivist distortion of the scientific quest (cf. Gelwick, 1977:27). The calling of the humanist sociologist might be similarly conceived. S/he too is a scandal-monger committed to exhuming the suppressed sides of truth.¹⁷ This commitment is not born of undisciplined malice toward orthodoxy nor of relativistic nihilism, but of a passion for truth fostered by a tradition professing the value of free inquiry.¹⁸

In Beyond Belief (1970), Robert Bellah urged sociologists to re-orient their focus from objects and begin to explore "the cities of the interior" mapped by Polanyi's theory of knowledge. As we draw near to the close of a decade which has been repeatedly described as Narcissistic (cf. Lasch, 1977); it is prudent to reiterate that Polanyi's cities of the interior are not private refuges. They are the nurturing grounds of community and commitment.¹⁹ For Polanyi affirms the conviction of his colleague and friend, T. S. Eliot, that the most individual and innovative ideas we have are those in which tradition--"the dead poets"--assert their immortality through us: "a sense of the timeless as well as the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer more acutely conscious of his place in time, his own contemporaneity" (Eliot, 1956:894).²⁰

. . . this is as in science: Copernicus and Kepler told Newton where to find discoveries unthinkable to themselves (Polanyi, 1969b:67).

FOOTNOTES

1. Conspicuous exceptions to this generalization include Aron (1968); Bellah (1970); Gouldner (1970; 1976); and Shils (in shaping the editorial policy of Minerva). Merton (1976:156-157) recently noted the similarity of his concept of "sociological ambivalence" to Polanyi's distinction between focal awareness and tacit knowledge.
2. Kuhn writes, "Mr. Polanyi himself has provided the most extensive and developed discussion I know of the aspect of science which led me to my apparently strange usage [of paradigm]. Mr. Polanyi repeatedly emphasizes the indispensable role played in research by what he calls the 'tacit component' of scientific knowledge. This is the inarticulate and perhaps inarticulable part of what the scientist brings to his research problem: it is the part learned not by precept but principally by example and practice" (Kuhn, 1963:362; quoted by Gelwick, 1977:128).

3. Brodbeck's (1960) review of Personal Knowledge in the American Sociological Review is indicative of the pejorative responses the book provoked in many quarters.
4. Polanyi departs from the generally accepted view that modern science is founded upon a total rejection of authority. He points out that while during the formative period of modern science, the rejection of authority was the battle-cry of its apologists, Bacon, Descartes, and the Royal Society; their target was an adversary long since defeated. Today science itself has become an established authority with a formidable tradition spanning three centuries (1969b).
5. The jargon is deliberately Sartian, or more precisely, anti-Sartian. Grene (1969:xii) presents a succinct exposition of the breach separating Sartre and Polanyi.
6. Both Simmel and Dilthey insisted that there were instances (primarily in aesthetics) in which intuition could be regarded as a legitimate form of cognition. Hodges (1969) gives a good analysis of Dilthey's position in this debate. Weber (1975) provides a detailed account of Dilthey and Simmel's differences with Rickert and Max Weber.
7. Locke and Kant allowed loopholes in their systems for faith. However Strauss (1952) suggests these loopholes may have been dictated as much by the threat of persecution as by conviction.
8. This is a crucial point since some of the early supports of humanistic psychology, e.g. Koch, have renounced the emotionalism and subjective excesses they perceive in the present directions of that movement. And humanistic sociology has also become the target of a similar criticism leveled by a former ally (cf. Wrong, 1976:1-2).
9. The eloquence of Von Humboldt's definition of the "hermeneutic circle" remains unsurpassed: "Man lives with his objects chiefly--in fact, since his feeling and acting depends on his perceptions, one might say exclusively--as language presents them to him. By the same process whereby he spins language out of his own being, he ensnares himself in it; and each language draws a magic circle around the people to which it belongs, a circle from which there is no escape save by stepping out of it into another" (quoted from the German in Cassirer, 1946:16). Radnitzky (1972) provides a perceptive exposition of the breach separating positivistic and dialectical-hermeneutic approaches to the human studies. Polanyi responds to the linguistic bind by asserting, ". . . if I cannot speak except from inside a language, I may at least speak of my language in a

manner consistent with the situation" (1958:253). This very Wittgensteinian statement points to a promising area of convergence. The similarity of Polanyi's concept of "community" and Wittgenstein's "form of life" is immediately apparent. For a skilled preliminary exploration, see Daly (1968). Gadamer's (1975; 1976) hermeneutics also suggests a path of convergence which remains wholly unexplored. Both Polanyi and Gadamer break radically with the hermeneutic tradition of Schleiermacher and Dilthey insofar as each recognizes presuppositions as positive constituents rather than impediment of understanding. Gadamer's primary concern is to explore the hermeneutic of all forms of understanding and to move away from the preoccupation with formal methods which he believes has distorted contemporary approaches to the interpretative process. Polanyi, of course, retains a primary concern with the process of scientific knowing; but assumes no absolute discontinuity between the cognitive skills of the scientist and non-scientist. For Polanyi the distinctive character of the scientific vision is the result of the fact that it has been focused by training in the priorities set by a particular scientific community (1946:10).

10. Aron provides an illuminating comparison of the positions of Polanyi and Max Weber on the issue of values in scientific inquiry (1968).
11. Cicourel (1974) who speaks of the subject as a "partner" in the research process, and Gouldner (1976) who describes him (or her!) as a "brother" sociologist, approach the sort of "reverence" envisioned by Polanyi as the appropriate stance for engaging human subjects.
12. It is significant that Personal Knowledge is written in the first person singular.
13. Davis explores the extent to which "the interesting" is already the covert operative principle of selection within the social sciences (1971). And P. B. Medawar notes, "What scientists do has never been the subject of a scientific, that is, an ethnological inquiry. It is no use looking to scientific 'papers,' for they not merely conceal but actively misrepresent the reasoning that goes into the work they describe. . . . Only unstudied evidence will do--and that means listening at the keyhole [which reveals] . . . scientists are [not] hunting for facts, still less . . . they are [not] busy formulating 'laws.' Scientists are building explanatory structures, telling stories which are scrupulously tested to see if they are stories about real life" (1967:152). It is, of course, an elementary 'law' of rhetoric that only interesting stores are repeated.
14. For an especially cogent explication of the logical absurdity of such arguments, see Polanyi, 1969c:179.

15. Although the "form of life" of the particular linguistic community may articulate criteria for verifying or validating social facts; whether that criteria can be adequately translated into another linguistic frame is questionable. Hegy (1974:339) builds a strong case in support of the position that sociology is "a language which uses, often in a specialized sense, concepts borrowed from the language of the society to which it belongs. Therefore, these concepts (like power, authority, social class, power elite, etc.) have a meaning which can be considered objective only in reference to this particular society: the 'objective' definition of power, authority or social class in French would be considered ideological in American sociology and vice-versa." In addition, the scientific claims of sociology are further compromised by the lack of determinism which is implied by the "three-storied" logical structure Polanyi considered appropriate to disciplines which must take into account judgments and volition (1958:344-345).
16. Studies in cognitive psychology and linguistics lend additional weight to Koestler's notion. Bruner (1966:123) contends that the possibility of cognitive overload requires that perception become selection. Chomsky (1966:123-131) also maintains that we see selectively through a screen of linguistic categories. Similarly, phenomenologists use the concept, "horizon," to suggest that conscious knowledge is a ray of light surrounded by a shadow world of unexplored possibilities (e.g. Schutz, 1970:318).
17. Additional precedent for this definition of the humanist sociologist's "calling" is provided by the evolving "tradition" of humanistic sociology inaugurated by Berger (1963) and elaborated by Gouldner (1970) and O'Neill (1972).
18. Polanyi (1969a:26-36) notes that where Western scholars invoke the concept of "truth" hesitantly, Eastern European revisionists unambiguously define their struggle as a "fight for truth."
19. Even contemporary American sociology is not wholly devoid of a common idiom. In spite of the existence of warring factions and conflicting theory-groups, a common elementary vocabulary is present, there is a shared concern with rule-governed behavior (cf. Winch, 1958), and the same facts seem to be expressed within the vernaculars of different theories (cf. Aron, 1969:359).
20. Polanyi participated in "The Moot," a discussion group which also included Eliot, Karl Mannheim, and H. A. Hodges (Dilthey's translator and chief expostulator in the English-speaking world). The ideas of these thinkers intersect at many points suggesting a fascinating area of study in the history of the sociology of knowledge.

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