

THE ENIGMA OF VISIBILITY AND ORIGINALITY

Essays, historical in approach,
on things
only imperfectly understood.

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ABSTRACT:

This thesis deals mostly with studying the occurrence of the widespread unemployment of the senses. Part I of the thesis deals with Visual thought and sensorial experience as found (wanting in some measure) in our Hellenic and Judaic traditions. Part II represents a concentration on technology and education: i.e. to what extent mechanization has entered our whole being, affected the total fabric of our society and its educational institutions as well as penetrated the subconscious of the artists of our times. Part III, The eye, the meeting place, is a call to restore the world of perception and to reestablish the roots of the mind in its body.

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Sir George Williams Univ.
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CONTENTS.

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	i
PART I	
REASON AND PERCEPTION	11
PART II	
EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY	22
PART III	
THE EYE, THE MEETING PLACE	54
POSTSCRIPT	61
BIBLIOGRAPHY	

INTRODUCTION

The main theme "The Enigma of Visibility and Originality" of this thesis was accepted in the spirit of great caution. This must not be taken as an indication of underestimating (on the part of the author) the importance of the problems posed in this thesis but rather as a measure of the extent of this writer's awareness of treading on very thin ice indeed. This realization of not being fully qualified to deal with a topic of such scope and importance to the general field of Art caused me to readily rely on the thoughts and ideas as expressed by numerous authors, philosophers and artists, such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Martin Heidegger, Werner Haftmann (particularly his excellent book on Paul Klee), Jean Piaget, Jacques Ellul, Albert Camus, Rudolf Arnheim, to name but a few.

The central theme of this thesis is that of visibility, perception ("the thinking eye," "the seeing mind"). The noun "enigma" in association with that of "visibility" and "originality" refers to the recurrent, constant and continuously reciprocal activity of "vision" i.e. to see things "at a distance" or to see "into the life of things." In the case of the artist it may be a particular sharpness, accuracy, or depth of vision, or even better still a "heightened" form of such activity in opposition to others allowing their powers of percep-

tion to lie dormant, largely unused (or wrongly applied) leaving them in a more "shadowy" terrain.

Poets, painters and sculptors particularly give full reign to this "heightened" form of vision.

During the preparation of the writing of this thesis, the writer both recalled and came across many lines of poetry, which ideally served the purpose of directly focusing in on the problems posed in the parts of this thesis, which are to follow. This author has given prominent display to these important lines by placing them out of context, at the beginning and end of the parts, i.e. by allowing these poets to have the first and last words, so to speak, on the problems discussed within the chapters. These lines, chronologically spaced, are not to be taken by the reader as an exercise bordering on the facetious, but rather as an honest attempt at setting a mood in answer to the questions, posed in the actual body of the work. These lines are like quotation marks, suspending the parts and hopefully having an enigmatic effect on the reader during the course of reading a chapter. The distribution of this poetry throughout the thesis in a way intends to serve a similar purpose to that of a painter's or sculptor's way of handling mass - space - space relationships.

The earth is degenerating these days.
Bribery and corruption abound.
Children no longer mind parents.
Every man wants to write a book,
and it is evident
that the end of the world is approaching fast.

- Assyrian tablet -
c. 2800 B.C.

"Where in the world are we?"

- opening sentence of Cicero's speech
on Catalina to the senate of Rome.
c. 40 B.C.

The world is too much with us; late and soon, getting and
spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

W. Wordsworth
-1806.

Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beautiful forms of things:
We murder to dissect.

W. Wordsworth.

By abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man.

S.T. Coleridge.

A grief without a pang, void, dark and drear,
A stifled, drowsy unimpassioned grief
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief
In word, or sigh or tear.

S.T. Coleridge
c. 1830.

What is the being called
Man? Consider the earth within
The unlimited obscurity of the
World's space. It is like a tiny
grain of sand separated by no
less than a mile of emptiness
from the next particle. On the
surface of this tiny grain of sand
there lives a crawling, bewildered
multitude of presumably intelligent
animals who for the moment
have discovered knowledge.
What is the temporal extension
of such human life on the road
of time measuring millions of
years? It is a scarcely visible
motion of the second hand or a
mere breath. There is no special
reason, within the totality of
being, for singling out the
entity, called mankind
to which we ourselves
happen to belong.

Martin Heidegger's "An Introduction
to Metaphysics." c. 1930.

I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which overleaps itself
And falls on the other.

Shakespeare's Macbeth,
Act. I, Scene 7.
c. 1600

Man is now experiencing more grievously and fatefully than
ever the increasing decay of the old organic forms of
men's common life... and Man's lagging behind his works.

Edmund Husserl, c. 1910.

We live in a world characterized by:
The flight of the Gods,
The destruction of the earth,
The standardization of man,
The pre-eminence of the mediocre.

Martin Heidegger's "An
Introduction to Metaphysics."
c. 1930.

Things fall apart:
The centre cannot hold...

Yeats.

The remains of the sun are shuddering.
Fumes rise as it rots.
It has a green skin,
punctured,
With stains running from the sores.
It is nothing more than a decaying grape.
Its light is putrifaction.
At the moment,
It is retreating into the anus of the night.
In the morning,
It will be dumped like a turd on the horizon.

Opening paragraph from
R. Hunter's "Erebus," 1968.

For the world is a mountain
of shit: if it's going to
be moved at all, it's got
to be taken by handfuls.

Allen Ginsberg.
c. 1955.

PART ONE

REASON AND PERCEPTION

In the ancient world there existed an intuitive awareness that in breaking boundaries man reaches points of reversal and no return. The Greek dramatists, myth-makers and philosophers presented the idea of creativity as creating also its own kind of blindness. It was as though they realized that the penalty for one breakthrough was a general sealing off of awareness to a larger field of sensation. The Greeks left many doors open in their myths and philosophies, by wisely placing a great deal of ambiguity in them. This attitude of not being absolutely definitive allowed for further interpretations, adjustments, changes and growth of their perception and conception of their world around them and themselves. These avenues of open endedness were effectively closed by later religions and philosophies which propounded and imposed a different world view. Such is the case for example with the "Myth of Narcissus." This Myth is directly concerned with a fact of human experience, as the pronoun "Narcissus" indicates. It is from the Greek word "Narcosis," which means numbness. What did the Greeks really understand or mean by the underlying cause that numbed the senses (or perceptions) of Narcissus?

The Greeks started on the road of celebrating man as an individual by loosening up his ties with the Gods as well as with members of the human community, whose fates, they deemed, were inexorably tied to the

whims of the Gods. This loosening up of ties, which were at one time so firmly entrenched in the daily lives and thoughts of Man, evolved out of a great deal of introspection as to the real nature of man. This introspection allowed for the contemplation of the possibility of man beholding before his own eyes and mind an image of man, himself, rather than a (super) imposed image of a supernatural origin; i.e. the possibility of thought (processes) in its entirety being operative within man autonomously, rather than a borrowed (or lent) "extended" facility from the gods (paying in turn needless rent for such a privilege, by doing the gods' bidding at their pleasure). According to L. Wittgenstein, philosophy is not a theory but an activity. With the above sentence in mind we could surmise that those Greeks informed with this knowledge began to view their relations both unto themselves, others, and all that surrounded them in a totally different light. They could consider themselves as no longer subservient to any one thing or being. This radically new point of departure, as it welled up from within man himself, embarked him on a journey of a new kind altogether. They had cut loose - they were on their own, quite literally. The Myth of Narcissus is suggestive of the fears and anxiety that must have accompanied such an excursion into the unknown. The myth is an elaborate form of a dire warning to any man daring to postulate such new thought. For it is not so much

that the youth Narcissus saw an image of himself before him in the water and fell in love with that image as was suggested by later Christian interpretation of this myth, and thus numbed his perceptions; nor that he mistook his own reflection for another person; "this extension of himself by mirror numbing his perceptions until he became the servo-mechanism of his own extended or repeated image" as has been suggested by M. McLuhan.¹ It is rather that Narcissus saw no one... nothing in other words. There was nothing before him, ... but a void. He was incapable of perception; all his senses were numbed. He was totally mesmerized. He reflected upon reflection itself; that being the real extent of the fear as suggested by this Myth. It appears that J. Swift drew a similar conclusion as his "Gulliver's Travels" particularly that bizarre episode of the voyage to Laputa, seems to indicate. (La-puta (la putain) appears to be a direct take-off on Luther's coarse exclamation "The whore reason!"). These airy creatures that inhabited the supraterrrestrial land of Laputa had one eye continuously fixed contemplatively at the stars above and the other eye turned inward in empty and vacuous introversion. They, like Narcissus, had effectively cut themselves off from sensory perception.

One can similarly trace a distrust (sometimes to the point of direct hostility) of information obtained by our senses in other cultures, such as the Judaic side

¹ M. McLuhan. Understanding Media. Toronto: The New American Library of Canada Ltd., 1966, P. 51

of our tradition illustrates; as the Psalmist's insistence that the very "beholding" of idols conforms men to them; the Judaic tradition subscribing to only one image, namely that of Jahweh, The Lord of Lords, the only God. His followers are like unto Him as children would be to a father; and like a supreme "Gardener" (or Shepherd) giving "dominion over (earthly) things" to his (sons) "apprentice" gardeners (or shepherds) for them to do with as they deemed suitable for the duration of time spent on earth. The reward for having been a good worker on this soil (earth) being infinitely in the presence of the "Father" in the "Above" or hereafter. (This realization of not really being of this earth (as the word "pilgrim" would imply) being in part responsible for the carelessness as shown by man's treatment and arbitrary usage of the "things" of this earth during his "temporary" stay). The tell tale mark of man and hence his likeness to (and identity with) God was his ability to think. With this gift he partook in the creation, as initiated and continued by God, by showing his eternal gratitude and praise for such trust. As has been pointed out by M. Heidegger the verbs to think (denken) and to thank (danken) have this kind of kinship - (the latter being taken up and more fully explored from the Hebraic point of view by M. Buber in his discussions on creativity). As similarly so the "Hymn" (song of praise) would represent the joy and gratitude of man for having been elected and entrusted with this power of thought and creativity; as the "elegy" (song

of mourning) expresses the heavy burden of this knowledge (this depth of vision and insight man has into himself and things around him) and the responsibility that is part and parcel with it. Both hymn and elegy spring forth from the very depth of man's being (evoked by a "poetic" people in their height of joy or depth of misery). They are wishes, hopes, requests and demands, begging and imploring not to be cast loose. The very idea of being "cast loose" being both "ungrateful" and "unthinkable" (and vice versa). This relationship of thought - gratitude - creativity - deed, being the very cornerstone, cementing in eternity and irrevocably the faithful to the "Master," the "Shepherd," the Father, the "Creator," the Origin. Faith to the Judaic people really meant to take on the authority of the "Supreme authority" without question. It is easy to see why what took place around the 5th Century in the Hellenic Isles could not possibly have taken place in the land of the Israelites for their marriage between "heaven and earth" was much more firmly established. The whimsical relationship between the Greeks and their gods and demi-gods resembled more a chinashop of well-used antiques. It could not have been such a great traumatic experience for them to finally transfer "authority" to the residence of man's own mind, and in doing so making man independent (no longer "ridiculously" subservient) and responsible only unto himself.

As has been stated in the introduction, this

thesis is mostly concerned with the relationship between "visibility," man's "perceiving" powers, and things (animate or inanimate); "The thinking eye," "the seeing mind," in its relation to object (including itself). In order to do so it seems necessary to go more deeply into the above (Hebraic and Hellenic tradition) as well as thereafter study how these influences played a role (or did not) in developing our "attitudes" and "thoughts" of today.

The Judaic (Hebraic) tradition in a manner of speaking resembles a kind of "compromise" between God and things, man participating in this relationship in a mediating capacity, after having been "groomed" and "cared" for by a ("tired") Supreme Being for such a "chosen" task. It is in a way a "miraculous" discovery and an extraordinary stroke of good fortune: the property called Earth, deeded to an "elect" people by a just and kindly, old (gentlemanly) Father of all men - the terms of the transaction being gratitude - the specifications being no further questions asked (for surely it would be "unthinkable" (extremely "ungrateful") to question such a gift of absolute kindness).

The verb to "speculate" involves (in its etymological sense) reflection and meditation. It has found its way into our present day vernacular, meaning to buy and sell (land) at a risk (small or large). However speculation involves a reflection (and meditation) more of a momentary kind (a hesitation), to calculate the possibilities, the

odds. (The "odd" relationship of "elect" man to things of this earth has overtones of a usurious kind). The risks (the odds) for man with one foot in the doorway to the heavens were never to the extent of "loosing all" (as in the case of the Hellenic tradition). The short term lease, that one generation of man would enjoy, to "care" for the "things" of this earth is by far too short, for this man admittedly so is all too imperfect. The "care" for the things of this earth requires fundamentally and necessarily a "long" term approach on behalf of man, the whole of humanity. This "long" term approach requires the "care" born out of the perceptive mind, the imagination of man, exceeding and suspending from one generation to the next. The temporal relationship of man to earth does not appear to be of sufficient strength in itself to do justice to the nature of all things, for man being much too paradoxical "quixotic" and whimsical by nature himself. A generational "organic" approach is called for regardless of whether a God or many gods are kind, absolute, just, whimsical or none of these.

The Hellenic man of old bargained and wagered with the gods (and vice versa) until such a time arrived, that its philosophers entertained and pressed for notions that amounted to no less than disowning the gods, considering them as unreliable and delinquent in their duties toward man, absolving them of any further responsibility for man, and putting an end finally to their meddling influence in human affairs. As is stated above, thought (al-

though god-like) took up residence in the minds of men who chose to go it alone. Having logically arrived at that present state of affairs, the ability to reason was given a place of unequal honour unproportionally high above any power to perceive or to intend objects through the aid of man's senses. Quite literally a sense of vertigo seemed to have set in, ... in as much as the world outside of man was viewed with a great deal of doubt, scepticism or "reasoned" to be wrongly interpreted by our senses altogether. Parmenides went as far as to insist that all sensory experience was no more than deceptive illusion. He called for a definite distinction between perceiving and reasoning, for it was to reasoning that one had to look for the correction of the senses and the establishment of the truth:

"For never shall this be proved, that things that are not are; but do thou hold back thy thought from this way of enquiry, nor let custom, born of much experience force thee to let wander along this road thy aimless eye, thy echoing ear or thy tongue; but do thou judge by reason the strife-encompassed proof that I have spoken."¹

Even to this day the concept of "Reality testing," being very prevalent and greatly important in psychological circles, has similar overtones; "Reality testing" meaning,

¹ Kirk, G.S., and J.E. Raven. The Presocratic Philosophers, Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1962, Fragment 6, P. 271.

to caution one not to identify innocently the world we perceive with the world that "really" is; this could distinctly undermine our trustful familiarity with the reality in which we are at home.

However the Greek thinkers were subtle enough not to simply condemn sensory experience but to distinguish between the wise and the unwise use of it. The criterion for how to evaluate perception was supposed to come from reasoning. Heraclitus had warned that "barbarian souls" cannot correctly interpret the senses: "Evil witnesses are eyes and ears for men if they have souls that do not understand their language."

Thus the split overcome in the conception of the physical world in relation to a "supra-world" was now introduced into that of the mind. Just as the realm of order and truth had been beyond the range of man on this earth, so it was now beyond the realm of the senses in the geography of the inner world. Sensory perception and reasoning were established as antagonists, in need of each other but different from each other in principle.

It would no doubt be of great importance to give more background and information as to how this split came about. One could go back somewhat in the Greek history of philosophy and see to what extent the Pythagorean philosophy (the lawful order of astronomy - (harmony of the spheres) - in opposition to the disorderly setting of unpredictable changes of the sublunar world) set the stage

for this to occur. As well as to go forward somewhat in time and study the ideas on the same subject by the great philosophers of Greece such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. In Plato's dialogues an ambiguous attitude (toward sensory perception and reasoning) is expressed in different approaches, which co-exist uneasily. A similarly complex attitude toward sensory experience is found in Aristotle's thinking; neither one philosopher alleviating the tension that this ambiguity caused. However these Greek philosophers at least showed a great deal of awareness that the distinction between reasoning and sensory perception created great problems. They were unwilling to exalt reason dogmatically at the price of deprecating the senses. They refined the technique of reasoning but they also believed that, in the words of Aristotle, "the soul never thinks without an image."

To round out Part I of this thesis, a quote from M. Merleau Ponty would convey the important dimension of the ambiguity spoken of earlier:

"We never cease living in the world of perception, but we bypass it in critical thought - almost to the point of forgetting the contribution of perception to our idea of the truth. For critical thought encounters only bare propositions, which it discusses, accepts or rejects. Critical thought has broken with the naive evidence of "things" and when it affirms, it is because it no longer finds any means of denial. However necessary this activity of verification may be, specifying criteria and demanding from our experience its

credentials of validity, it is not aware of our contact with the perceived world, which is simply there before us, beneath the level of the verified true and false

To restore the world of perception
... The perceiving mind is an incarnated mind To reestablish the roots of the mind in its body and in its world, going against doctrines which treat perception as a simple result of the action of external things on our body as well as against those which insist on the autonomy of consciousness. These philosophies commonly forget - in favour of exteriority or of pure interiority - the insertion of the mind in corporeality, the ambiguous relation which we entertain with our body and, correlatively, with perceived things."¹

¹ M. Merleau Ponty, The Primacy of Perception. Northwestern: Univ. Press, 1964, pp. 3-4.

The Caged Skylark

As a dare-gale skylark in a dull cage
Man's mounting spirit in his bone-house, mean house,
dwells -

That bird beyond the remembering his free fells;
This in drudgery, day-labouring-out life's age.

Though aloft on turf or perch or poor low stage,
Both sing sometimes the sweetest, sweetest spells,
Yet both droop deadly sometimes in their cells,
Or wring their barriers in burst of fear or rage.

Not that the sweet-fowl, song-fowl, needs no rest -
Why, hear him babble and drop down
to his nest,

But his own nest, wild nest, no prison.

Man's spirit will be flesh bound when found at best
But uncumbered: meadow-down is not distressed
For a rainbow footing it nor he for his bones risen.

Gerald Manley Hopkins.

PART TWO

EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY

During the French student rebellion of 1967 there was a statement made by some students that could strike one as being rather curious. The statement, referred to here, is that they, the students, were fed up with authors such as Camus...

Albert Camus may or may not go down in our literary history as one of the better writers of this century. Be that as it may for surely the outburst could hardly have been of a literary-critical nature (given the circumstances in which it was heard). The outburst was more so directed at a quality, that a man such as Camus stood for.

Albert Camus could be considered (in a way) a modern day apostle with a strong belief in the need for communication and dialogue, which he professed must be engaged in objectively by all people particularly when times are (extremely) trying. His wartime "Letters to a German friend" and books such as "The Rebel" and others are all attempts made in that direction.

Perhaps it was not so much the concept of true dialogue that the students had in mind but, reversely, they were trying to point out that "dialogue" itself has no hope of survival in the present day marshland of bureaucratic verbiage, i.e. the lines of communication are of a worn-out variety, serving purposes and ends that are directly in conflict with those of the students.

The campus of a modern high school and univer-

sity resembles the whole of society mosaically. Although it sometimes institutionally falls behind the times, its "student" population intimates "its" future with a remarkable degree of accuracy (minimally - on an emotional level in any case) and in doing so these campi give the onlooker a fairly close look of what is to come in the years ahead.

The unrest on the American campus gives one perhaps a more accurate look of what lies ahead to the extent that the American students already know that at the end of the line no job (of their choice, vocation or inclination) is awaiting them; whereas their European counterparts still (at least in 1967) spoke of resenting their institutes of learning, in as much as they resembled "factories" turning out so many sausages.... To the American student the institute is no longer a factory but rather a much more sophisticated type of "vested interest."

What, indeed, are our institutes all about? Have they (at present) outlived their usefulness in their present form or is it possible that initially and during the course of their development they never really served man in his aspiration to learn? To put the question in another way: if the goal of education is to create (qualitatively) the possibilities for a student to discover and invent rather than (quantitatively) increase the amount of knowledge from point x to y, to what ex-

tent is our present institutional form of education fulfilling such aspirations...; to what extent is the quality of education strained?

The structural form of our educational institution, particularly in the manner in which it is staffed and administered, is a direct result of a hierarchical influence and control (of an ecclesiastical, military and political kind); the school being a most useful extension of that hierarchy. The break between church and state (as achieved by Napoleon for example) resulted in a move away from the ecclesiastical, shaping the schools more along military lines; - delivering to the (modern) state its "useful" products (i.e. its graduated students) who (or which) in turn carry out in some manner or form the "useful" policies of such a government.

This is the skeleton, the state and its policies supplying as well most of the muscle, compelling a way of life (i.e. of learning and living - its absence -) on the student and teacher population that could not even remotely approximate some of the ideals of a true education. Our governments are continuously becoming stronger, their meddling influence in the education of the young by extension growing larger all the time.

Such is the situation (on the one hand) and let us make no mistake about it, particularly not when brilliant "new" idealistic theories are advanced by educators, philosophers, psychologists, etc... on how to "improve"

the situation. The above analysis of the structure of our educational institution must at all times be kept in mind particularly when one makes an attempt at understanding what it is precisely that the students are rebelling against. The students rebel against the "whole" system, not a "part" of it; they call in question the whole "set up," demanding changes that commence at the very roots, the very "core" of the education of man. "Particular" solutions to "particular" problems to them are mere "stop gaps," stays of executions, offerings to placate the moderates amongst them, amounting to no more than further evidence of "sheer," "ingrained" unwillingness to alter, to change and to attempt bolder experiments; for to them everyone and everything is at stake. All solutions (by educational theorists and applicators of such theories) advanced and tried have miserably failed. The last, being the Technological "miracle worker," has proven itself to be a "fake" in many more ways than one.

Let us on the other hand take a look at the subjects taught in these institutions of learning. Most subjects taught in our schools relate to the Arts (humanities), Sciences and Applied sciences (as well as technological "inferior" subjects such as the "trades" and mechanical arts). A previous chapter dealt with the prejudicial discrimination between perception and thinking. It was shown that this division plays an important

role even in today's psychology (for example "Reality testing"). It is the point of this chapter to show that this view was not limited only to the field of psychology but had application and support in the traditional exclusion of the so-called "Fine" Arts from the "Liberal" Arts. The Liberal Arts are so-named because they were the only ones worthy of being practiced by a "Free" man and dealt solely with language and mathematics. Specifically, Grammar, Dialectic and Rhetoric were the arts of words; Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy (as well as Music) were based on Mathematics.

In his book on "Visual Thinking" (Perception torn from thinking), R. Arnheim tells us the following:

"Today ... Our entire educational system continues to be based on the study of words and numbers. In kindergarten, to be sure, our youngsters learn by seeing and handling handsome shapes, and invent their own shapes on paper or in clay by thinking through perceiving. But with the first grade of elementary school the senses begin to lose educational status. More and more the arts are considered as a training in agreeable skills, as entertainment and mental release. As the ruling disciplines stress more rigorously the study of words and numbers, their kinship with the arts is increasingly obscured, and the arts are reduced to a desirable supplement; fewer and fewer hours of the week can be spared from the study of the subjects that, in everybody's opinion, truly matter. By the time the competition for college placement becomes acute, it is a rare high school that insists on reserving for the arts the time needed to make their practice at all fruitful. Rarer still is the institution at which a concern with the arts is consciously justified by the realization that they contribute indispensably to the develop-

ment of a reasoning and imaginative human being. This educational blackout persists in college, where the art student is considered as pursuing separate and intellectually inferior skills, although any "major" in one of the more reputable academic areas is encouraged to find "healthy recreation" in the studio during some of his spare hours. The arts for which the bachelor and the master are certified do not yet include the creative exercise of the eyes and hands as an acknowledge component of higher education.

The arts are neglected because they are based on perception and perception is disdained because it is not assumed to involve thought. In fact, educators, and administrators cannot justify giving the arts an important position in the curriculum unless they understand that the arts are the most powerful means of strengthening the perceptual component without which productive thinking is impossible in any field of endeavour. The neglect of the arts is only the most tangible symptom of the widespread unemployment of the senses in every field of academic study. What is most needed is not more aesthetics or more esoteric manuals of art education but a convincing case made for visual thinking, quite in general. Once we understand in theory, we might try to heal in practice the unwholesome split which cripples the training of reasoning power."¹

It is the contention of Mr. R. Arnheim that "Visual" thinking is as important as "Rational" thinking. He analyzes in his book called "Visual Thinking," the problems that have arisen due to placing Visual thought (obtained by our senses) in subordination to Reason. The above is stated, (since it has been quoted

¹ R. Arnheim, Visual Thinking. London, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1969, pp. 2-3.

out of context) in order to dissuade anyone from jumping to ready conclusions such as: "I told you so. We need more and more art and less and less science in our curricula"; for the latter is not at all what Mr. Arnheim has in mind by "the widespread unemployment of the senses." He wishes to see the "employment of the senses" in all subject areas rather than a large concentration of Visual thought solely in "one privileged" area. For he warns:

"If we hear that the arts develop and enrich the human personality and cultivate creativity we need to know whether they do so better than other fields of study and why. The battle against one sided intellectualism cannot be fought by nourishing a romantic prejudice against the sciences as agents of mechanization. If the present practice in the sciences does indeed impoverish the human mind, the remedy may have to be sought in the improvement of science education and not in an escape from the sciences into the arts as a refuge. Nor are pedantry, sterility and mechanization found only in the sciences; they are equally present in the arts."¹

In order to add further weight to the problems under discussion the following quote is offered from Prof. George Grant, as he analyzes the present dilemma the university curriculum finds itself in from a different point of view than Mr. R. Arnheim:

¹ Ibid., p. 296.

"In the last hundred years in Europe, a series of justifications of humane studies arose in the light of the crisis produced by the age of progress. Each of these passing justifications made certain particular studies dominant for their particular hour. For example, Dilthey's distinction between "Naturwissenschaft" and "Geisteswissenschaft" led to the enormous concentration on the study of history as that which would fulfil the role which once had been played by the traditional philosophy and theology. By studying history men could understand the alternatives of the past, see where they were and be enlightened to choose where they were going. The humanities became the sciences of the human spirit which culminated in that new subject, the philosophy of history. This position was destroyed in turn by Nietzsche when he showed that history, could not, any more than God, provide men with a horizon within which to live. In terms of this critique Weber taught that a humane and scientific sociology could fulfil the magisterial role. Over the century these various justifications have had their necessary moment but as they have succeeded each other, the humanities have become a smaller and smaller island in a rising lake. The drowning lake was the ever more clearly formulated assumption that all important questions can be solved by technological means."¹

When a student first arrives at a school of learning (be it a high school or university) the curriculum may at first appear to be a set of arbitrary and incoherent details. However this is only so at the surface. In fact it can be understood in terms of powers and purposes of a society or civilization. For, in the

¹ G. Grant. Technology and Empire. Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1969, p. 122.

words of Prof. G. Grant:

"The dynamism of technology has gradually become the dominant purpose in western civilization because the most influential men in that civilization have believed for the last centuries that the mastery of chance was the chief means of improving the race. It is difficult to estimate how much this quest for mastery is still believed to serve the hope of men's perfecting or how much it is now an autonomous quest. Be that as it may, one finds agreement between corporation executive and union member, farmer and suburbanite, cautious and radical politician, university administrator and civil servant, in that, they all effectively subscribe to society's faith in mastery."¹

By "technology" ("Technique") Jacques Ellul means:

"The totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency (for a given stage of development) in every field of human activity."²

Technology is in part responsible for the crisis in education and does offer tools in which it can come to the rescue and assist in bringing about some changes needed. This statement, taken at face value, seems straight forward and innocent enough. However,

¹ G. Grant, Technology and Empire. Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1969, P. 113.

² J. Ellul. The Technological Society. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1964, P. XXV.

let us start here by asking some rather pointed questions: - What sort of technique will be employed, what price will be exacted, what needs to be sacrificed next, to what purpose, to what end, ... etc? Where is the child of man in all of these means, methods, ways, ends, etc... that so totally engross all of us? Where is our humanity, our being? What guides us, that has any true meaning and value? And if there is such true meaning and value, what lines of communication are still left intact, untouched and unimpeded as to make it possible to impart and in-form such meaning and values?

In order to lend more gravity to the foregoing questions, I would like to offer a number of quotes:

"So we arrive at the era of social engineering in which entrepreneurial talent broadens its province to orchestrate the total human context which surrounds the industrial complex. Politics, education, leisure, entertainment, culture as a whole the unconscious drives and even protests against the technocracy itself: all these become the subjects of purely technical scrutiny and of purely technical manipulation. The effort is to create a new social organism whose health depends upon its capacity to keep the technological heart beating regularly."¹

Here is an incisive prediction of things to

¹ T. Roszak, The Making of a Counter Culture. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969, P. 6.

come, by Paul Goodman, which appears in his book "The Empire City," published in 1947; it is delivered by the ghost of the super capitalist, Eliphaz, the last of the self-made men:

"Sociolatriy is the period when the great Society that has inherited itself from me will be organized for the good of all and will coordinate unchanged its wonderful productive capacities to heighten continually the Standard of Living. You will buy many expensive things that you do not absolutely need.... Next, the great Society will turn to assure the psychological well-being of most of its members. This is called "the education for democracy in the conditions of mass industrialization." This is the Sociolatriy. It is the adjustment of the individual to a social role without releasing any new forces of nature.... Please, I am not speaking of a crude regimentation but of a conformity with universal tolerance and intelligent distinction.... Each person will warrant individual attention for there is a man fitted, with alterations, for every job...."¹

The following quotes are by J. Ellul from his book, "The Technological Society":

"Technique requires predictability and, no less, exactness of prediction. It is necessary then, that technique prevail over the human being. For technique, this is a matter of life and death. Technique must reduce man to

¹ P. Goodman, The Empire City. New York: Macmillan, 1964, P. 277.

a technical animal.... Human caprice crumbles before necessity; there can be no human autonomy in the face of technical autonomy. The individual must be fashioned by techniques, either negatively (by the techniques of understanding man) or positively (by the adaptation of man to the technical framework) in order to wipe out the blots his personal determination introduces into the perfect design of the organization."¹

"It was thought for a long time that man's conduct belonged to the realm of art, and it could certainly be said that Freudian psychoanalysis is an art. Behaviour based on flair, on intuitive as well as reasoned knowledge and on personal relations; the spontaneous devising of means for influencing heart and mind; the wholehearted participation of man in his acts - all these are characteristics of art. Great leaders, great teachers, and agitators have all been artists. But Art and Artistry no longer suffice. We must find solutions to the problems raised by techniques, and only through technical means can we find them.

The means of exerting action on men must answer to the following three criteria:

- 1) Generality. Every man must be reached in every area of life because everyone is involved. Individual action is unimportant.
- 2) Objectivity. Action, since it is a function of society itself, cannot be dependent upon the transient and subjective acts of individuals. The means must be rendered independent of

ⁱ J. Ellul, The Technological Society. New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1964, P. 138.

the individual who employs them so as to make them applicable by anyone at all. This criterion alone would imply the transition from art to technique.

3) Permanence. Since the technical challenge to man concerns his whole life, psychic action must be exerted upon him without letup, from the beginning of his existence to its end."¹

"EDUCATIONAL TECHNIQUE":

"Progressive education has as its end the "happiness" of the child. It entails bright classrooms, understanding teachers, and pleasurable work. Its educational formulas are well-known: the child in school must be "relaxed" and enjoy himself; he must exist in a "balanced environment," get rid of his "complexes," and "play while he is learning." All this represents a perfectly valid program. It has the elements of genial scholarship derived from the celebrated saying of Montaigne to the effect that we must stop cramming children's skulls to pass the baccalaureate; supercharging their brains with encyclopedic knowledge to the detriment of all other activities. Education must seek, rather, to develop in a balanced way all their faculties, physical, manual, psychic, and intellectual and in this last, it must seek to stress personal observation and reasoning instead of rote learning. Moreover, the whole process is supposed to take place with the minimum possible use of force. It is essential to respect the person of the child and to individualize instruction to the maximum. Instruction is part of total education and is not addressed to the intelligence alone. Its method, based on the maieutic of Socrates, consists in bringing the child himself to discover

¹ J. Ellul, The Technological Society. New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1964, pp. 340-341.

the properties of objects or, starting from facts he himself observes, the principles which underlie them. This educational procedure is, however, a highly refined technique, detailed and rigorous; and it makes the most exacting demands on the technician himself, who must indeed be a remarkable pedagogue to be able to apply it. It is not a mechanical technique that applies itself almost ipso facto. The same holds for the majority of the human techniques we shall discuss. The person of the technician counts for a very great deal, especially since these techniques are in their infancy.

Clearly, the child so educated will be much better balanced and in a better position to develop his own personality. It is beside the point to note how inadequately this program has been applied in France and how meager have been its results. It has been a problem, for example, to recruit enough qualified teachers to make it possible to assign students to classes of no more than fifteen. Difficulties have been experienced in adapting the new methods to the old-time examination programs, which remain unchanged; this of course vitiates the system and results in overburdening the child. There are difficulties with regard to school location and equipment. But these stumbling blocks seem to me only of secondary importance. They represent transitional problems of adaptation which, in the normal course of events, will disappear. In a "normalized" society the new school is the only possible system; and when the importance of the education it has to offer has been understood, no sacrifice will be spared to secure the application of this method. Recall the sacrifices of the Hitler regime and of the Communists in behalf of education. The new education is a governing principle of every modern political system and of technique as a whole.

We come here to one of the most important problems raised by the new method: the child's personality development. The problem is to put the child in the best possible situation and to prepare him optimally for the tasks that await him. These are phrases that are heard everywhere, as for example in the following statement drawn from a speech of Mme. Montessori to UNESCO:

"We must awaken the child's social conscience. I know that it is a complicated educational question, but the child who will become the man must be able to understand life and its needs, the fundamental reason for all existence, the search for happiness.... He must know exactly what he must do and what he must not do for the good of humanity.... To reach these ends, we must prepare the child to understand the meaning and necessity of the entente among the nations. The organization of the peace devolves more on education than on politics. To secure peace practically, we must envision a humane education, psychopedagogy, which affects not one nation but all men on earth.... Education must become a truly humane science to guide all men to judge the present situation correctly."

This statement seems to me truly remarkable in that it designates candidly the end of psychopedagogic technique in the best possible circumstances, within a liberal and democratic conception of man, state, and society. (Mme. Montessori is liberal and speaks for liberal countries). I have taken Mme. Montessori's statement by way of example; but one could examine the purpose of this technique in numerous other pedagogical studies published in the past few years.

We note first of all that this technique

must be implemented by the state, which alone has the means and the breadth to carry it through. But the rigorous application of the psychopedagogic technique means the end of private instruction - and therefore of a traditional freedom.

Second, this technique is "pantocrator" (omnipotent). It must be exercised over all men. If one man is left who is not trained according to its methods, there is the danger of becoming a new Hitler. The technique cannot be effected unless all children are obliged to participate and all parents to co-operate. There can be no exceptions. If only a minority are educated to comply, this technique can resolve none of the problems it is intended to meet. Mme. Montessori's statement is therefore neither a metaphor nor an exaggeration; all human beings, without exception, must be reached. We note again the aggressive character of technique. Mme. Montessori emphasizes the fact that "it is necessary to free the child from the slavery of school and family" for him to enter the cycle of freedom proper to this technique. However, this freedom consists in a profound and detailed surveillance of the child's activities, a complete shaping of his spiritual life, and a precise regulation of his time with a stop watch; in short, in habituating him to a joyful serfdom. The most important aspect of this technique is the forced orientation toward it. It is a social force directed toward a social end.

The education of the child, however, is not directed toward some merely abstract social end. Concretely, the child must develop a social conscience, understand that the meaning of life is the good of humanity, and grasp the need for an entente among all nations. These ideas are much less vague than one might think. The good of humanity, for example, is not the obscure notion the philosophers pre-

tend it to be. At most, it varies somewhat with the political regime; and even this variability is becoming less and less pronounced. Compare Life Magazine with the Soviet News and you will see that the "good of humanity" is conceived in almost identical terms in the United States and in the Soviet Union; the difference lies mainly in the persons charged with securing it. In both cases, the social good can be reduced to a few concrete and precise factors. The corresponding educational technique, as a consequence, takes a completely determinate direction. Social conformism must be impressed upon the child: he must be adapted to his society; he must not impair its development. His integration into the body social must be assured with the least possible friction.

This technique of alleged liberation of the child cannot be oriented differently, even if it were so desired. The technique permits the broadening of the child, the development of his social personality and happiness, and consequently, of his equilibrium. Opposition to society, the lack of social adaptation, produces serious personality difficulties which lead to the loss of psychic equilibrium. One of the most important factors in the child's education therefore is social adaptation. This means that - despite all the pretentious talk about the aims of education - it is not the child in and for himself who is being educated, but the child in and for society. And the society, moreover, is not an ideal one, with full justice and truth, but society as it is.

When a society becomes increasingly totalitarian (and I say "society," not "state"), it creates more and more difficulties of adaptation and requires its citizens to be conformist in the same degree. Thus, this technique becomes all the more necessary. I have no doubt that it makes men better balanced and "happier." And there is the danger. It

makes men happy in a milieu which normally would have made them unhappy, if they had not been worked on, molded, and formed for just that milieu. What looks like the apex of humanism is in fact the pinnacle of human submission: children are educated to become precisely what society expects of them. They must have social consciences that allow them to strive for the same ends as society sets for itself. Clearly, when modern youth are fully educated in the new psychopedagogic technique, many social and political difficulties will disappear. Any form of government or social transformation becomes possible with individuals who have experienced this never-ending process of adaptation. The key word of the new human techniques is, therefore, adaptation.

The new pedagogical methods correspond exactly to the role assigned to education in modern technical society. The Napoleonic conception that the Lycees must furnish administrators for the state and managers for the economy, in conformity with social needs and tendencies, has become world-wide in its extent. According to this conception, education no longer has a humanist end or any value in itself; it has only one goal, to create technicians.... Education will no longer be an unpredictable and exciting adventure in human enlightenment, but an exercise in conformity and an apprenticeship to whatever gadgetry is useful in a technical world."¹

In reviewing all the foregoing quotes, one could respond emotionally and state emphatically that all of that is merely an exercise in how to look at things pessimistically. Theodore Roszak goes as far

¹ J. Ellul, The Technological Society. New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1964, pp. 344-349.

as calling J. Ellul's book "The Technological Society" outrageously pessimistic; although he also admits that the book is, as well, thus far the most global effort to depict the technocracy in full operation. However, not withstanding that such reactions are entirely in keeping with our consistent efforts to either face or not face up to facts, that we may or may not like to see, we are still left with the burden of asking ourselves more importantly still: are these facts correct or incorrect; drawn hopelessly out of focus or not; or do these facts cause us to stand more nakedly in awareness of our true predicaments? Jacques Ellul urges us to stand in complete awareness of our (technological) dilemma, as it is through its total (environmental) techniques most dangerously determining our whole existence, and armed with such knowledge (that is wished to be non-existent or at the most latent in man through techniques) perhaps transcend and come to more reasonable terms with the forces that shape our daily existence and destinies.

Art and artists most powerfully call our attention to the above. Concerning Art, Giedion says:

"What happened to art ... gives us the most intimate vision possible of the penetration in depth of the human being by mechanization."¹

¹ J. Ellul. The Technological Society. New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1964, P. 129.

Barr's revealing selections in his "Cubism and Abstract Art" shows us how the artist,

"who reacts like a seismograph, expresses the influence of full mechanization Mechanization has penetrated into the subconscious of the artist. Chirico expresses it in a remarkable way in the mixture he makes of man and machine The anxiety, the solitude of man forms a melancholy architecture of the preceding epoch and its mechanical dolls, painted in the smallest details with a tragic expression."¹

In the words of J. Ellul:

"The artist is in fact a seismograph that records the fluctuations of man and society."²

Ezra Pound said that:

"The artist is the antennae of the human race."³

As similarly so M. McLuhan used the simile that:

"Art as radar acts as an early warning system."⁴

In the words of W. Barrett:

"Modern Art thus begins, and sometimes ends, as a confession of spiritual poverty."⁵

¹ J. Ellul. The Technological Society. New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1964, P. 129.

² Ibid., P. 404.

³ M. McLuhan. Understanding Media. Toronto: The New American Library of Canada, Ltd., 1966, P. xi.

⁴ Ibid., P. xi.

⁵ W. Barrett. Irrational Man. New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1962, P. 45.

Particularly in the more recent history of man art has in succession celebrated man's greatness as well as gradually but unerringly testified to man's growing spiritual poverty as truth in science has made man more and more aware of the anxiety-filled facts that we are accidental inhabitants of a negligible planet in the endless spaces of the universe. Concomittant with his growing understanding of the above, man as well probed the inner universes of the biological, chemical and physical domains. The proliferation of numbers, the vastness of quantities involved, has given, by necessity, rise to an electronic universe which in its ensuing rapid development has left man himself behind, as a negligible quantity, proportionally diminishing in meaning and importance as one day follows the next. In addition to the above, man as well in his everyday existence has to face up to or ignore the unprecedented rise in constructive and destructive power of such universal and absolute proportion as to make the quotation from the Assyrian tablet, as quoted at first in this thesis, more than merely facetious, rather null and void, for its Cassandra-type validity no longer applies. It would do very well to quote A. Koestler at this point for he leaves one with very few doubts as to what has occurred thus far:

"As a result, man's destiny was no longer determined from 'above' by a super-human wisdom and will, but from 'below' by the

sub-human agencies of glands, genes, atoms, or waves of probability. This shift of the locus of destiny was decisive. So long as destiny had operated from a level of the hierarchy higher than man's own, it had not only shaped his fate, but also guided his conscience and imbued his world with meaning and value. The new masters of destiny were placed lower in the scale than the being they controlled; they could determine his fate, but could provide him with no moral guidance, no values and meaning. A puppet of the Gods is a tragic figure, a puppet suspended on his chromosomes is merely grotesque.

Before the shift, the various religions had provided man with explanations of a kind which gave to everything that happened to him meaning in the wider sense of transcendental causality and transcendental justice. But the explanations of the new philosophy were devoid of meaning in this wider sense. The answers of the past had been varied, contradictory, primitive, superstitious, or whatever one likes to call them, but they had been firm, definite, imperative. They satisfied, at least for a given time and culture, man's need for reassurance and protection in an unfathomably cruel world, for some guidance in his perplexities. The new answers, to quote William James, 'made it impossible to find in the driftings of the cosmic atoms, whether they work on the universal or on the particular scale, anything but a kind of aimless weather, doing and undoing, achieving no proper history, leaving no result.' In a word, the old explanations, with all their arbitrariness and patchiness, answered the question after 'the meaning of life' whereas the new explanations, with all their precision, made the question of meaning itself meaningless. As man's science grew more abstract, his art became more esoteric, and his pleasures more chemical. In the end he was left with nothing but 'an abstract heaven over a naked rock.'¹

¹ A. Koestler. The Sleepwalkers. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Eng.: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1964, P. 550.

In order to lead into the next part of this thesis, it would, at this point, be of importance to approximate an understanding of the real meaning of art in the history of Man and day-to-day life of man. The one noun that seems to most readily lend itself is that of image. Nouns such as symbol, confession, testimony and others may contain similar ideas and meanings. Furthermore, it would be necessary for the purpose of being concise and comprehensive to exclude the many necessary elements that go into the making of the images, i.e. the art of man. Nouns such as intuition, creativity, open endedness, the element of surprise, gift (non-evaluative - or no immediate gain is indicated here) as well as many others, all are important considerations when one attempts to gain a larger understanding of art. Similarly so, art used as a form of propaganda and as well serving as the handmaiden to religion and morality will engulf one in an unnecessary, ensuing controversy notwithstanding its correctness as a point of view amongst many others of a similar nature. For concentration on any of the foregoing aspects would necessarily delimit the scope of the definition at hand.

Throughout the history of man art is most closely identified with such activities which (amongst others) are in excess of those which are necessary to the biological and/or material survival of man. Hence

Art could be thought of as a concomittant activity necessary to the spiritual survival of man. The earliest evidence of art known to man is closely linked with the ritual aspects of man's attempts in coming to terms with his "hostile" self and similarly so his "hostile" surroundings. The facial and body make-up as well as the decoration of clothing, headdress, etc., are all attempts at distorting reality necessary for the spiritual survival of early man. Music, dance, application of highly colourful paints, sculptures, etc., all came into existence to fulfill these urgent needs to survive spiritually. As man grew in understanding of himself and gained greater insight into his surroundings, the attempts at distorting reality similarly so diminished.

In gradually divorcing himself from his surroundings (i.e. no longer a mere object amongst many others) man's art similarly so directed itself to celebrating man's growing freedom. Make-up, clothing (as well as the absence of clothing) in murals and sculpture, music and dance, are all indicative of confirming man in his newly acquired freedom.

It would take several pages, if not more, to trace the development of art of man, the image maker, all of which would similarly serve the same purpose in defining art as the making of images, aiding man to survive spiritually, celebrating his greatness or testifying to his spiritual poverty.

Now that my ladder's gone
I must lie down where all ladders start,
In the foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart.

W.B. Yeats.

It is true as the understanding says,
that there is nothing to wonder at,
but precisely for this reason is wonder
secure, because the understanding
vouches for it.

Let the understanding condemn
what is transitory,
let it clear the ground,
then wonder comes in the right place,
in the ground that is cleared in the
changed man.

Everything appertaining to that
first wonder the understanding
can consume.

Let it do so in order that
enigmatically it may help one
to wonder.

S. Kierkegaard
(from Short discourses.)

What I am trying to translate to you is
more mysterious; it is entwined in
the very roots of being, in the
impalpable source of sensations.

Cezanne.

The weightless dove, feeling the resistance of the air through which it flies, might well conceive the idea that it could fly even better in a total vacuum.

Immanuel Kant.

Originality is not the urge to be different
from others, to produce the brand-new;
it is to grasp (in the etymological sense)
the origin, the roots of both ourselves
and things.

Max Raphael.

We are:
"Before the gates of the Vacant future."

Naum Gabo.

Perception is revelation:
It is an insight into the workshop of creation;
that is where the Secret lies.

Paul Klee.

Art does not render what is visible;
art makes visible.

Paul Klee.

The role of the painter is to grasp
and project what is seen in him.

Max Ernst.

Art is probably a sleepwalkers'
vision of the typical.

Franz Marc.

The painter lives in fascination
The action most proper to him
seems to emanate from the things themselves,
like patterns of constellations.

M. Merleau Ponty
(from "Eye and Mind.")

What interests me in all paintings
is resemblance:
- that is, what is resemblance for me:
something which makes me discover
more of the world.

A. Giacometti.

For the painter takes his body with him.

P. Valery.

PART THREE

**THE EYE,
THE MEETING PLACE**

In the two previous parts of this thesis the concern centered largely around the distinction that does, in fact, exist between reason and perception to the detriment of man in his relationship both unto himself, others, and the things of this world. As was shown it has been the focal point of the philosophy of M. Merleau Ponty namely "to restore the world of perception" and "to reestablish the roots of the mind in its body." He urged:

"Scientific thinking, a thinking which looks on from above, and thinks of the objects-in-general, must return to the "there is" which underlies it; to the site, the soil of the sensible and opened world such as it is in our life and for our body - not that possible body which we may legitimately think of as an information machine but the actual body I call mine, this sentinel standing quietly at the command of my words and my acts. Further "associated" bodies must be brought forward with my body - the "others," not merely as my congeners, as the zoologist says, but the others who haunt me and whom I haunt; the "others" along "with" whom I haunt a single, present, and actual Being as no animal ever haunted those beings of his own species, locale, or habitat. In this primordial historicity, science's agile and improvisatory thought will learn to ground itself upon things themselves and upon itself and will once more become philosophy....

But art, especially painting, draws upon this fabric of brute meaning which activism (or operationalism - trans.) would prefer to ignore. Art and only art does so in full innocence..."¹

¹ M. Merleau Ponty. The Primacy of Perception. Northwestern Univ. Press, 1964, pp. 160-161.

It is indeed of interest to point out that the major influences in philosophy of today come from two men who were more poetic than philosophic both in thought as well as in their writings, namely, S. Kierkegaard and F. Nietzsche. Since then many philosophers in turn have taken a great interest in poetry and in painting. As already indicated M. Merleau Ponty and R. Arnheim but as well Ortega y Gasset and J. P. Sartre, all took a great deal of interest in painters and sculptors. On the other hand the great philosopher, M. Heidegger, made a close study of poetry, particularly the works ("Homecoming" a.o.) of the poet Holderlin; G. Marcel studied the poetry of H. Heine; and N. Berdyaev as well as A. Camus displayed a great deal of interest in the works of Dostoevski.

All this interest, it should be acknowledged, is indicative of an attempt by these great thinkers of our times to once more get in touch with the "fabric of brute meaning," which for so long now has been ignored, and "to reestablish the roots of the mind in its body."

In the words of M. Merleau Ponty:

"The enigma is that my body sees and is seen. That which looks at all things can also look at itself and recognize in what it sees, the "other" side of its power of looking. It sees itself seeing; it touches itself touching; it is visible and sensitive for itself. It is not a self through transparency, like thought, which only thinks its object by assimilating it, by constituting it, by transforming it into

thought. It is a self through confusion, narcissism, through inherence of the one who sees in that which he sees and through inherence of sensing in the sensed - a self, therefore, that is caught up in things that has a front and a back, a past and a future

... The enigma of the body Since things and my body are made of the same stuff, vision must somehow take place in them, their manifest visibility must be repeated in the body by a secret visibility. "Nature is on the inside," says Cezanne. Quality, light, color, depth, which are there before us are there only because they awaken an echo in our body and because the body welcomes them."¹

In as much as perhaps painting more easily lends itself to exemplify this "visibility as rooted in the body" M. Merleau Ponty continues:

"Painting celebrates no other enigma but that of visibility.... The painter's world is a visible world - nothing but visible: a world almost demented because it is complete, when it is yet only partial. Painting awakens and carries to its highest pitch a delirium, which is vision itself, for to see is to have at a distance; painting spreads this strange possession to all aspects of being, which must in some fashion become visible in order to enter into the work of art. Painting gives visible existence to what profane vision believes to be invisible. Thanks to it we do not need a "muscular sense" in order to possess the voluminosity of the world. This

¹ M. Merleau Ponty, The Primacy of Perception. North-western Univ. Press, 1964, pp. 162-165.

voracious vision, reaching beyond the "visual givens" opens upon a texture of Being of which the discrete sensorial messages are only the punctuations. The eye lives in this texture as a man lives in his house."¹

This house, this home, is the world of mankind. Art could be taken to mean a way of orienting oneself in one's world; to seek a horizon, the formal plane of things (P. Klee) or that dimension which lets Van Gogh say he must go "further on."

Perhaps this is also what Wittgenstein means when his thinking inevitably and continuously brings him to the threshold of silence (- limits of literal discourse -). As Wittgenstein says: "Where of one cannot speak there of one must be silent." This is purposely quoted to point out the human tendency to continuously come up against the limitations of speech and try and transcend that very border line beyond which there appears to be nothing other than eternal vigilance and silence. This is the very point of departure for Art.

M. Heidegger makes a distinction between "calculative" thought and "essential" or "primordial" thought. Calculative thinking would be predominantly found in the sciences and as well represent the kind of thinking that we engage in to deal with our everyday activities in the

¹ M. Merleau Ponty. The Primacy of Perception. Northwestern Univ. Press, 1964, P. 166.

world. Calculative thinking by virtue of its "intention" objectifies and breaks up the whole, causing a "possible" fragmentation and subdivisiveness in our total approach to life. It is directed toward the handling and the mastery of the things within the world; it is the thinking for example typical of the technological age.

"Primordial" or essential thought has a meditative character. It is thinking that listens ... as distinct from the "busy-ness" of calculative thinking. It is the kind of thought that would play a large role in the mind of an artist, for he would be receptive (in a patient listening capacity) in his interpretation of the world; he would let the world impinge upon him; he would stand in openness to it. Paul Klee, for example, was such a "complete" artist, as his art is a continuous and living testimony of elemental thought, that Heidegger speaks of; but as well this is evident in Paul Klee, the man, particularly as he wrote in his diary: "I create pour ne pas pleurer; that is the first and last reason."

As Rudolf Arnheim points out:

"It is evident that Klee's drawings and paintings could serve so great an artist and so intelligent a human being as an alternate to weeping only by clarifying for him what there was to weep about and how one could live with, and in spite of, this state of affairs."¹

¹ R. Arnheim, Visual Thinking. London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1969, P. 254.

"Each day I believe less and less in the social question, and in the political question, and in the aesthetic question, and in the moral question, and in all the other questions that people have invented in order that they shall not have to face resolutely the only real question that exists - the human question.

So long as we are not facing this question, all that we are now doing is simply making a noise so that we shall not hear it."

Miguel de Unamuno
"Tragic sense of life" c. 1900

Like the Chrysler - Barracuda commercial says:
"Asking the question does not make it;
Driving the answer makes it!"

Jan. 1, 1970 - during the
Rose Bowl game.

When you have to attend to ... the mere incidents of
the surface, the reality - the reality, I tell you,
- fades.

J. Conrad.

While with an eye made quiet by the power
of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

W. Wordsworth.

POSTSCRIPT

**NOTES
AND
APOLOGIES**

The scope of this thesis is, indeed, by far too large to be dealt with properly in the time allotted anyone to write on a subject matter of such great importance. It is next to impossible to narrow the scope down to a neat and tidy package, that would, in turn, then be ready for "proper" consumption. It was the intention in this thesis to gather as much information as possible, pertaining directly or indirectly to the main theme of visibility and originality only after a fairly careful reading of what some of the wisest men have written about the most important questions, that such a topic would bring out into the open. Needless to say, this thesis fell short by far in accomplishing that. A great deal more "careful" study needs to be undertaken of the writings of such great thinkers, such as M. Heidegger (on "essential," "primordial" thought), M. Merleau Ponty (perception, the eye and the mind), L. Wittgenstein (the threshold of silence), Paul Klee ... to name but a few. This thesis represents only a meagre attempt at opening up this vast world of "real" and important information that awaits us

NOTES ON ART EDUCATION

In most articles, relating to the title above "Developments in Art Curricula," one comes across themes, ideas, frame works, etc., that invariably do not have the subject of "Art itself" as a point of departure. More often than not, the area of concentration is of an administrative nature, in one form or another. They may have overtones, relating to classroom organizational problems, improvements in one's physical or architectural surroundings, integration-problems with other subject areas, social concerns (re polution in relationship to visual awareness of a people) timetabling, etc.... Needless to say, these (above) and many other key-concerns of the art of "teaching" should not be dismissed out of hand, for they are indeed urgent problems, that call for our attention and need to be brought out in the open, discussed and dealt with accordingly, to facilitate the every-day activities of teachers and students alike. However, it must also be pointed out that none of these approaches in any way even attempt to get to the heart of the matter. For all of these approaches are of such a general nature, which does not really distinguish itself as having a point of departure, which is applicable to one area, specifically. Or, in other words, one must try and approximate, first of all, a more precise understanding of the particular subject, one is teaching (High-school level primarily for the purposes of this essay and perhaps by extension to other forms of teaching if and when applicable). After one has gained such an approximate understanding, then one has a truer point of departure, which, itself, might impose and be suggestive of changes in present day curricula-planning, as well as be in a much better position to make selections and take advantage of existing forms of curriculum guidelines. To take the overall-general-imposed guidelines in curriculum planning and make them the sole inheritors of all the responsibility of one's own subject area is all too frequently precisely that which occurs, and is accordingly pointed to as the villain, responsible for shaping and altering one's subject area beyond recognition and leaving most of its teachers in a state of confusion and anxiety.

I do not propose to be as bold as to come up with any significant answers, which have eluded much more capable people than myself. However, I do wish to commence by stating implicitly where I personally think the real problems exist and at least make an attempt at following through and then lastly, let the plans for the art curriculum follow suit accordingly (if at all possible).

During our two terms of seminars in Art Education, some questions arose out of our discussions, which, to my mind, are of great importance to the problems of art curriculum-planning. Most of these questions related to the disparity between present day art-teaching and that, which in actual fact had happened and is happening in the world at large (in general) and in the world of art (in particular) - allowing for the purpose of this paper the inconsistency of the latter part of the sentence - If this disparity is acknowledged to exist in fact, then we should look for the reasons, how it came about and why it continues to exist in our present day approach to art education.

The success of art education rests largely on the fact that its teachers have properly learned to take advantage of the younger child's need, readiness, willingness, etc., to express him-herself through the visual idiom. The children, quite naturally, respond extremely well to a spontaneous, untutored and undirected form of "teaching" and the results are received with a great deal of encouragement and pleasure by students, teachers and parents alike. This form of art teaching largely rests on providing an atmosphere and materials. The child is the originator here and its own curriculum. This type of "child" originating (rather than oriented) type of curriculum seems to become progressively less useful as the child gets older, as he accordingly appears to have less and less need to express himself through the visual idiom.... It is possible that in future years the older child will persist in his need to express himself iconographically as his surrounding visual world becomes increasingly more imposing and demanding. In as much as this may be a distinct possibility, the art educator must allow and prepare for it. However this does not answer our original question of "disparity" in art education, which exists presently and it is doubtful if the iconographic need of the future student has, in fact, got that much in common with the visual idiom that might hopefully be imparted to present day students in Art Education.

The visual statements (of young children) have many charming characteristics, i.e. as seen through our adult eyes, however, its unique and creative elements largely relate to the total context of the child's world, its needs, necessities, etc., and have very few corresponding values (and/or guidelines) for the adolescent world and their needs. From the previous sentence, the reader must not infer that the overall importance of this visual need to the child has in any way been underestimated. Rather what must be stressed is the relative-passive role being played (and rightly so) by the art

educator at that level. Our educational system has largely depended on the "literate" approach to education, and thereby attempted "to open up the eyes of its pupils," widen their horizons, etc., this perhaps giving some support to the contention that this might have accounted for a conflict of interests between the world of art educators and their "pupils." The students were and still are (see M. McLuhan) encouraged to explore within the boundaries of a literate world and thereby control, manipulate, extrapolate, theorize, draw conclusions, etc. In a world of a numerical order, purposing to quantify, this approach was entirely suitable and logical. School systems, industries, etc., were built at an increasingly rapid rate to accommodate and take advantage of the new trend in our culture. Art and artists existed (and still do to a certain extent) on the outer limits, on the periphery, influencing, pulling and pushing from that vantage point. Those artists, who had the greatest influence in their societies were those of the literary field (poets, writers, dramatists, critics, pamphleteers, etc....) and this fact is not at all surprising. Unfortunately our educational system has seen fit to leave that most important aspect of the arts solidly locked up in "English departments" and created an area, called "Art Education" which, in turn, willfully concerns itself with the "so-called" "Plastic Arts" excluding music and other forms of Art, etc.... This separation itself, to me, is indicative of the incomplete approach to the whole field of art. It is important, in my mind, to fully appreciate and understand its background - history, and by extension the implication this has had up to this very day in the field of art education. As art education exists now, it is already a compartmentalized "special" area in the curriculum and its very "raison d'etre" largely has depended on how wrongly it has been allowed by art educators to be used by the various school authorities, past curriculum makers, etc... In school systems that heavily encouraged sequential-type of studious approach in its relationship to its own subject matter, as well as fostering similar attitudes in the interaction of teacher-students relationship, are necessarily found itself in a different category. Subjects on a secondary level of education are taught along a non-knowledgeable to more-knowledgable continuum, having at its foundation a fairly simplistic attitude to the child's capacity to take in information. Here again, we notice a markedly different approach in the field of Art Education. In the previous "simplistic" attitude token lip service is being paid to the child or adolescent as an individual or social member of a larger group beyond the boundaries of the school, whereas in the field of Art Education a more

"complex" attitude is fostered and indeed becomes "pivotal" to its very teaching. When art educators are called upon to give account of themselves, their defense is largely based on their more "complex" role, that they (either by default or through their own initiative) are to play. Why Art, as a subject, is any more suitable than say, English or History, to perform the latter role, is completely beyond my understanding. This role can only be effectively undertaken by the whole community at large. Art education, in my mind, should attempt to rid itself of this "stigma" and accept it only to the extent that it can incorporate it into its subject area but not necessarily any more so than other areas should be sharing in this "communal" aspect of learning. Art education "inversely" has accepted a role, that it cannot play alone to begin with, and this, in turn, has been allowed to play too large a role in shaping this "Subject." It has enough substance to have "full" status as a "true" subject. The curriculum should be developed along the lines of taking a more "inclusive" approach to the "whole" field of the arts. I cannot see any virtue in continuing a separate specialized approach (plastic arts with social-duty overtones). The whole field of the arts should be considered within the framework of Art education. The important statements, made and being made by all artists, painters, musicians, authors, sculptors, poets, dramatists, architects, art historians, critics, etc., should hold the attention and interest of students and teachers alike to the extent that this more "total" approach could be implemented (with the aid and close cooperation of other departments, such as English, History, Library resources, etc...). Art educators would do well to develop the art-curriculum in this direction.

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