I. A. Richards Selected Works 1919-1938

Volume 9: Collected Shorter Writings 1919-1938

Edited by
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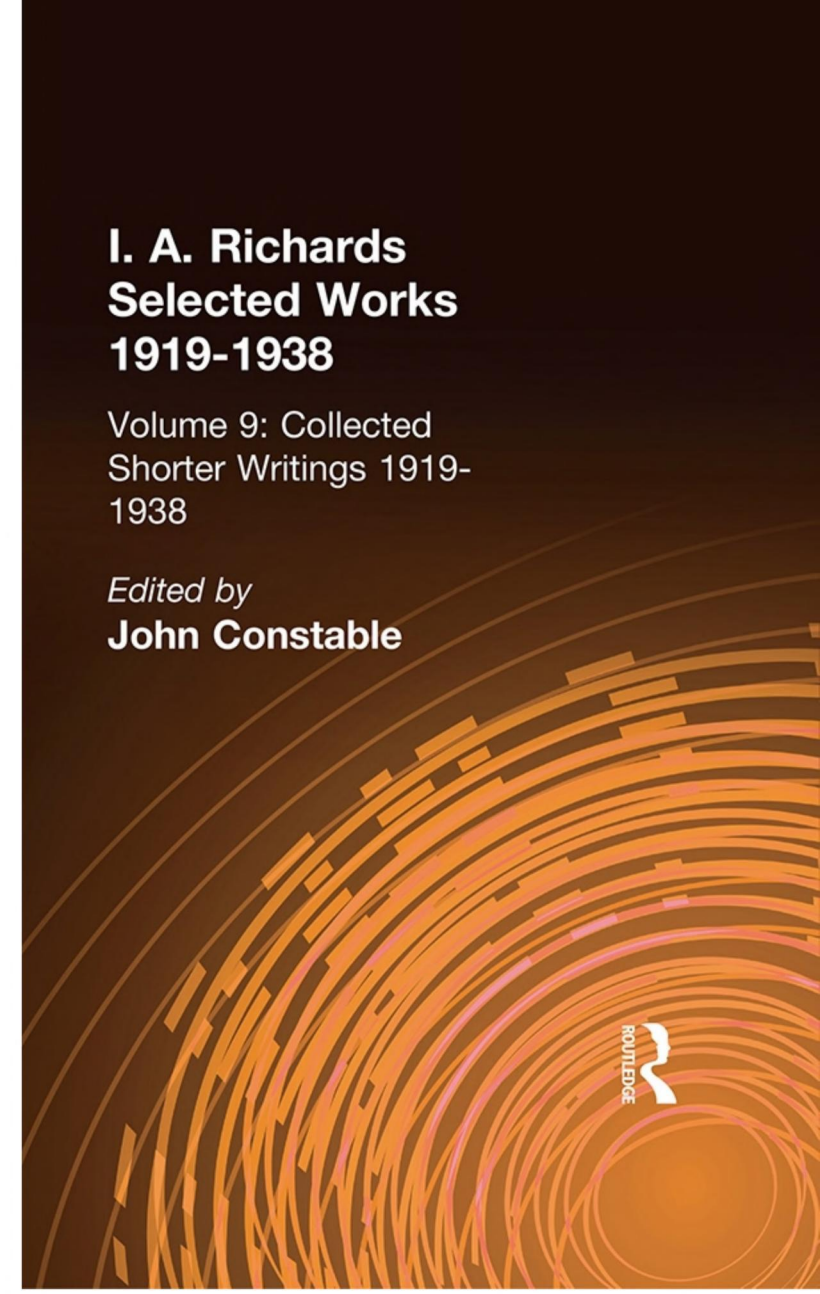

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1 Titles in quotation marks are Richards' own; titles without quotation marks are editorial.

Editorial Note

This volume contains most of the known shorter published works of I. A. Richards between 1919 and 1938, together with a selection from unpublished material in the Richards Collection of Magdalene College, Cambridge. Items reprinted in books, and one or two pieces of lesser interest – prefaces, book reviews, and shorter articles repeating points made at greater length elsewhere in volume form or in other articles – have been excluded. However, in some cases where the journal article has only been partially reprinted by Richards it has been included here, in spite of the repetition of the material that results. For example Richards' review of Stern's *Meaning and Change of Meaning* (1933), his 'Preface to a Dictionary' (1933), and his 'Our Lost Leaders' are all drawn upon for *Basic in Teaching: East and West* (1935) without being completely reused.

A complete checklist of Richards' publications 1919–1938 will be found in Volume 1 of *Selected Worlds of I. A. Richards: Foundations of Aesthetics*.

The text of *Science and Poetry* given in here in Volume 9 is that of the extensively revised edition of 1935. Those needing to consult the widely read and much cited edition of 1926 should refer to Editorial Appendix Three to Volume 3 of *Selected Works of I. A. Richards: Principles of Literary Criticism*, where the original edition is reprinted in full.

The page numbers of the original articles and books have been supplied in the margin of the present text.

COLLECTED SHORTER WRITINGS 1919–1938

Part One:
Articles

Art and Science 1919

‘Communications: Art and Science – I’, *Athenaeum*, No. 4652 (27 June 1919), 534–5. (‘Art and Science – II’, was by H. W. Crundell.)

The analogies discussed by Mr Roger Fry (*Athenaeum* June 6) between art and science are important both for the theory of art and for the theory of science. The problem is one which no one need be ashamed to treat with caution. Yet it is a fair inference that there must be some incompetence about a view of art or of science which allows no clearer exposition of the relations between them than that given in Mr Fry’s article. A more precise statement will certainly run more risk of being wrong, but it will, on the other hand, have a chance of being definitely and recognizably right.

Mr Fry poses the question whether a theory which disregarded facts would have equal value for science with one which agreed with facts. He sees no purely aesthetic reason why it should not. The answer is, of course, dependent upon the kind of theory and of facts which we have in mind. For instance, some of the geometries which are known quite possibly apply to given space; others do not. But the facts which are relevant to the aesthetic value of these theories are not facts of given space, but facts of implication, logical facts. No theory disregarding these would have any aesthetic value. Again, generalizations proper, that is, inductions from observed particulars, must, if they are to have aesthetic value (whether they ever do have any or not is another matter), agree with the particulars they cover. Hypotheses on the other hand, whether they agree with particular facts or not, may have value through the inevitability of the deductions they contain, that is through the logical truths they embody.

The point is that the notion of truth is the decisive notion, not only for the scientific value of theory, but for its aesthetic value as well. It is an indication of a fatal weakness in Mr Fry’s aesthetic that it shuns this notion, the simple notion which is referred to when we say that these remarks of mine are true or false. The reason for this avoidance is, I think, an undue nervousness lest by making use of truth he should be led into non-aesthetic considerations. Stupid people will of course use truth in narrow senses, for presentational verisimilitude for instance, but so will they use sensation, emotion, relation, and pleasure. Any aesthetic worth considering must use truth as a main instrument. To avoid it because in the past it has been foolishly misused is to be the sport of reaction.

Truth (with falsity) is an attribute of propositions. Propositions are what are apprehended. They are not part of our minds, 535 or produced by our minds, but things to which our minds gain access. They are not facts – for we may apprehend what is false, and then there is no fact

for us to apprehend. When a proposition is true, there is, of course, a fact which corresponds, but still the proposition is other than the fact. Nor is a proposition the same as the sensible form by which it is apprehended. A proposition is a complex of terms in relation to one another. The terms can be called ideas provided that no confusion is allowed between images and sensation which are in some sense ‘occurrences in our minds’, and ideas which are not in our minds in this sense, but things which by means of these occurrences the mind gains access to, or thinks of.

We do not, perhaps, ever apprehend propositions except by means of some sensible form, either of words or of imagery or of sensations. We need vehicles by which to approach and gain access to propositions. This is so of all propositions, those with which science as well as those with which art is most concerned. Now science is the systematic connection of propositions. It is, therefore, predominantly interested in those propositions whose connection with other propositions can be traced. The vehicles of science for this reason are composed of signs, words for the most part, arbitrarily assigned as names to defined ideas. Art, on the other hand, is interested in propositions for their own sake, not as interconnected. To this is due the great difference between the ways in which art and science approach propositions, and between the propositions with which they are severally concerned. Those which are most worth contemplating for their own sake are not those whose connections we have the best hope of tracing.

The vehicles with which art approaches propositions are as a rule vastly complex systems, composed of sensations and images of all kinds *and* of the feelings and emotions provoked by and provoking these sensations and images. The whole experience which we call ‘contemplating a work of art’ is the vehicle. Through this we apprehend a proposition. When the work of art is great the proposition is such that in no other way could we apprehend it, and our access to it is so complete that it appears perfectly self-evident and inevitable. It is this kind of knowledge, and not any more or less accidental pleasure which it may afford, which is properly called aesthetic satisfaction.

Now in science the only truths for which much aesthetic value has ever been claimed are those which belong to logic and mathematics, abstract and necessary truths. The explanation of this is to be found in the nature of scientific vehicles. Signs are perfect vehicles for abstract truths, but for no others. Thus it is not only the inevitability of these truths which gives value to their apprehension, but the accident that mathematical symbolism plays the part of the great artist in presenting them through forms by which we may gain most complete and perfect access to them.

The points of most fundamental difference between this view and Mr Fry’s are my substitution of the complete experience called ‘contemplating a work of art’ for the ‘work of art’ in the narrower sense, my consequent inability to split this whole into ‘work of art’ and resultant pleasure or emotion, and my introduction of propositions. It is only, I hold, by reference to propositions that any explanation can

be given to the terms ‘inevitability’ and ‘unity’, as applied in art.

The two theories superficially are violently opposed, yet I am inclined to think that the real differences may not be great. I cannot allow the language of Mr Fry’s second column, for instance, but by a process of translation I can subscribe to the thought. Perhaps Mr Fry may find himself in a similar position with regard to this statement, or perhaps he may disapprove not only of my terminology, but of the thought which I have chosen it to convey.

Emotion and Art 1919

Athenaeum, No. 4655 (18 July 1919), 630–31.

The nouns ‘feeling’ and ‘emotion’, the verb ‘to feel’, the adjective ‘aesthetic’, occur with a frequency of almost hypnotic effect in criticism and theory of art. It would be an excellent thing, then, if somebody understood what in the ordinary contexts these words refer to. It may cause surprise to hint that there can be any doubt about this. Certainly, most critics write as though they knew none, and, I suspect, most readers are too familiar with the phrases which contain them to ask what their meaning is. But a very little analysis of any assertion about works of art and emotions, especially if qualified by the term ‘aesthetic’, will destroy this confidence.

Psychologists have, and will long have, difficulty in deciding whether feeling is a direct relation of the mind to its objects (such as, in some cases, is ‘thinking of’), or a quality of ‘thinkings of’, or a quality of somatic experience causally correlated with an accompanying ‘thinkings of’. I take this last assumption, the James-Lange view, but the points I wish to make could be stated upon any assumption as to the nature of feeling. I shall be concerned with a group of distinctions which any doctrine of feeling must allow for. The assumption may be stated as follow: As we think of this and that, our consciousness throughout varies and is modified as this and that vary. The stuff of consciousness at any moment contains a host of elements contributed by sensations due to visceral and vascular changes. It is believed that every change of thought is accompanied by some degree of general organic change. Add to this the plausible possibility that we have images of these organic sensations just as we have images of tastes and movements. The assumption is that feeling is this bodily sensation and imagery aroused through a complex system of instincts by the things we think of. A mass of this sensation and imagery, of definite internal structure, is, on this assumption, what is referred to as a feeling or emotion. To think of anything by the meditation of such a mass is to feel it; just as to think of anything by means of a visual image is to visualise it. When any sensation or image is a mediating form by which we think of something, then it has meaning, and this something, which may be real or ideal, is its meaning. Sometimes a thing’s meaning is something directly connected with it, as when certain visual sensations mean that the surface we are looking at is green, or certain visceral sensations mean that we have indigestion. At other times the meaning is more remote, as, when hearing a voice, we judge not about the movements of someone’s tongue, but about what is being said; or, feeling disgust, we judge not about our insides, but about the nature of whatever is arousing our disgust.

Now how do emotions come into art? My thesis is that they come in in at least six different ways, and that unless we know which of these is referred to we had better not either make or attend to any assertions about aesthetic emotions and works of art. To display the great differences between the ways in which emotions come in, I must use the distinction between propositions and vehicles. A proposition is what is meant by any sensible form which has a meaning. A vehicle is any sensible form which has a meaning, or gives access to, or places before the mind, a proposition or import.

The first incidence of emotion is simply as part of a vehicle. We may have full acquaintance with the form of a work of art, and yet fail to apprehend it because our state of mind in contemplating it is incomplete. Emotion, which should be directly aroused by the form and which is *necessary* to the apprehension of the import of the form, may be lacking. The form without the emotion may be like half a sentence, conveying nothing. Completed by the emotion, it may suddenly become adequate and convey its meaning. Emotion so occurring is most commonly confused with the meaning (import or proposition) which it helps to convey. It is true that when we have the emotion, we apprehend, if all else is well, the import; but the emotion is no more the import than a teacup is a cup of tea.

The second incidence of emotion is due, when it occurs, to the nature of some imports. Most, but not all, of the imports 631 with which art deals arouse emotion when grasped. The difference between this second case and the other is seen very clearly if we compare the emotions which accompany the reading of any tragedy, which are necessary to the understanding of the tragedy, with the emotions which ensue as the import of the tragedy is understood. The first will probably be painful, will almost certainly be constricting; the second will be emotions of expansion and release. There is a certain uniformity about the latter emotions, which has helped to mislead theorists to the conclusion that the function of art is just to arouse these emotions. That this is a mistake becomes plain when we consider that we can imaginatively and actually arouse these emotions in the absence both of works of art and of the apprehension of imports: directly, that is to say, as a sentimental exercise. With a little practice this becomes quite easy. Such feelings owe their ridiculousness not to any defects as feelings, but to the absence of their really valuable, appropriate causes, apprehensions of imports. To suppose that these feelings are the end and aim of art is like supposing that the end and aim of coal-fires is smoke.

Next we have the emotion which arises from a perception of the perfect fitness of vehicle to proposition. This naturally develops most in connection with forms of art whose vehicles do not contain emotion – forms, that is, from which the first incidence is absent. Some people, through what I should call an over-specialization of sensitiveness, would exalt this emotion above all others.

Before passing to the next way in which emotion may be involved in art, we must deal with a problem. Are there two ways of being a work of art, or only one? I hold that there is only one – by being a

communication of an import of a certain order. Others hold also that there is only one way – by arousing certain specific emotions, 'aesthetic emotions', supposed to be peculiar to works of art. This view seems to me to have a small initial plausibility which disappears completely upon analysis. For if works of art are defined, as has been done, as just those things which do arouse these emotions, then to say that they do so is a triviality; and if they are not so defined, then how they come to arouse them must be explained. For this reason it is usual to allude to works of art as 'significant'. But 'significant' as applied to art is either an idle term or else comes under the more general notion of being a vehicle, and only by being a vehicle does anything become a work of art. There are, however, wide ranges of emotions which are aroused by works of art and yet do not help to convey meaning. Sometimes they interfere with the conveyance of meaning, and then their arousal is a defect of the work of art. Sometimes they act as a kind of bait to attract attention and to hold it through the necessary intervals in the real performance. These may be called irrelevant or mere emotions, no disparagement being intended. Often they are delightful, and to be delightful is as respectable a property as anything can possess. On the other hand, when they are not delightful no excuse justifies their occurrence, since they do not, as many undelightful things may do, carry meaning.

The two remaining modes in which emotion is aroused by works of art raise no obvious problems. Emotion occurs in connection with the ease or difficulty with which we apprehend an import. Apprehension of no matter what import, if performed with ease, but not with too much ease, is accompanied by a lightening and lifting emotion which may amount to joy. Bafflement, on the other hand, in apprehending an import, which is suspected but not grasped, may lead to distress. These effects are of interest in considering repetition and familiarity and resultant modifications of emotion. Finally, to see any difficult thing done with success arouses emotion. All technical triumph, if we appreciate it, does so, whether the master is a juggler or a sonnet-writer.

These are, I think, the six most important ways in which emotions come into the contemplation of works of art. All of them can be found in current criticism masquerading as aesthetic emotions. Is it too much to require that critics should make up their minds before writing to which of these they wish to refer, or, if to none of these, to which other case not stated here? I sometimes think that if this demand could be pressed, it would dry up for a long time our chief critical and aesthetical springs.

Four Fermented Aesthetics 1919

Art & Letters, 2/4 NS (Autumn 1919), 186–93. (Pages 189–90 are taken up by an unrelated illustration.)

The four theories I discuss in this article are well known and widely held. There is a fifth, not quite equal in repute to any of these four, which is, I hold, the true theory. But this is perhaps better not discussed. If it is true then it would be regrettable if in a brief statement it should appear as though it were false. With these that I discuss the danger lies the other way. None the less at present they prevail. Most recent criticism which deserves attention will be found to contain remarks based upon one or other of them.

In this discussion I have in mind the general reader. I wish to deal with these theories in the forms in which they are used in current criticism, not as they are preserved and refined in the philosophical laboratories. For the sake of brevity I shall make no citations. I shall try to present, as justly as I can, in each case what an average reader, who has read the work of a leading exponent twice, will carry away from his reading. Theories so presented must be comparatively crude, but only in crude forms do theories gain currency and only in crude forms can they be used. The danger of the procedure is that I may seem to be slaughtering dummies; but who ever does anything else?

(1) The danger is greatest with Signor Croce, who offers an antique but renovated idealist doctrine only adequately presentable in its setting as part of the Philosophy of the Spirit, but as such quite out of the reach of what is usually known as logic. None the less although few people have any dealings with that Philosophy many people make use of a form of his Aesthetic. It is this form which I endeavour to present.

> There are certain things named Intuitions. To create a work of art is to have one of these. Whenever we perceive or imagine vividly, completely and expressively we have an Intuition. In fact to have an Intuition and to express are literally one thing. For in Intuition we are active as opposed to Sensation in which we are passive, and to be active is to express. It follows that no Intuition can be unexpressed. Intuition is self expression and self expression is Intuition. By Intuiting we impose form upon, or objectify, our impressions. An impression which we do not Intuit is 187 mere formless matter, indistinguishable, unintuited, from any other unintuited impression. When an artist has an Intuition he at that moment and by having it expresses it, so that when he has had it all is finished; there remains only the technical task of copying it in some durable material. Similarly, the enjoyment of a work of art consists in having by means of the copy the Intuition which the artist had. All perceivings and imaginings of things which are distinguishable from one another are Intuitions; we therefore all Intuit; we therefore all are artists;

> but some people's Intuitions are *more* expressed in some way and these people are ARTISTS.

(2) Let us sample next an entirely opposed theory. Mr Santayana's materialist, sensationalist, phenomenalist theory which he expounds in his book *The Sense of Beauty*. He deals with Beauty. Now Beauty has, of course, as a *definiendum* for long been any man's prey. The notion is now somewhat discountenanced in meticulous circles. But Mr Sanatayana makes it plain that Beauty for him is what the artist should produce and works of art possess, so that we may state his doctrine without being troubled by this merely verbal question.

> Beauty is pleasure regarded as a quality of a thing. To call anything beautiful involves a radically absurd mistake which we cannot avoid because it is a fixed habit of our intelligence. Beauty is just pleasure. That is, it is an element of a sensation; but it is that pleasure which we fail to recognize as belonging to the sensation and project or objectify as a quality of the cause of the sensation, of whatever thing it is which we call beautiful. This projection is a trick which we play to a greater or less degree with all the elements of our sensations, even with 'red' or 'pointed'. We throw them out and build them up into 'things'. Now some 'things' cause us pleasure in a way which makes us think that they possess this pleasure as a quality and then we say that they are beautiful. The artist makes such things. The critic discerns them and points out if he can how they do it.

(3) Next let us try to condense a theory which Dr Bosanquet in his *Three Lectures on Aesthetic* has helped to spread.

> Beauty is a feeling embodied in beautiful things. Some feeling which is disinterested, impersonal, pleasurable, and stable, which is embodied in an object, is referred to when we speak of an object as beautiful. Any feeling will do provided that it has these characters and is embodied. To feel in this way is to take up the aesthetic attitude. A feeling is embodied in an object when the object perfectly expresses it and by itself evokes it for all normal people.

(4) Lastly, we have a doctrine simpler than the others, a rigoristic doctrine which has been current recently mainly through 188 the brevity and elegance of Mr Clive Bell's exposition in his book *Art*. The whole doctrine is contained within pages 6–13 of that work, a compact and pellucid doctrine.

> There is a group of peculiar emotions, aesthetic emotions, which certain things arouse. Whenever anything arouse some of these it is thereby proved to be work of art. Now the things which arouse aesthetic emotion must have some common quality. The only quality common to all the things which arouse aesthetic emotion is significant form. Works of art therefore are these things which possess significant form and the only means of recognizing them that we have is the aesthetic emotion this significant form arouses in us.

Discussion of these doctrines will best be performed in the reverse order to that in which they were set up. I will begin with Mr Clive Bell

and finish with Signor Croce.

(4) I will grant, to begin with, several things which are in the minds of those who accept this doctrine: that emotion of peculiar kinds as a rule accompanies the contemplation of works of art; that the occurrence of it is often a condition of our recognizing them as such, that there is something else common to works of art which makes them what they are. But these truths by no means fit together in the way supposed. The particular mechanisms Mr Clive Bell employs (pages 7, 8, 11) to bring them together into his doctrine are a plain fallacy and two tautologies. I will expose these, but there are many other methods of confusion. In fact Mr Clive Bell uses an incompatible set on pages 6 and 9.

The first tautology is this. If you define works of art' as 'those things whatsoever that cause aesthetic emotion', then, beyond asserting the Law of Identity, you are saying nothing when you say 'Works of art cause aesthetic emotion'. The second is this: If you go on to define 'significant form' as 'aesthetically-moving form', then when you say 'Works of art (i.e. aesthetically-moving things) possess significant form', again you are saying nothing except that works of art have form. What kind of form is a question you happily avoid. The plain fallacy is this. A group of things which agree in a common external property, such as causing similar effects, or being in the same universe, need have no common internal property or quality whatever. The outcome is that when Mr Clive Bell sets himself to show that significant form is the only quality common and peculiar to all the works of visual art which more me' (page 10), he has so arranged his definitions that what he is setting out to show is that 'being composed of lines and colours' is the only quality common and 191 peculiar to things composed of lines and colours. Later appears a suggestion which might have given the doctrine a foothold. It is suggested that 'significant form' may be the form of 'that which philosophers used to call the thing in itself. But the thing in itself was what the philosophers used to call that whatever-it-is which has no form in this sense, which you do not see. I fear that this suggestion is

> Nonsense precipitate like running lead
> That slipped through cracks and zig-zags of the head.

Some other suggestion is needed before the doctrine becomes anything but a choice specimen of illogic.

(3) Here we have not to deal with any one peculiar group of feelings. Any feeling which is not concerned with our own advantage, which is not due to peculiarities of our own experience, which is pleasurable and persists, will, if embodied in a thing, justify us in believing that the thing is beautiful. As to embodiment I will deal with that in discussing Signor Croce's doctrine. What I wish to discuss here is feeling. Feeling enters in several different ways into art. There are feelings which we must feel if we are to understand works of art: there are feelings which we feel as a consequence of understanding them. These are in most cases very different. Think of any tragedy. The first

group of feelings will probably be painful, certainly constricting: the second may be pleasant, but will be expansive. Now to which feelings, condition feelings or consequent feelings, does this doctrine allude? To neither in separation, but to both inextricably confused. It is true that in experience they commonly occur merged into one mass, but criticism is largely their disentanglement. It is no merit of a work of art that it has bathed us in emotion unless we know either that through this emotion we have had access to something worth knowing, or else that the emotion is due to such access. The doctrine has noticed that feelings of the familiar kinds are involved in art, but it has mistaken the machinery and the repercussion for the aim of art and so misrepresented the only essential.

(2) How is pleasure involved in art and why does anyone think that works of art have anything especially to do with pleasure? The second question is most easily answered. If you try to explain the world with an insufficient number of ideas, you may do the best you can but you will not succeed. The pleasure theory is the best that the physiologist can do towards explaining art. More ideas are available than can be supplied by physiology, and some of these unluckily for him are required for the explanation of art.

The first question is more difficult. There are two things, 192 *pleasure* and *pleasantness*. The first is a quality of sensations and is in no way necessarily the concern of art. But the second is a property of acts not of sensations. Any free successful act is pleasant, thus any apprehension of a work of art which is a free successful act will be pleasant. This is the only certain way in which pleasantness is connected with works of art.

Signor Croce's doctrine is the most formidable of the four. We have, if we can, to from clear ideas of intuition and of expression. 'An intuition' may stand for one of three things, an act of intuiting (as looking is an act), what is intuited (as a tree may be what is seen when we look), the way in which this is intuited (as there are different ways of seeing the same tree). For the Philosophy of the Spirit these three things are all the same, but for exoteric readers they are as different as possible. When I imagine or perceive a tree these three things may be distinguished, my act, the tree, and something else which may be either imagery or percepts. (This is the view of widest acceptance. I bring it in merely as an expository convenience. The same criticism of the 'Aesthetic' holds on any view except that of the Philosophy of the Spirit. But that view involves a permanent desertion of logic, ordinary logic not Signor Croce's; a difficulty which arises for the discussion of any *part* of his doctrine).

Now Signor Croce holds that 'All intuitions are expressed because they are products of the activity of the Spirit.' The Spirit produces them; they are expressed, shot out by the Spirit. Here exoteric readers who adopt the doctrine must mean by intuitions acts of imagery, not objects, not trees. But for Signor Croce the whole universe is in this sense shot out, expressed by the Spirit. This is because he will not distinguish acts from objects, but since few readers follow him here I may not deal with this flattering hypothesis. My business is with his

doctrine in the form in which it is most widely held.

This, then, is one meaning of ‘Intuition is Expression’, that, when we think of anything, the images or percepts through which we think of it are shot out, produced, concocted, expressed by the activity of the mind. But there is another meaning in this powerful assertion. ‘Intuition is Expression’ may also mean that these images or percepts, besides being expressed also express (in the sense in which any significant form expresses, embodies or stands for a truth) an idea, a meaning or a proposition. Sentences of words are often convenient forms with which to express propositions, and indefinite numbers of propositions can be so expressed; but infinite numbers remain for which no mere words are adequate. It is a plausible, I think it is the true view that art is the expression of these. If so, the imagery of the artiest at work will, if he is succeeding, be expressive, and the idea, the truth, the proposition which is the object of this intuition will be expressed in this work. But it does not follow that every bit of imagery which is an expression in the other sense will express anything in this sense.

The novelty, the force, the vogue, the prevalence of Signor Croce’s aesthetic among his exoteric readers is due to this identification. There is a difference between the active and the passive of the verb ‘to express’ to which in his English dress he seems at times quite indifferent, preferring to allow the abstract term Expression to contain either or both as is most convenient. The movement of his argument so presented resembles to the unbeliever some superlatively clever piece of jugglery. His readers find him always stimulating, but I believe that most suspect. His divergences from common knowledge are so violent. If he were right these final remarks would be not true or false but nonsense. We may intuit something without having any imagery before us at all adequate to express what we are intuiting. We may then go on to develop adequate imagery without any change in what we are intuiting. Imagery may be adequate to express to ourselves the things we intuit without being adequate to express them to others. It may require the deletion of the parts which are to us most inadequate; it always does require what are, to us, unnecessary additions: these are the exigencies of communication, probably the more pressing the greater and the more original the artist. Finally between the intuition and the work of art there is much more than a mere mechanical task of copying. As Lord Melbourne is supposed to have said, ‘It is very easy not to write a Tragedy in five acts’.

The Instruments of Criticism: Expression 1919

Athenaeum, *No*. 4670 (31 Oct. 1919), 1131.

Criticism, which is the study of the aims and methods of literature and art in general, has not as yet turned with concentrated energy to the study of its own aims and its own methods. The omission is natural but unfortunate. Natural, because such considerations are properly the concern of the philosophers. All through, critics have had to beg, or, more often, to steal, their tools, the notions with which they work, from the workshops of philosophy. Unfortunate, because tools so acquired are easily misused. Criticism has always suffered, and suffers more than ever, from misuse of its principal instruments. Instances in even the best available criticism are not hard to find. In some cases the usage is so far sanctioned by custom that no experienced reader is in doubt as to what is meant. In these cases the usage does perform the fundamental function of speech: it does say something. But it is precisely these cases which are the most unfortunate.

Consider the following, chosen for no peculiarities, but as a typical specimen of a usage to which most critics will confess. Of a poem by Mr Lawrence (*Athenaeum*, August 22, p. 784):

> Here, we feel, is a poem which has a real reason for its existence; a compelling emotion has demanded expression, and in these twelve lines has received the poetical embodiment inevitably reserved for it.

We all know what these remarks convey; something which in this case we may be eager to maintain is true and important, namely, that the poem in question is a good poem. We all can see if we will look that this is not what upon their face value they should convey. Hold them to their literal sense and they become confused mythology; the first remark combines, blurring them both, the different notions of causation and justification – a confusion not peculiar to criticism. The two, if distinguished, are supposed to go together; the speculative, tentative, the necessarily dubious account of how the poem came to be what it is, is supposed to explain why, being what it is, it is good. Most people hold that there is some connection, but to trace a connection between two things it is indispensable that you should be able to distinguish them. In the amplification which follows this confusion is worse confounded by the occurrence of the word ‘expression’, always a danger signal. The poem is suggested to be a kind of residuary and permanent analogue to the flood of tears which in this compound usage (‘expression of = ‘result of + sign of + sympathetic arouser of) is the typical expression of emotion. The complexity of the analysis required brings out the point. No critic as such, however acute, however brilliant, however sound a *critic* he may be, is prepared to

analyse out the causal, the significatory, the revelatory, and the symbolic elements contained indifferent proportions and degrees in the six or eight current usages of ‘expression’. It is a tedious and not an easy task. Compare the senses in which a smile may be the expression of pleasure – noticing the total change in the causal elements included as the smile is spontaneous or calculated; a plan or a building, the expression of a purpose; a novel, the expression of life; a poem, the expression of a meaning or a truth; a = b, the expression of a mathematical relation. These are merely a few of the more salient steps; you may bridge the wide gap between a dog howling at the moon and Newton formulating his Laws with instances as closely graduated as you please, and all for current criticism would be cases of expression. What then can be done? The best suggestion would seem to be that the term be banished altogether from considered criticism, or retained only under the heaviest suspicion. The causal elements in its meanings may be stated in causal forms; for the other elements there are the terms ‘to convey’, ‘to suggest’, ‘to reveal’, ‘to present’, ‘to mean’, ‘to mediate’, and many others, some, however, tainted with the same ambiguities. ‘Expression’ stands for no notion which cannot be more clearly, if less concisely, displayed by other means. But conciseness is as often a vice as a virtue.

It will perhaps now be plain, in this case, why the accepted usage of criticism is unfortunate. It is the acceptance which is most unfortunate. For this complex bundle of notions, habitually employed for the roughest purposes, contains many of the most delicate and most indispensable of critical instruments. It is regrettable that the great influence of Croce in recent years has been, in this country at least, all in favour of this abuse. With rare exceptions those who undergo his influence tender only a partial submission. The Philosophy of the Spirit as a whole, as seen, for instance, in his *Logic*, leaves them unconvinced; but all the more readily they give to the central tenet of his *Aesthetic*, the tenet that ‘Art is Expression’, independently interpreted in a fashion to which Croce would object as vigorously as any of his opponents, an acceptance which is disastrous in its consequences. A reader of Croce has his choice. He may – it depends upon temperament, not upon logic, because it is a question of a choice between logics – choose to follow Croce, but if so he ought to know what he is doing. Croce is far too careful a philosopher for his readers to be able to pick and choose between the parts of his doctrine. You cannot adopt his Aesthetic by itself and handle it by the aid of a ‘common-sense’ logic with the usual distinctions without results abhorrent alike to Croce and to Jevons. But this is what for the most part has happened. The critical world is filled with exoteric disciples of Croce, and their doctrine, like most exoteric doctrine, is merely so much confusion to be cleared away.

The further analysis of this intricate collection of relations commonly compressed at haphazard within the term ‘expression’ is the most urgent of all the tasks of speculative criticism. All the chief problems, of the origins and determinants of works of art, of their functions, their methods and their ends; the meaning for art of unity,

universality, and objectivity; even the definition of the term ‘aesthetic’, which so far, strangely enough, has received no definition which has any reference to any ‘aesthetic’ problem – all wait upon this analysis. But so long as ‘expression’ continues to be used in exactly the same way as the old-fashioned medical practitioner’s ‘blunderbuss mixture’ these problems will remain, so far as general criticism is concerned, unexplored, and the new powers and assurances which result from their exploration will remain unknown.

We must expect opposition to this abandonment of what is, from a writer’s point of view, so useful a term. Whatever it may be which is to be said, the term ‘expression’, if given a chance, will appear to say it. Actually, as is always the case with high-powered ambiguities, nothing is said. More than three meanings together form no meaning. But when the intended meaning is difficult to single out without error, we are all glad to turn on a word which like ‘expression’ sprays out (expresses) such a wealth of meanings that the odds are great that the one we intend will be among them.

Intuition and Expression 1921

Typescript in Richards Collection, Magdalene College, Box 10/MS3. Richards lectured in Cambridge on Croce in the Lent term of 1921,[1] and this article almost certainly dates from that period.

The labours of Croce have secured for his special doctrines a peculiar immunity. No one of them can be usefully discussed without a discussion of his entire philosophy, and such a discussion involves a renunciation of all ordinary logic, a rash adventure. In particular, his aesthetic is embedded in the mass like the fly in amber. No more than the fly, can it be extracted intact for independent inspection.

In spite of the pains Croce has taken to make this fact clear, it is often neglected. It has obvious consequences. Because of them, I am very sure that the discussion which follows of some of his assertions will have nothing directly to do with any doctrine which Croce himself holds. For his whole philosophy is supported by a logic which is directly opposed to that which I shall use. The philosophy itself I shall not discuss. Ordinary logic has no difficulty in pointing out the precise fallacies which give rise to it; confusions between thoughts and what thoughts are about; in fact, nothing is easier than the demolition of Croce by ordinary logic, except it be the demolition of ordinary logic by Croce.

Instead, therefore, of wasting time in such an idle tournament, I propose to examine the theories, not Croce's and not in conflict with or demanding the desertion of common logic, which occur to a reader more interested in the ideas actually aroused by the reading than in those which the writer may have intended to convey.

This explained, let us attack the first crux. What shall we mean by intuition and expression, and what can we make of the doctrine that they are inseparable? We have to find a meaning for an intuition which does not include either 'having an expression' or 'being an expression'. Otherwise to ask whether intuition and expression are inseparable or not will be a foolish question. And we have to find some precise meaning for the phrase 'to express', this last not an easy undertaking.

Let us have some specimens of Croce, at his clearest and most stimulating, upon these points.

> Certainly perception is intuition (p. 5)
>
> Intuition is the unindifferentiated unity of the perception of the real and of the simple image of the possible. In our intuitions we do not oppose ourselves to external reality as empirical beings, but we simply objectify our impressions whatever they may be (p. 6)

It may be in part the translator's fault, that some of this is very

obscure, but the point for us is in what the exoteric reader gathers. This is that perceivings and imaginings are alike intuitions. The piece about external reality and ourselves as empirical beings is cryptic but probably most readers pick out the notion of objectified impressions as familiar and interesting. To get it clearer we must touch on sensation.

> *On the other side, and before the inferior boundary, is sensation, formless matter, which the spirit can never apprehend in itself in so far as it is mere matter. This it can only possess with form and in form, but postulates it, precisely as a limit*… it is what the spirit of man experiences but does not produce… *and how often do we strive to understand clearly what is passing within us? We do catch a glimpse of something, but this does not appear to the mind as objectified and formed*. In such moments, it is that we best perceive the profound difference between matter and form. Matter attacked and conquered by form gives way to concrete form. *It is the matter, the content, that differentiates one of our intuitions from another; form is constant: it is spiritual activity, while matter is changeable*. (p. 9)

Here I have italicized those remarks of portions of remarks which seem to me to be true. The selection will indicate much of my criticism. If we abstract from a perception all that makes it an act of knowing, then we are left with a sensation. But such a thing is an abstraction and though psychology finds it useful as such, as a limit, we should no more expect to experience such a thing than we expect to touch the ether. The next remark partly contradicts this saying that sensations are experienced, and partly plunges us into the depths of the Philosophy of the Spirit. The Spirit being appropriately enough here figured much under the guise of a conjuror producing things out of nothing. The ensuing remarks about our obscure insides are true in several very interesting and different ways. First they may refer to percepts and images other than those of our ears and eyes. Tastes, smells, touches, temperatures, movements and those visceral and vascular experiences which supply the body of emotions. To them we do not as a rule pay much direct attention, any more attention than we ordinarily pay to the *immediate* objects of hearing and sight. What we do attend to is their meaning, and if we suppose that because these objects are as a rule simple they do not carry meaning, we shall be wrong. But probably Croce is thinking of something quite different. Perhaps he is thinking of the distinction psychologists make between mental content and mental process. The mind is conscious of none of its acts in the way in which it is conscious of the things upon which its acts are directed. We may attend to an act, making it an object, but then our experience is different from the original experience which was the act. No mental process is conscious of itself, though another process may be conscious of it. But ‘it’ in this case is not a sensation, though Croce seems to be touching upon this topic.

To understand the rest we need one other quotation.

> With the concept of productivity is already posited the distinction between passivity and activity, between sensation and intuition… If by representation we mean something detached and standing out from the

> psychic base of the sensations, then representation is intuition. Representation is elaboration of sensation, it is intuition. (p. 11)

It is Croce's doctrine of productivity which makes his doctrine of expression plausible to him. Everyone knows that as we attend to a suitable object we come to apprehend it with more and more particularity and as having more characters. Croce holds that these characters themselves are actually produced by the act of attention. Now, no doubt, our apprehension of these characters is produced by our attention, but our apprehension is not the same as the characters. Here we come across the central secret of Croce's system alluded to in the first paragraph. Without this doctrine that thought produces what it thinks about, the whole edifice collapses. With its aid, enemies say, anyone can construct as good a system, for nothing if this be true, can be false. The gulf between Croce's logic and ours may be made in a particular instance clear by noticing that if we agreed with Croce in his last remarks, we should be landed, with him, in what we call an inconstancy, i.e., by holding that it is the matter which differentiates one of our intuitions from another, and that matter is changeable, and also that the forms by which alone one piece of matter can be distinguished from another are not its forms but ours. Croce's logic gets him out of this difficulty, or rather leaves him at ease in it, but ours would not.

But, rejecting the whole doctrine of matter and form, denying that perception is productive or creative of new characters in its object, are we to take the same view of imagination? With this we come to a question which does not arise for Croce and for which his heroic and summary methods will not serve.

At first sight, it seems plausible to hold that we do or can produce in our images the characters which we imagine them as having. But on a second scrutiny of the facts, there seem to be as good reasons to deny this as in the case of perceptions. It seems plausible that we make and mould our imagery as we will, making it red or blue, low or loud, by the mere intention that it shall be so. But the same difficulty as with perception arises to show that this account must be in some respects incompetent, namely the obstinacy of some imagery. At times, imagery can tyrannize over us as much as a locomotive whistle. At other times, no doubt, it does seem to be a merely fictile thing. The difference is not one of vividness, or of distinctness, or of degree of attention, or of momentary will-power. It is a more ultimate difference, the two things do not merge into one another, the difference is one of kind. With the first kind, if we change our imagery at all, it is as if we change a playing card at poker by laying down one card and picking up another; if our imagery changes itself it is as clouds in the sky change, not at our desire. With the second kind we are definitely in control and may have what we please, amusing or boring ourselves. It is an activity analogous to seeing faces in the fire, in perception, or fancying bird-filled bushes in folded inkblots. Let us mark the difference by calling the first activity Imagination, the second Fancy. So far we have only touched the differences superficially. Is it possible

to get behind it and describe it? An expensive and easily found answer would make the difference a matter of open or veiled dependence of the imagery upon interest and instinct, an answer obviously appropriate to some cases but missing the special difference between Fancy and Imagination, which these terms historically and with reference to aesthetic are designed to mark. In fact, this is a case of a question much easier to answer than to ask in any strict terms. The answer we seek involves, as has been long recognized, a reference to truth. Imagination is a means to knowledge. Fancy is its own end. In Fancy we create so far as we ever create, in Imagination our activity is more humble and more dignified; we learn, we use images as means to give us access to the things about which we wish to think. But not all images will do this, only some, and which will we only know when we have found them. It is the dependence of images upon what they stand for (to stand for is not necessarily to reproduce or re-present) which gives them their resistance to our whims, and makes Imagination so much more living and exciting a thing than Fancy. We may recognise Imagination by the fact that there is always a reason (not a cause) *why* the imagery could not be essentially other than it is, whereas with Fancy there is no such reason.

We must postpone further remarks upon this, for art, all-important topic, until we have discussed expression. Enough has been said to allow us to define an intuition. An intuition is an act of knowing directed upon *a thing*, *real or ideal*, by means of sense percepts or images. It is to be distinguished from mere awareness through the senses or from mere dreaming. It is in no sense creative, but is selective. It is in the highest degree liable to falsity and to error. We have more false intuitions than true. Intuition so defined is a very different thing from Croce's, it will be perceived. But this, I think, is what survives from the struggle with his contradictions.

Now we may pass on to expression. It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the confusion which this word involves. For instance, I express myself by doing something and what I do in turn expresses me; again, I may say something which expresses my state of mind and this may or may not express a truth or a falsity. It is not difficult, though troublesome, to isolate and manacle in definitions seventeen quite different meanings. What is worse, these meanings breed like rabbits, so that ultimately their number is only discoverable by the aid of higher mathematics. Out of this multitude, we have to pick those most relevant to aesthetic theories, leaving aside those interesting only to psychology.

Let us have a passage from our author to start from. Representation, remember, he has stated above, is intuition:

> In truth, language in the strict sense, as we understand it, is equivalent to expression; and expression is identical with representation, since it is inconceivable that there should be a representation which should not be expressed in some way, or an expression which should represent nothing or be meaningless. The one would fail to be representation, and the other would not even be expression; that is to say both must be and are one and the same. (p. 6. *Logic*)

We must ponder this, for our task is to catch the meanings which tantalise the mind when there comes over it the feeling that possibly this cryptic utterance has something concealed within it. To do this, we must refrain from the joyous sport of face-value analysis; of showing that the equivalent proof is, as given, formally invalid, that the corrected argument would be circular, and that the final remark if it is not taken as inconsistent with what has gone before would reduce the whole passage to a triviality. But Croce does not hold with formal logic, and all this, as I have said, would be merely sport. Instead we have something more serious and more difficult to do.

Two different assertions, I think, emerge from this passage. One is that every expression represents something. The other is that every representation (intuition) is expressed in some way. These are the cardinal doctrines repeated again and again in the *Aesthetic* and the *Logic*. With regard to the first, I shall try to state a meaning for expression which makes it self-evidently true. For the second, I shall find meanings with which it will be self-evidently true when we take intuition to mean ‘act of intuiting’, and when we take it to mean ‘what is intuited’. The way in which these three meanings are related to one another will then be displayed.

The first proposition is self-evidently true, if we take ‘to express’ or ‘to represent’ as standing for the relation between vehicles and propositions. What these are must be explained. Propositions are what we believe, judge, doubt, or merely apprehend. They are what sentences, pictures, gestures, poems, plays, dances, music, works of art generally, and many other things which are not works of art, stand for. Typically, they are what certain arrangements of words, remarks, mean or stand for. The meaning of a remark is the proposition for which it stands, that which is apprehended when the remark is understood. The mistake must not be made of supposing that only arrangements of words can stand for propositions, or that all propositions can be ‘expressed’ or ‘stood for’ by straightforward forms of words. There are many propositions which require quite other sensible forms to stand for them. These, it is the business of art to ‘express’, that is, to find sensible forms which will ‘stand for’ them. ‘Stand for’ is the name of a relation which is quite different from, for instance, ‘re-present’ or ‘resemble’. Here we have one meaning of expression. An arrangement of words, or rhythms, of forms of any kind is the expression of a proposition when awareness of it enables us to apprehend the proposition. When any such arrangement stands for the same proposition to more than one person, then communication is possible and such an arrangement may be called a vehicle. An arrangement which simply serves to stand for or make accessible a proposition to one person without being able to do so to other people may be called a private vehicle. Now, using this sense of expression, we can restate Croce’s first assertion in the form ‘every vehicle has a proposition’ which is self-evident.

One crux of the aesthetic which Croce sometimes suggests to his readers may be faced now. This will introduce us to a sense in which Croce’s second assertion is self-evidently true. Is it possible to

apprehend a proposition without any vehicle, even a private vehicle? Can we, that is, directly apprehend propositions or must there always be a mediating sensible form? Such a question cannot be answered a priori. It is, therefore, not the question which Croce's second assertion answers. Observation seems to give the following answer. Whenever we apprehend propositions, we seem always to make use of some sensible form, but the degree to which this form must be developed and adequate to the proposition which it conveys will vary with different propositions and with different attitudes to them. It can dwindle so much that it is hard to see why it should not be absent altogether. It may be sketchier when it has to stand for a proposition which is familiar than when the proposition is novel. If we are interested in the proposition for its own sake, we need a full and adequate vehicle. If we are merely interested in its connection with other propositions then the most summarized vehicle will suffice. There is also an ascending order of adequacy required when our attitudes are those of mere apprehension, acceptance, rejection, belief, disbelief and doubt. Any uncertainty as to what our attitude is leads at once, if we really want to be certain, one way or another, to elaboration and determination of the vehicle in all possible ways. Most of the propositions of great art are self-evidently true, because their vehicles are so adequate as to give us perfect access to them.

This sketch of an answer deals, I think, with a question which is before most minds when considering Croce's second assertion, that every intuition is expressed in some way. Taking 'intuition' as 'what is intuited' not as 'act of intuiting', this assertion is self-evident, if we recall our definition of an intuition as an act of knowing directed upon a thing real or ideal, *by means of a sensible form*. Here propositions are what are intuited, ideal things which we intuit by means of vehicles and which therefore are expressed. Whether all acts of knowing propositions are intuitions, that is, take place through mediating sensible forms, is an open question, which may be experimentally decided or may not. It is not, however, of direct interest for aesthetic.

Now, taking Croce's assertion 'every intuition is expressed in some way' as saying that every *act* of intuiting is expressed in some way, in what sense if any is it true? Not certainly in the sense of expression which we have been considering. But there is another sense which constantly recurs to readers in connection with Croce's doctrine of productivity, the sense in which a shell is expressed from a gun, juice from an orange, an act from an agent.

In discussing his views on sensation, we saw that Croce holds that intuited objects are produced by acts of intuiting, or rather both are the same and are produced by the Spirit. We saw why, if we deny that a 'thought' and 'what the thought is of are the same, we must deny this productivity doctrine. Croce thinks that when I intuit an apple, the apple is an act of mine, or else due to an act of mine. The apple is in this sense an expression not of a proposition but of me. I have expressed myself in the form of an apple. In an original sense of the word, I have expressed it, pushed it out, wherefrom or what I am to do such things, I know not. The secret is kept in the heart of the

Philosophy of Spirit.

Returning to our parallel construction and keeping as near Croce as we can, we admit that out intuitions as acts are expressed (out of the Spirit), in this sense, but not the things known in the intuition. We express ourselves in our acts, so, in this sense, it is self-evident that all intuitions (acts) are expressed. But this is to say merely that we are active in our acts.

Now what is, for aesthetic, the connection between these two different meanings of ‘to express’, to press out and to stand for. Retaining an ordinary logic and the inexpungible distinction between thoughts and what thoughts are of, none can be found, and into this gap pours irrecoverably almost all that is most notable and striking in Croce’s *Aesthetic*. The tenets which, for us at least, must be abandoned are the most familiar part of his doctrine. To intuit can no longer be the whole of the artist’s need, a work of art can no longer be identified with an intuition, the group of problems which concern communication return to their place and the old questions as to the relative worths of different objects of intuitions, or different propositions, and how best they are treated, open their mouths again for answers. How Croce came to identify ‘to press out’ and ‘to stand for’ can be made out; I have hinted at the main manoeuvres, but to discuss it fully would take us too far into his system. To an unsympathetic, logically hostile eye, it is by a series of what seems to be calculated confusions and fallacies chosen with prodigious skill and disguised in the cleverest equivocations.

There is, it needs not be said, another side to the matter, but to those for whom this side will have an interest it will be only too apparent. What I have most wished to do will be finished if I have shown that ‘expression’ is not an innocent or an easy and safe word to handle. The bundle of fine shades and distinctions for which it stands are indeed as delicate and elusive, as volatile and implicate as a cobweb. Many strands are certain to be snapped when we attempt to pin it down in words. But it is at least a respectable belief, whether Croceans will admit it as such or not, that the best hope for speculative aesthetic is in disentanglement rather than in convulsive attempts to grasp the whole matter in such formulas as ‘Intuition is Expression’, ‘Art is… simply to express’. ‘Identify, somehow identify’, is certainly the watchword of Croce and this school. His enemies might choose ‘Distinguish’.

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1 See Lectures 14 and 15, Notebook 5, Richards Collection, Magdalene College, Cambridge.

First Steps in Psychology 1921

By I. A. Richards and C. K. Ogden

Psyche, 2/1 (July 1921), 67–79.

A few years ago the word Psychology was a technicality covering a field of inquiry in which none but specialists and perhaps a few enterprising teachers were expected to take an interest. Today it would be hard to find a general reader of current literature who had not at any rate browsed through one or more of the books on psychological topics which appear every other day.

There are, however, among these readers many who feel a difficulty in comparing and combining together the views, opinions, and information thus casually obtained. Although interested, they have no time for the study of voluminous works on first principles. They would like to read the *Principles of Psychology* of William James, the *Analytic Psychology* of Professor Stout (having dipped perhaps into a volume with almost the same title by Dr Jung), Urban's exhaustive investigation of *Valuation*, Professor Ward's *Psychological Principles*, or Baldwin's *Thought and Things*. But even for those who have the time to make such an experiment, it is not readily discoverable which is filled with mysticism and which with meat.

It was therefore suggested that readers who are seriously approaching the subject for the first time, and who look to *Psyche* to help them in forming an estimate of current tendencies, would welcome a brief account of the nucleus of accredited opinion from which the growing science of Psychology is tending to develop. In what follows, therefore, will be found an endeavour to deal in the simplest possible language with elementary subjects as discussed in standard works, and to deal with it more concisely than has been done by any introduction hitherto. This conciseness must be an excuse for any lack of precision. No attempt at originality has been made, nor are the views here represented in all cases those which, given the opportunity of a full technical statement, the authors would regard as most satisfactory. The refinements and adjustments which any science demands for its adequate formulation cannot in all cases be simply stated until some of its special terms have become current.

A sudden interest in any science is due either to new methods (as in the case of modern mathematics), or to new subject matter, as in the case of Radioactivity. In the ease of Psychology, 68 both these causes have been present. New methods – the laboratory and the new hypotheses of the Unconscious, and the Mneme. New subject matter – Hypnosis, Psychical Research, 'Neurasthenia'.

As a result, Psychology, the study of the Psyche, now sets about its business just as any other study, collecting its information from any

source which gives relevant results; partly by introspection and partly by deliberately selecting and interpreting various signs as corroborative evidence. There are, it should be noticed, no other facts which can be *directly* studied quite in the same way as our own ‘experiences’, our own feelings; upon these, and upon the study of Behaviour, psychology is based. Behaviour, which is particularly of value in providing corroboration, is studied like any other subject matter. This possibility of direct study (introspection) gives to psychology a privileged position, and adds to its fascination as the most fundamental and intimate method of studying any portion of reality. The fundamental nature of psychology is also shown by the fact that all our knowledge starts from sensations, the investigation of which is an important branch of psychology. Starting from sensations we proceed by processes of interpretation to infer the nature of the universe, the laws of these inferences being known as physics, physiology, chemistry, and the other sciences.

A certain amount of training is, however, necessary in introspection as in all other pursuits, and from a practical point of view psychology is largely an acquirement of this training. The subject matter on which it is exercised is perhaps best indicated by an example.

As the reader reads these words he will probably agree that many things happen ‘in his mind’.

He *attends* to the marks on the paper, he *things* and *understands*, he takes up an *attitude*, he *remembers*, he is *interested* or *bored* as a consequence, his *instinct* of curiosity is perhaps aroused, or possibly he is *irritated* by the obscurity of the style. He *endeavours* to persevere, until eventually he feels *tired*, and to avoid *pain* he falls *asleep*. But even then he may *dream*, and on awakening may *forget* his dream – though if *hypnotised* he may rescue it from the *unconscious*.

All these are psychological events described in current psychological language, and in psychology we are either engaged in classifying such events and elaborating our descriptions of what takes place, or in seeking for their causes, i.e., explaining why just that particular process took place at just that time in just that way.

The first of these, classification, is academic psychology – useful when wanted, but receding in favour of genetic and causal treatment. By genetic treatment is meant the treatment which seeks for light upon the things with which it deals through the study of their history and development. When we thus approach the mind we find that the importance of past history is far greater than it is with physical processes. A teacup, for 69 instance, is little affected in its behaviour by what has happened to it in the past, but nothing that a mind does, or that can be done by a mind, is unaffected by its previous experience. It is, in fact, the first principle of psychology to recognise the peculiar way in which experience leaves effects behind it. Whenever we think of anything as being this or that, there are, as Professor Stout puts it, ‘processes of interpreting, identifying, classifying, recognising, etc., by which the object is brought into relation with the results of previous experience as retained and organized in preformed dispositions’. Similarly anything we do by habit we do only thanks to our past

experience. Instincts may be regarded as habits pre-natally formed. Thus we never think or feel or act quite freshly and spontaneously, for the character of our thinking, our feeling, and our acting is always due, in part at least, to the ways in which we have thought and felt and acted in the past. What exactly this dependence in any particular case may be is the main question which psychology attempts to answer, and it is chiefly in order to trace these connections more easily that it adopts certain technical distinctions.

Popular language in all matters that are connected with the mind is apt to be vague and misleading. Psychologists have, therefore, felt obliged to introduce terms freer from irrelevant associations than those in ordinary use, and these often make the subject seem dry and abstract to the beginner. But if it is realized that they are only names for what must from the nature of the case be processes familiar to everyone as part of ordinary experience, a little patience is all that is necessary for the mastery of current opinions.

Thus we find *Psychosis* ('state of mind', and sometimes 'abnormal state of mind'; much *as phenomenon* = 'appearance' and sometimes 'abnormal appearance'), *Conation* (striving), *Volition* (will), *Affect* (feeling), *Cognition* (knowing process), *Engram* (disposition), *Presentation* (sensation), *Ideation* (thinking), *Hedonic tone* (pleasure), *Endo-somatic* (inside the skin).

Described in the most general terms, the business of the mind is to adapt the organism to its environment. The process of continual change from adaptation to adaptation is what is known as *Conation*. In cases where there is conscious effort this process is popularly known as 'willing'. It is, however, now widely held that there is no essential difference between automatic responses to the environment and those responses which, owing to a conflict of tendencies, seem to involve the efforts of something which may be called 'the Will'. There are difficulties in admitting such an agent as the Will into psychology as a science, since if there were such a thing, it appears that nothing could be known about it. On the view that all mental change is conative, we must of course admit that we are 'willing' even when we are asleep, and much of the work of modern psychologists, such as 70 Freud, is devoted to showing that we constantly have volitional processes of which we are unconscious. The 'libido', which now appears so prominently in psychoanalytic writings, is a name for this general striving activity, which is regarded as hardly if ever suspended.

The exact forms which this striving takes on any occasion, those features which make an act or adaptation applicable to one thing rather than to another, are *Thinking*. There are not two kinds of activities which we perform: (1) Thinking, (2) Willing. They are inseparable aspects of a single process. The thinking is a form of the willing, much as the contour of a mountain is not something independent of its stuff, but simply the stuff in a certain shape – the shape of course depending on the nature of that stuff, e.g., pitch or porphyry.

How this stream of striving and thinking proceeds in any individual depends partly on sensations impressed by the external world, but also partly on internal factors. Certain of the latter are of particular

importance, because their character determines the direction of the stream. To these factors the name *Feeling* is technically restricted. Pleasantness and painfulness, and unnamed characters intermediate between these, clearly play a great part in controlling our behaviour, and this pleasure-pain aspect is what is generally spoken of as feeling-tone.

Where in such an account does Consciousness appear? It cannot be too clearly realized that much of what is quite properly to be called mental activity is not conscious. Only some of the elements involved have the peculiar character which we name conscious. These elements are perhaps reducible to two kinds – *Sensations* and *Images*. Sensations are modifications of the organism, due to stimuli from outside the body, e.g., in vision, or to the stimulation by one part of the body of another. A toothache, or a colic, is essentially the same in its origin as the sensation obtained, e.g., by clenching the fist. The importance of these sensations due to the action of one part of the body or another will be clear when we come to discuss *emotions*.

It is obvious that not all effects of stimuli on the organism are, or give rise to, sensations. What may be the difference between effects which give rise to sensations and those which do not, is a matter upon which no light has yet been thrown. It illustrates the relative unimportance of the idea of consciousness in psychology that this problem is rarely discussed. Consciousness is supposed to be associated with the higher or more central parts of the nervous system, the bringing in of these higher systems being known as the act of *attending*. It is plain that attention alone may suffice to make conscious what has hitherto been present but unperceived. If we keep our eyes motionless, we can discover, by merely attending to the edges of the field of view, that we are all the time seeing far more than we are ordinarily conscious of seeing. Thus at all times there is a large field of 71 inattention which is affecting us without causing consciousness, and an interesting attempt has been made by Mr H. R. Marshall in his work on *Consciousness* to identify the ‘field of inattention’ with what is usually called the Self.

The other kind of element which appears in consciousness is the *image*. A great deal of work has been done on images since Galton’s *Inquiry Concerning the Human Faculty* drew attention to the vast range of difference between individuals both as to the images they habitually employ, and as to their powers of forming imagery of any kind. There are psychologists, such as Professor Watson in his *Behavior*, who deny that any kind of imagery is necessary, or indeed occurs at all. There is also an interesting controversy as to how far thought can be conducted without it. The chief kinds of imagery hitherto enumerated are visual, auditory, tactual, olfactory, gustatory, motor, kinaesthetic, thermal, and organic. In fact, images corresponding to every kind of sensation can be formed.

One of the most striking instances of the possibility of applying psychology to practical affairs is the educational significance of modern views on imagery. It is of little use appealing to children of an auditory type by metaphors or diagrams suitable to visualizers; and if,

as seems probable, various abilities depend largely on the possession of special powers of imagery of one type or another, it should eventually be possible to avoid much disappointment and waste of time due to the early selection of unsuitable occupations.

These great differences between the type of imagery which is employed by different people raise a special problem, as to how far people with different imagery can be said to have the same thoughts. If my consciousness is filled, say, with mental pictures (visual images) and your consciousness is filled with the mental echoes of the sounds of words, how can we be said to have the same thoughts? And yet there is plainly a sense in which people who use quite different images can be said truly to be in agreement, to be thinking similarly.

This problem, which is very important both historically and theoretically, is the same as the old question, 'What is an idea?' when this question is asked in Psychology. The full answer is very complicated, but an outline may be given which shows how the difficulty we have raised, and which would result from an attempt to identify ideas with images, may be avoided.

For this purpose we require the biological notion of adaptation with which we began our account. We saw that all thinking, all mental activity is adaptation. When we have an image, the actual occurrence (which appears to us as an image) is an adaptation. It is a repetition of a previous adaptation, namely, that which we made when we had the original sensation of which the image is a copy.

Since it is an adaptation there must be something to which it is adapted. If, for instance, I am thinking by means of an image of the Dome of St Paul's, and you are thinking by means of the words 'St Paul's', we shall each be adapted to something. If this is the same then we can be said to be thinking of the same thing, and so to be having the same thoughts, i.e., adaptations, the same ideas, in spite of the difference in our imagery. Thus an *idea*, which is synonymous with a 'conception', a 'concept', a 'notion', and a 'universal', is a way of thinking applicable to something, and as is implied by the term 'adaptation', all 'thought' may be regarded as determined by the necessity of reacting to situations and as directed towards action of some kind or other.

We may now, keeping this idea of adaptation in our minds, turn again to striving, instincts, and the emotions. According to a view which leads to a great simplification in psychology, and is named after its first and most prominent exponents, the James-Lange theory, the distinctive feature of emotional as opposed to other experience is the presence of certain sensations due to physiological changes in the main tissues and organs of the body. Different groups of these give their special characters to the distinct *emotions*, such as anger, fear, disgust, or wonder.

It must not be supposed that these sensations are all that constitutes such an emotion as anger. We have to examine the causes to which the sensations themselves are due. We then find that there are a small number of primitive *instincts*, innate arrangements of the organism, which lead it to respond to typical situations in a specific fashion. Thus

if a jaguar rushes suddenly upon us, our instinctive adaptation takes the form of *flight*. But to facilitate flight the internal conditions of the body, the heart-beat, the breathing and glandular changes, are modified; and these modifications give rise to the sensational part of the emotions above indicated. In other words, we are sorry, as James put it, because we cry, rather than vice versa. On the other hand a fly in the eye will make that organ water, but we do not necessarily experience grief. That is to say it is only bodily sensations, instinctively originated, which constitute emotions or 'affects' as they are often called by modern writers. In some such way as this the chief objection to William James' view, namely, Professor Stout's contention that a stomach-ache is not an emotion, is avoided.

The accepted classification of fundamental instincts, or conative tendencies, inherited modes of striving or acting, are the following:

Flight (fear).
Pugnacity (anger).
Repulsion (disgust).
Parental instinct (tenderness).
Reproduction.
Feeding.
Curiosity (wonder). 73
Self-assertion (elation).
Self-abasement (subjection).
Gregariousness.
Acquisition.
Construction.

This is Professor McDougall's classification. Names for the emotions which accompany the instincts which he thinks it possible to distinguish, are not easily discovered, and he finds himself forced to omit some. The subject clearly requires more discussion than it has received, before any such list can be regarded as more than provisional. If feeding, for example, why not sleeping? If constructiveness, why not destructiveness? Further, it is fairly clear that instinctive activity may be unaccompanied by emotion in the sense in which we have used the term. Many, however, would maintain that emotions do accompany such instincts even when not consciously experienced, but 'in the unconscious' to which we may now turn.

It is the recognition, chiefly since the opening of the present century, that most of our mental life has not the character of consciousness which is responsible for much of the present popular interest in the subject. The laws of the interconnections of conscious elements had been elaborately studied a hundred years ago by writers like Hartley, and already by the time of John Stuart Mill it seemed unlikely that much more could be added. Authorities like Bain were producing definitive treatises on the intellect and the emotions, and, though there were sporadic attempts to found a science of animal psychology and laboratory methods were being developed, it hardly

appeared possible to do more than put the finishing touches on so monumental a structure.

At this point morbid psychology, through the work of medical men and alienists, began to force upon the attention of the official representatives of the science the necessity for fresh hypotheses.

As so often, advance was due to the fresh stimulus provided by strange occurrences for which accepted theories could suggest no explanation. Hypnotism, alternating personalities, automatic writing and psychical research, hysteria, phobias and neuroses in general, particularly those relating to sex, became the central points of interest. Resemblances between the phenomena of dreams and those of mental diseases led to a completely new account of what happens in the mind when conscious control is relaxed.

The facts thus brought to light show that only a small part of our mental life is under conscious control, i.e., controlled by processes accompanied by consciousness. This has emphasised the fact that consciousness is the exception rather than the rule in the processes studied by psychology. In dealing, however, with 'The Unconscious' which is becoming too ready a resource in psychological difficulties, the first necessity is to decide as to 74 the precise way in which we are going to use our language. Most discussions of the unconscious proceed as though there were two distinct realms, the conscious and the unconscious; as when it is said that what was in the unconscious can be brought into consciousness or what is conscious may be repressed into the unconscious. The mind is thus regarded as composed of separate strata, and in addition to the Unconscious, we hear of the Sub-conscious, the Pre-conscious, the Fore-conscious, and so forth. This metaphorical language is convenient for some purposes, but no clear understanding of the problems can be reached unless we are prepared to go behind such verbal devices.

When we say that under certain circumstances (hypnosis, word-association tests, or dream-analysis) we are able to recover from the unconscious repressed memories of early childhood, or to liberate portions of experience, we are apt to forget that for other purposes we can describe the facts quite differently. We say, for example, that we can remember what we have not hitherto remembered; and when asked what we mean by remembering we reply, still without bringing in the unconscious, in terms of the effects of past experiences or our present behaviour. And in doing this we are not only avoiding the *word* 'unconscious' but a certain idea or hypothesis. The word 'unconscious' is, indeed, only useful when deliberately used by way of metaphor, i.e., so as to avoid this idea. What is the idea in question? The answer leads us to the heart of the problem.

We may say of the physical world, of a stone, for example, that it is unconscious, i.e., not conscious at all in any fashion. But in psychology the unconscious is often used to mean 'conscious but not in my personal consciousness'. Thus a common argument runs as follows:

> There can be no doubt at all that there are processes of which we are not

achievements, so the psychology of desire and memory in its early stages has lent itself to a picturesque treatment which, now that its work has been done, can profitably be discarded.

There is thus reason to expect that many phenomena for which the most desperate hypotheses have been required will be found to be explained by quite reasonable scientific assumptions. *Dreams*, for example, are being shown to bear the closest resemblance to many normal forms of conscious thinking. Dreaming is, in fact, a metaphorical or symbolical mode of thinking, allowing the analogies upon which metaphor depends to be so strained and far-fetched that the fully awakened mind is often entirely unable to recognise what has been the subject of thought. Now, thinking, as was pointed out above, never takes place without desire or striving of some sort – thinking being the *form* taken by conation. Thus the unrecognisable form or expression of the desire active at the time is what characterises dreaming, rather than any suppression or censorship of the desire itself.

Similarly, no fresh factors or strange hypotheses are required 76 to deal with the phenomena of alternating or dissociated personalities. Cases have been carefully studied in which a person has appeared to live two or even more independent lives, the memories of one being inaccessible to those of the other. In a milder form the same thing often happens in neuroses, when patients suffer from what are known as fugues, lapses into behaviour, often of an unusual kind, the memory of which escapes them. In these cases we need not suppose that there is anything actually in the personality during one phase which in the least corresponds to, or partakes of, the other phase, whether in a repressed, submerged or unconscious form – any more than the signalman who sends his train along one line supposes that there are suppressed trains rushing along the other lines on which it might have gone. It is true that in these cases we have an unusual multiplication of tracks, but we have only one train. Similar considerations apply to hypnosis and to automatic writing, and when this is realized one set of extended principles will be found to cover both traditional psychology and the newer developments.

While dealing with the nature of consciousness it remains to mention that the answer to the primary question, ‘Is there a mind?’ is still undecided. There are four main answers:

(1) There is the view of the Behaviorists and Materialists that what appears to be mental is in reality physiological processes. Thinking, for instance, is sub-vocal talking – minimal muscular movements in the organs of speech (Watson, *Behavior*, *passim*), or as the neurologists would put it, ‘As soon as “mental states” are resolved into reflexes among some of the 10,000,000,000 cortical neurons, it becomes obvious that the word ‘mind’ is no more than shorthand for neuronal action and interaction when influenced from the outside or by internal stimuli’ (Morley Roberts, *Warfare in the Human Body*, p. 229).

(2) The Animists reply that whatever may be the status of these material phenomena there is a mind or soul also, affected no doubt by the body but likewise affecting it. This interactionist view is advocated in McDougall's *Body and Mind*.

(3) Various hypotheses have been devised to avoid either of these opposed positions:

(a) Parallelism, by which, although mind and body do not affect one another every event in the higher nervous system is supposed to be accompanied by a mental event, and vice versa.

(b) Epiphenomenalism, according to which, mind would be a by-product of neural process, not reduceable to such process but still quite unable to affect it. This, perhaps sombre, view has lately receded somewhat in favour of (c).

(c) A view by which both mind and brain would be equally real, both what we experience and what others looking into our heads could presumably observe being equally signs of some more fundamental happenings. The very same event which *appears* to me as my thought, appearing to you, if at all, as neurons in agitation. The disadvantage of such a doubleaspect hypothesis is that the fundamental happenings are left in such obscurity.

(d) To avoid such unknowables a new set of suggestions has recently been put forward by Professor Russell, mind being reduced to sensations and images, and these regarded as probably reduceable to physiological events. At the same time his treatment of matter turns the universe into sense-data and sensibilia. Thus the two suggestions meet in a kind of neutral stuff, those changes in this stuff which follow psychological laws being mental, those which follow physical laws being physical. Much interest is certain to centre round this view, which is, however, far from representing a stable position.

It is fortunately not necessary for psychology to assume any one of these hypotheses in order to continue its work, any more than physics needs the aid of metaphysics. The most interesting thing about these metapsychologies is the extreme degree in which they resemble one another when fully stated. A fact which suggests that their remaining apparent differences may be due merely to the language in which they are stated.

Having now described the main features of the science of Psychology, we may turn to the question of its use. Since society is composed of human beings, it is not surprising that most topics of social importance and interest have their psychological side. Our knowledge has, however, only recently reached a stage at which it can be of assistance in this sphere. In some branches uncertainty still

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