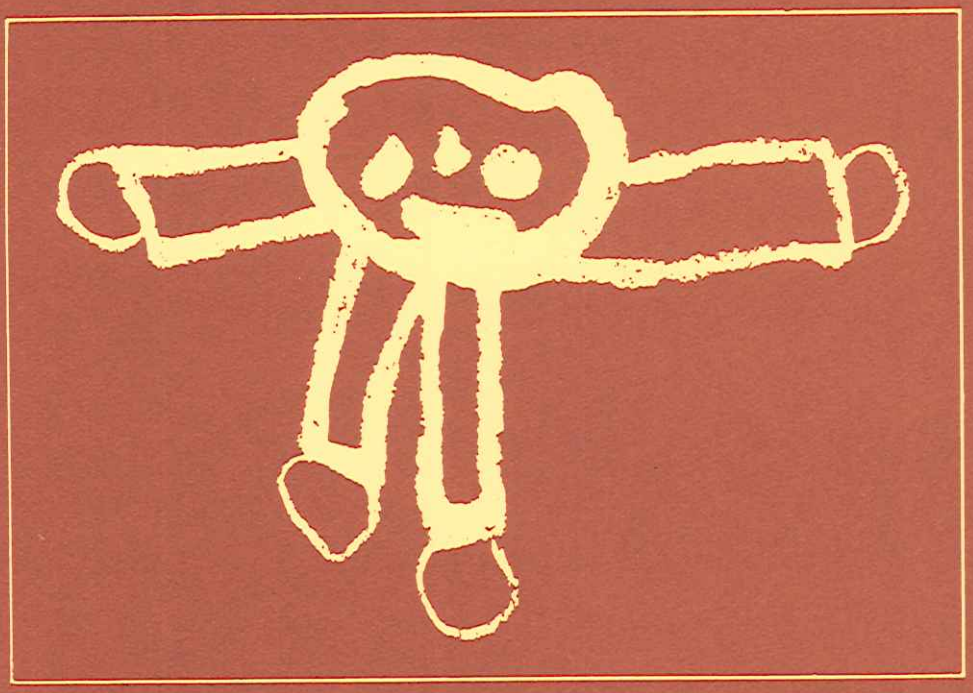
North Dakota Study Group on Evaluation



Patricia F. Carini

THE ART OF SEEING AND THE VISIBILITY OF THE PERSON

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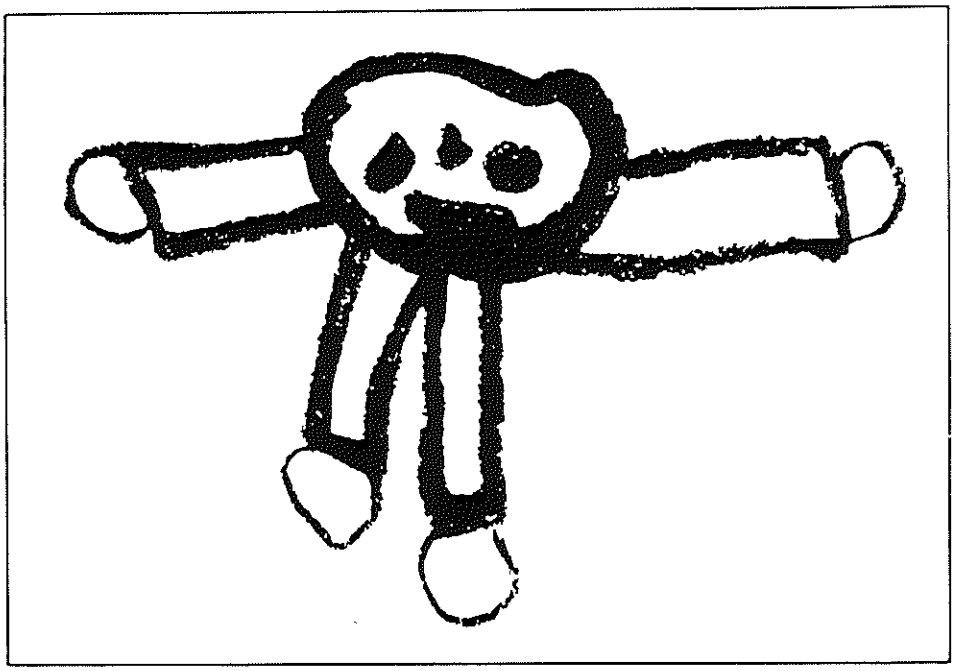

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THE ART OF SEEING AND THE VISIBILITY OF THE PERSON

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In November 1972, educators from several parts of the United States met at the University of North Dakota to discuss some common concerns about the narrow accountability ethos that had begun to dominate schools and to share what many believed to be more sensible means of both documenting and assessing children's learning. Subsequent meetings, much sharing of evaluation information, and financial and moral support from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund have all contributed to keeping together what is now called the North Dakota Study Group on Evaluation. A major goal of the Study Group, beyond support for individual participants and programs, is to provide materials for teachers, parents, school administrators and governmental decision-makers (within State Education Agencies and the U.S. Office of Education) that might encourage re-examination of a range of evaluation issues and perspectives about schools and schooling.

Towards this end, the Study Group has initiated a continuing series of monographs, of which this paper is one. Over time, the series will include material on, among other things, children's thinking, children's language, teacher support systems, inservice training, the school's relationship to the larger community. The intent is that these papers be taken not as final statements--a new ideology, but as working papers, written by people who are acting on, not just thinking about, these problems, whose implications need an active and considered response.

Vito Perrone, Dean
Center for Teaching & Learning,
University of North Dakota

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Contents

Introduction

A member of the North Dakota Study Group on Evaluation, Patricia F. Carini is director of The Prospect Archive and Center for Education and Research. (North Bennington, VT. 05257), which includes the Prospect Archive of Children's Work, The Prospect School, and the Prospect Institute for the Study of Meaning.

In a previous monograph in this series,* I have examined and criticized the extent to which our epoch has been suffused with attitudes that have derived from science as it has evolved in the West. An essential point of that critique was to disentangle the spirit and intention of science from its reduction in practice and particularly as expressed in its technology. I pointed out how, in its cruder technologic formulations, scientific method has espoused a simplistic objectivity to accord with an independent and singular "reality." Although sophisticated scientists and philosophers of science have rejected the notions, there is general acceptance within the scientific community as well as in the larger society that the scientific method is the only path to valid knowledge and that it is a method equally applicable to all phenomena. Even in sophisticated circles, the underlying commitment to universal laws and the superiority of scientific knowledge goes virtually unchallenged. In testimony to the pervasiveness of this attitude, even poets, artists, and religious thinkers feel called upon to justify their experience after the fact through some analytic process. Among the interpreters and critics of art, religious experience, and poetry, the practice is customary.**

My own philosophic orientation and early education and experience placed me in the mainstream of this so-called scientific thought. However, over the past 12 years, my work as an observer of children at The Prospect School has led me to a radical questioning of the applicability of this science to human events. In particular, the opportunity to observe children over long spans of time and through the rich variation of setting afforded by The Prospect School, has raised questions about observing itself (which I take to be the root of science), about the issues of objectivity and subjectivity central to it, and also about causation, past experience, and explanations, as these ideas are applied in the sciences of man.

This monograph schematizes a metaphysics of observing and presents a method for gathering and organizing empirical observations in order to disclose meaning. The vocabulary of the metaphysical position may seem initially difficult since the meanings of such words as "open", "mystery", "world setting", or "recognition" are carried

*Observation & Description: An Alternative Method for the Study of Human Phenomena.

**The poet, Howard Nemerov, in a fascinating essay (Speaking Silence, *Quadrille*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 24-32), addresses the power of critical analytic thought in the interpretation of poetry, and then suggests another approach to the meanings of poetry that do not yield to analysis.

in the full context of the position and exceed the "dictionary" definition of each word taken separately. I hope the context of usage will resolve any initial problem of understanding the reader may encounter. Identification of the sources of the position I am putting forward may also help the interested reader. These sources, in counterpoint with the activity of observing at The Prospect School, have shaped my thinking and greatly expanded my access to the things I observe. Books that have marked major turning points in my thinking through of my position on observing are the following: *The Phenomenology of Perception* (Merleau-Ponty, 1962) and *Modes of Thought* (Whitehead, 1958) for thought-provoking conceptualizations of the body; *Metamorphosis* (Schachtel, 1959) for a creative interpretation of perception; *Saving the Appearances* (Barfield, 1957) and *Man's Place in Nature* (Scheler, 1969) for conceptualizations of man's essential openness to, and detachment from, the world; *What is Called Thinking* (Heidegger, 1968) for its profound statement of quest and questioning; and *The Nature of Sympathy* (Scheler, 1970) for the basis which it provides for the recognition of the experience of others. More generally, and largely through personal communication over a 20-year period, my mode of observing has been shaped by the thinking and ideas of Leonard Feldstein on the nature of the person. At a more methodological level, the essays by Merleau-Ponty published in the *Primacy of Perception* (1964), Jung's essay "Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle" (1975, p. 417), and Owen Barfield's interpretation of Coleridge's notions of triune thought (*What Coleridge Thought*, 1971) have been formative in creating a framework for the study of the person. Finally, Owen Barfield's examination in *Worlds Apart* (1963) of the applications of science in widely divergent fields has provided an integration of my own thoughts on the specialization of knowledge.

The issues which have most captured and challenged my thought during this period of re-thinking have been time and meaning. Educated to view the person through the lens of the developmental construct, I was accustomed to a linear definition of time and to the generalization of personal experience according to developmental stages. The knowledge of developmental stages made available through the classic work of Piaget, Vygotsky, Werner, and others, was both formidable and informing. However, as I watched children, certain limitations of this construct became increasingly apparent. Particularly overlooked by this definition of time, I saw, was the person's own intuition of time, the relationship of personal time to epochal and historical time, and to memory and meaning (both personal and historical).

Increasingly, therefore, my thought has focused on the notion of time itself in its multiple dimensions, and on the continuity and transformation of the person through time. Supporting and prodding that thought were two complementary views of time and the person. The

first is Jung's suggestion that meaning precedes the individual life:

> It always seems to us as if meaning--compared with life--were the younger event...But how do we assign meaning?...The forms we use for assigning meaning are historical categories that reach back into the mists of time... (1969, p. 32)

The other is Froebel's statement that,

> Every man has, indeed, but one thought peculiarly and predominantly his own, the fundamental thought as it were, of his whole being, the keynote of his life symphony, a thought which he simply seeks to express and render clear with the help of a thousand other thoughts, with the help of all he does. (1899, p. 142)

This essay is an attempt to frame a method of study which, as the title of my monograph indicates, makes the person visible through a description of personal quest. I have thought of the essay in two parts. The first part, "The Art of Seeing," is a reexamination of the process of observing, contrasting the scientific observer with an observer who is reflective. The second part, beginning with "The Recognition of Other Persons," specifies the manner in which persons, as a special subject of study, can be observed and described. These latter chapters are illustrated by work-in-progress at The Prospect School. However, the illustration of the full documentary account of a child is the subject of a separate series of studies, The Child as Thinker, to which this essay is the methodological preface. This series will present full-scale portrayals of individual children, as they pursued their interest and education at The Prospect School over six- to eight-year time spans. The portrayals disclose the continuities and transformations in the children's thinking as these are revealed in their projects and activities, in such preferred mediums of expression as drawing, building, and writing.

1

Portrayals: Making the Person Visible

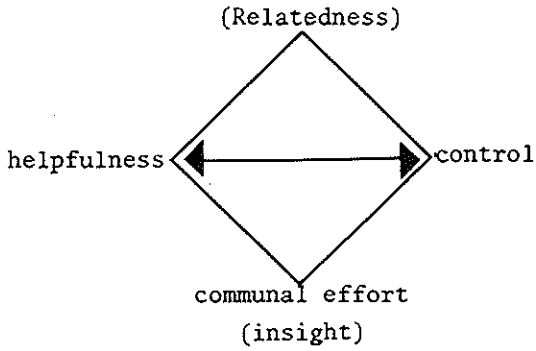
Each person is and remains an ultimate mystery--to himself and to others. The knowledge that we gain of others, or of ourselves, is captured through the lens of a common humanity and a common destiny. Experience and thought are not isolated or singular; rather, the fabric of being is woven through from first to last with the destinies, quests, sufferings and joys of other persons. In those lives, lived and preserved in works of the mind and hand, I find a vantage point for reflection upon my own particular destiny, quest, suffering and joy. My own works find a continuity and enhancement in relation to the works of others. Steeped by a perspective and consciousness peculiarly my own, these works mark another permutation of those large, eternal questions that are the peculiar destiny of creatures who live in consciousness of their own mortality.

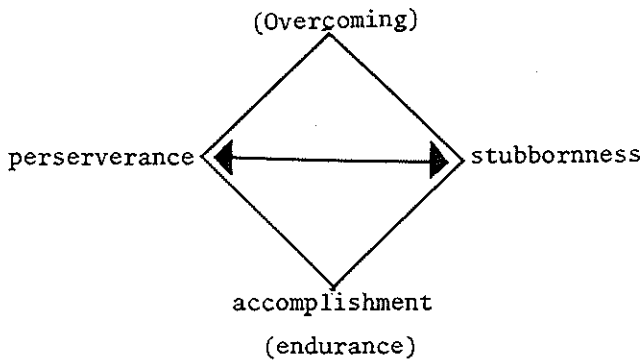
A work bears forever the gesture and imprint of its maker. However casually done in the flow of daily life, however insignificant the content, the person is evoked in the work. Glancing through a cookbook kept in the family, the jotted amplifications and comments of generations of users brings each one briefly into the present moment. The marginal notes and underscorings in an old book, recorded there by an unknown hand, bring a glimpse of another time and the commitments guiding another life. To the discerning eye, the delicacy or boldness, the firmness or hesitation, the tentativeness or flourish of another person's hand is visible momentarily in the line of script. From within the rhythm of content, word, and gesture, appears the partial visage of a living perspective--the cook, the visionary, the economy-minded householder, the teacher.

The person living and the person viewed through the long passage of time, myself or another, each compound the mystery of being by the interplay of opposites that compose the wholeness of each of our lives. This is an interplay that leaves person and viewer caught in an ever-reversing panoply of variant images--no one of which is in itself true or false, and the totality of which overwhelms the analytic effort to untangle and find the "real" person. The person is a counterpoint of oppositions. Indeed, the human fate and the understanding of it, would be immensely simplified if either of the

proponents of humanity's essentially good or evil nature were persuasive in their arguments.

However, the oppositions the person portrays are productive and lively, and not static and stagnant. The person is not this and then that; he is at each turn and action both this and that. It is an opposition born of unity; the light and the dark factors in the psyche are each other's reverse face. Helpfulness that is unqualified becomes interference and controlling influence, while perserverance that is unchecked becomes stubbornness. The one set of polarities stems from that deep relatedness to others which can eventuate in a reunification of the polar points in communal effort and in insight, while the other set of polarities stems from that capacity for survival or overcoming, which can eventuate in a reunification of the polar points in accomplishment and endurance.

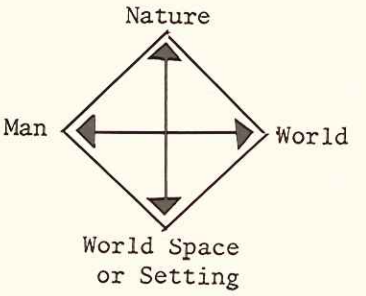




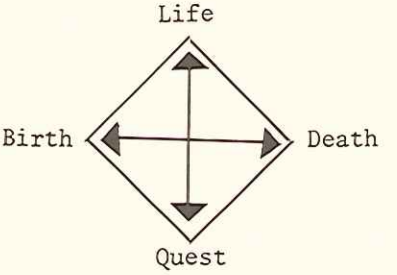
In the living person, young or old, such factors in virtually countless combination fluctuate through an astonishing and confusing array of patterns, each in turn subject to the influence of its setting and circumstance. In the enactment of these multiplicities of factors, a unique "bearer" of humanity is fashioned, permeated by the era and by the context of his particular moment in history. At the same time, that unique bearer of humanity shapes the era through his or her unique manner of searching for a meaningful existence and a completion of being within the eternal questions of love, work,

identity, loss, and gain.

The questions encompassed by the fabric of the unique and personal life always express a universal and transpersonal nature. Equally, each of those questions, bearing the ineffable mark of humankind, is itself composed of an interplay of seeming oppositions embodied in the symbolism and imagery of the unifying archetypes. Man himself is but a differentiated polar point in the larger fabric of nature that constitutes, in interplay with the opposing world environ, a world space or setting.



Birth and death, from this perspective, are not opposites exclusive of each other, but the two poles of life that frame each person's search for meaning--the quest--which characterizes mortal existence.



The universal and transpersonal symbolism surrounding and permeating the individual quest is a time-honored source of perspective and guidance to the seeker for life and meaning. Myth and religion are its repositories, although in the West these sources have, for many, long lost their vitalizing power, leaving the person in a state of virtual isolation which brings in its train restlessness, confusion, and fragmentation. Collectively, and in concert with the natural world, however, we are the source of our own wisdom, so the wellsprings of the universal images are never wholly dry. The world itself portrays the psychic drama, and the person groping in the interplay of forces within may recognize the universal and collective aspect of his personal struggle in the counterpoint of the world forces: fire and water; earth and sky; caterpillar and butterfly; night and day; the ebb and flow of the tides. Or it may be the life of another, fictional or real, or music, or a painting that provides the reflecting arc in which the personal enactment is placed and enhanced, bringing the experience of

relatedness through which the personal life is revitalized. In whatever manner it occurs, to grasp one's own or another's uniqueness in the light of the universal increases meaning. Our own actions and lives are finite, but taken in the light and the shadow of the infinite, they are inexhaustible and eternal.

Thus it is the perspective of the universal and transpersonal which provides an integrating pattern for gathering the threads of meaning which compose the fabric of the individual life. It is never so much the facts, circumstances, and literal occurrences that describe and portray the person as the *relationship* the person makes to those literal events, and the choices that follow from the mode of relating. The person is not rendered visible or understandable to himself or others by a factual account of his experiences, but rather through the perspective he brings to bear on those experiences. In Ortega y Gasset's succinct phrasing, "Man is the novelist of himself."

Equally, a person is not explainable in the same way that an event of the physical world is. When all of the traits, causal agents, and classifications of behavior and personality have been categorized, the person has fallen through the net of abstractions. As Merleau-Ponty notes, the body (and I would say person) is more aptly likened to a work of art than to a machine:

> The body is to be compared not to a physical object but rather to a work of art...A novel, poem, picture, or musical work are individuals, that is beings in which the expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed, their meaning accessible only through direct contact, being radiated with no change of their temporal and spatial situation. It is in this sense that our body is comparable to a work of art. It is a focal point of living meanings, not the function of a certain number of mutually variable terms. (1962, pp. 150-151)

An illumination of the personal life is achieved through a grasp of the universal archetypes in which it is rooted and the collective, transpersonal experience which it particularizes. All persons are possessed by love and captured by the questions, Who am I? How do I come to be here? Whither am I going? All persons are thinkers, dreamers, and seers of visions--to a greater or lesser degree--living and seeking beyond the mere facts of existence for a larger perspective. Each person lives the gift of love and the quest of being uniquely. In his thoughts, dreams, and visions, each person finds a unique relationship and perspective to the recurrent events of the human lot: birth, death, vocation, joy. We recognize in each life around us the

griefs, tragedies and triumphs of our own, and in our own lives we lend particularity to the full range of human experience.

Therefore, while the purpose of the method of observation and study set forth here is to portray other persons, that purpose must be qualified and clarified in certain ways at the outset. The study cannot capture or disclose the person, not only because of the limitations of perspective and method but because, *finally*, the person is never fully disclosed. As Scheler notes (1972, pp. 40-41), the full meaning of any action or thought remains ever open and incomplete, always available to transformation through permutations of other thoughts and actions, so long as the interplay of living forces is ongoing. Nonetheless, the person can be illuminated as a particular enactment of a collective, transpersonal potential. Equally, the personal enactment and shaping of universal questions can evoke and illuminate a perspective present in all our lives.

For example, studies of childhood such as those to be presented in the aforementioned series of studies carried out at The Prospect School preserve a time, a place, a setting whose meanings reach both forward and backward in the personal and the collective destiny. Seen from this vantage point, childhood has its own validity and importance, in contrast to a dominant developmental orientation that frequently overlooks that validity in favor of the more "mature" outlook, which reduces childhood to a functional stage in the achievement of the presumably superior perspective of adulthood. In its universality, childhood is the transpersonal and collective center of meaning which any particular and unique childhood intersects. To approach the collective context of meanings requires an act of remembrance--a reflection on childhood--in order to enter the complex of opposites which compose its living dimensions. Childhood is not a definable entity; rather, it is a landscape, both garden and wilderness, twilit and sunlit, a place of shadows and dreams and a place of play and laughter. When, in memory, we call forth childhood's meanings and establish the unifying force which holds the ever-revolving opposites in balance and swing, then the larger landscape is made visible, emerging as a setting within which a particular drama of childhood can be enacted. Through hand and eyes a child--not any or all, but a particular child--calls that landscape into focus in the same way actors and lights bring alive a stage setting that otherwise recedes before us in its endless expectancy and possibility.

To accompany this child along the paths of childhood's landscape, to portray the world space he in particular creates through the mediums and motifs simultaneously present in the landscape and in him, is also an act of remembrance. It is, in the first place, our recognition of his experience and his setting that allows us to join him. The story which is this child's

story is woven in and among all of the other childhood stories, over aeons of time, each touching upon, coloring, and shading the perspective and experience of this present sojourner. In the second place, it is by a devoted immersion in and concentration upon the moments in which his relatedness to the events and happenings of the landscape are made visible that the recurrent pattern which describes his unique perspective is made available. By concentrating on and abiding with all of the captured moments in which the child's relatedness is held, by staying with the record of the child's lived moments, some measure of access is gained to the larger perspective that gives lifelong coherence and durability to being.

Recurrence is the thread that holds the life fabric, and this thread lends validity to each perception and perspective of the person without regard for age. The person's life is never complete nor is it incomplete; equally, neither life nor any of its moments passes completely away or is fully revealed. What is present in one moment holds the present, the past, and what is to come.

However, if recurrence maintains the fabric, choice is the thread that transforms the recurrence from empty repetition into a vivid pattern or tapestry that displays a lived destiny. For example, the child's eye and hand is drawn to wood in order to build a small house of slats. In that moment, he is a builder, carrying forward the human gift and necessity for dwelling, and therefore, for building. He repeats the motif in sand, and then again in blocks; he varies it by constructing a fort and a lookout and by fashioning at another time an animal shelter. The motif of dwelling-house-shelter-fortress is stated, reworked, and differentiated in these choices and the child's imprint and choices are recorded within the larger contexts of meanings held in wood, sand, house, shelter, fortress, as these are unified within the larger archetypal theme of dwelling. In the counterpoint of the child's bodily expressiveness in the act of building, and in the completed structure which holds motif and gesture, there lies a description of his enactment of a universal potential.

Reflection and description of children carried out in this spirit through time, and in all the domains that provoke children's thought, allows the portrayal of a world space of living realities through which children's thought is partially visible. The effort of reflecting on the universal, conducted in counterpoint with the effort of describing the child's particular perspective and relatedness to the things--the mediums and motifs--which provoke his thought, leads to a compositional integration that maintains the concreteness of the particular details and yet transcends them.

The mode of observing and reflecting that stands at the heart of this method rests upon a capacity for imaginative vision and for memory that is peculiar to humankind.

2

Vision and Visibility

Having the capacity for sight, for seeing, we are all potentially observers. But it should be said straight off that it is a particular kind of vision that marks persons as observers, in contrast to other sighted animals. It is a vision that is open, concentrated and self-conscious relative to the more or less determined, diffuse, and temporally linear vision of other animals. The cat's eye is entrained to the movement of the mouse, as the young herring gull's is to the red spot near the parental beak. As Scheler says,

> The animal has no "object." It lives as if it were ecstatically immersed in its environment which it carries along as a snail carries its shell...It cannot perform the peculiar act of *detachment* and *distance* by which man transforms an environment into a world, or a symbol of the world. (1969, p. 39)

It is not the mouse as such that catches the cat's eye, but a movement which immediately triggers a highly specific set of behaviors, through which the cat carries through and completes a total and reflexive action, without awareness of himself or the mouse.

There is an example cited by Piaget which epitomizes even the young child's relative freedom from such determined and linear responses. In the example, a baby on witnessing a swinging door simultaneously opened and closed her eyes, mouth,and hands. Opening and closing eyes, hands, and mouth serves no purpose and it is not embedded to a specific opening-closing "drive" or "function." It is an "open" gesture in its variability, its freedom, its transferability and its ambiguity. In that open responsiveness, a relationship is stated to the world that is at once participatory and detached. The recognition of a back-and-forth motion in the world, stated through the transposition of the motion into its up-and-down reciprocal in the body, identifies the person's underlying recognition of the world, and at the same time both motions are set free through the variation in the restatement. Thus, the events of the world can come to stand not as completions of a chain of determined instinctive action but as correlatives to personal meaning.

The "break in the chain" releases vision to wander among the things of the world and to concentrate selectively and without purposive action--indeed without requiring action of any kind. The capacity to gaze, to see, to look independently of specific needs makes the person as much the object of his own vision as are the things around him. And therein, as Merleau-Ponty states, lies the germ of self-consciousness:

> The enigma is that my body simultaneously 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... (1962, p. 162)

The gift of vision described here, through which observing lays claim to its fullest possibilities, requires exercise to realize its power or it relapses into a kind of blindness,* in which the things in the world are perceived only as objects-of-use;** that is, in terms of personal needs. In its most benign form, habituated perception is reassuring and indeed useful:

*Merleau-Ponty has termed it profane vision and Schachtel has called it autocentric perception.

**Schachtel employs the phrase "objects-of-use" in *Metamorphosis* to describe the same phenomenon of perceptual blindness.

> When one walks along the street on the daily way to work or to home, when one glances around a room at home... perception proceeds only to the point of fleeting recognition of the familiar objects... We use the objects for orientation and reassurance that we are moving and being in our familiar accustomed every day world... (Schachtel, 1959, pp. 170-171)

But there are limitations and implicit dangers in habituated perception:

> ...the objects of the world never appear fully in this kind of perception, but only an impoverished, meager, and scanty aspect of them. A comparison of our usual "recognizing" perception of a chair with, for example, Van Gogh's painting of his chair will make apparent the vast difference between a full perception of the object and a perception in which mere recognition of the familiar takes place. (Schachtel, 1959, p. 170)

When habituated perception is carried to an extreme of circumstance (e.g., extreme physical need), or through a failure to exercise the gift of vision (e.g., ordinary "busy-ness"), the world may come to be seen only from the frame of reference of personal need. Then both viewer and viewed are impoverished, detachment replaces interest, and the world loses its power for calling forth meaning.

The scientist is no exception to the tendency to relapse into profane vision, to see only the usefulness of the object. Indeed, as Schachtel has suggested, there

are purposes espoused by science that are peculiarly antipathetic to observing:

> ...modern natural science has as its main goal prediction, i.e., the power to manipulate objects in such a way that certain predicted events will happen. This means that only those aspects of the object are deemed relevant which make it suitable for such manipulation or control...That is to say that his view of the object will be determined by the ends which he pursues in his experimentation. Thus it becomes an object-of-use. (1959, p. 171)

Still, for all of the possiblity of slipping into the comfort and familiarity of profane vision, the uniquely human gift of vision maintains always the power to break through, so that what has been "labelled and filed away" suddenly appears in a new light, full and complete. Schachtel describes the new relationship to objects identified in the observations of a deeply depressed woman as she regained her capacity for meaning:

> I discover a leaf of a beech tree, I feel it between my fingers, I feel the smooth and the rough surface like something entirely new. It was a moment only, the slender little leaf, it gave me a thousand times more than at Easter the faces of my children. (The experience took place in August.) At that time I took their heads in my hands so as to feel them, but I felt nothing--my hands, between them: nothing. The little leaf, suddenly I discovered it, and then it was gone again. I saw an earthworm, a little while ago, a dumb earth worm on the garden path. I stopped and looked at it as if at something unheard of--an earth worm who wriggled. People, alas are nothing to me as yet, only nature I have discovered, not as a whole, but in its smallest parts only. That is a great wondering, a great quietness after all the restless rushing. (1959, p. 235)

Apart from that same extreme circumstance, virtually everyone has at some time had the experience of "seeing" some familiar thing as if for the first time. The object stands forth vividly and fully. Rather than "observer" and "observed," there exists a mutual viewing, in which both moments enjoy an equality of being. It is truly the experience of coming face-to-face with something. The experience is one not of work-a-day familiarity, but of deep *recognition* of a reciprocity in which you speak to the object and the object affectively speaks to you. It may follow upon a long, slow process of seeing, looking, and engaging, or it may come about suddenly, in a flash. In either instance, both observer and the object

take on a new layer of meaning, and each is therefore increased in intensity, depth, and fullness. Inevitably, the initial moment of recognition leads to a whole series of recognitions as the reciprocity of meaning is strengthened through time and further encounters. It might be said that the peculiar power of gifted vision is to bring to visibility the full meaning of the observer and the object.

A little reflection also suggests that the power to recognize specific realms, aspects, and dynamics of the world varies for any given person, and that it is more strongly realized in some than in others. This is noticeable in the orientations of young children toward certain events of the natural world as it is revealed in play, and although less overtly, in the play and vocational choices of adults. It is in these objects and mediums that the gift of vision has its greatest potential for its realization. For example, walking with a friend who is a naturalist, an interesting bird attracted our attention. Thinking of her superior knowledge, I commented on the pleasure it must give her to watch birds. She agreed, and then added that unfortunately she couldn't really "see" things in the air, especially the rapid flight of birds. She continued, "What I can really see are very little things, still things, on the ground, near ponds, in the woods. I like to concentrate on a small area and take my time to look. I like to be able to return and see small changes. That is very satisfying."

What draws forth the eye in its great power then, are those things where the seer is present in the seen, and where the seen is prefigured in the vision of the seer.

THE REDUCTION OF OBSERVING

The reduction and specialization of observation specifically to serve the methods of science and technology needs to be seen with reference to the larger context and potential that I have just described. The scientific observer--detached, objective, at work in a laboratory equipped with standardized and complex recording instruments--is a cliche of our times. It is, in fact, so common a view that the term *observer* is virtually synonymous in common parlance with *distance, detachment, impartiality* and *neutrality*. "The United Nations has sent in observers"--i.e. neutral agents to render impartial, disinterested judgments. Thus, the teacher in the classroom needs an outside observer; she is too active, too involved, and too close to the situation to be capable of *objective* observations. As I have written elsewhere, when the tenets of the experimental sciences are adhered to strictly, we get the following definition of the observer:

> ...within scientific inquiry, the observer is largely assumed to be a constant factor--held constant by the formal requirements of his inquiry. Any given observer, therefore, is presumed interchangeable with any other observer, and within the experimental sciences, he is generally referred to impersonally as O. (observer) or E. (experimenter)...The underlying assumption about the observer in logical, scientific inquiry is that the very requirements of his inquiry render him "objective," and thus the peculiar character of his own thought and being is vitiated. (1975, p. 8)

The extent to which detachment is the accepted posture of the observer and objectivity the accepted standard for observing, is strikingly apparent in the reverberations caused in the scientific world by Niels Bohr's now famous and challenging statement that the observer is necessarily participant in the object of observation. Heisenberg's lucid interpretation of this statement is thought-provoking and particularly so, since the full implications of Bohr's statement has not been acknowledged by most scientists nor in the practice of scientific research:

> There is a subjective element in the description of atomic events, since the measuring device has been constructed by the observer, and we have to remember that what we observe is not nature in itself but nature exposed to our method of questioning. Our scientific work in physics consists in asking questions about nature in the language that we possess and trying to get an answer from experiment by the means that are at our disposal. In this way quantum theory reminds us, as Bohr has put it, of the old wisdom that when searching for harmony in life one must never forget that in the drama of existence we are ourselves both players and spectators. (1958, p. 58)

The result of viewing the observer as neutral and detached is, as Heisenberg acknowledges, to minimize the act of observing and to emphasize the *operations* of recording and measuring. The observer assumes the relatively passive posture of recording according to a standardized procedure. Ideally, he records measurements provided by a refined instrumentation. Less ideally, and in the less rigorously scientific fields such as psychology, he records behaviors or traits which can later be coded numerically and made available to statistical treatment according to the same procedures applied to data gathered in the physical world. However loose or rigorous, the focus on observing within this framework is actually a focus on recording, and on devising

standardized recording formats to ensure the detachment and objectivity of the observer. Observing is reduced to techniques, more or less specialized, for recording the data which the recording format or device can encompass. Thus the recording format determines what the observer sees and which aspects of the object will be available to investigation. It can be said that science and technology have reduced the power of vision in observation to treat phenomena of study merely as objects-of-use.

WHAT IS OBSERVING FOR?

If observation is not to be for use and from need, what is it for? What does observing serve, if it does not serve science and technology? In part the answer has been foreshadowed. Observing, through the full power of gifted vision, is for *meaning*. Meaning arises through the relationship among things or persons: that mutual reciprocity that occurs in the act of truly "seeing" something. Thus, meaning is not a *thing*, an *object*, or an *entity* itself. Rather, meaning designates the experience of relatedness which enhances and makes more vivid each of the events or persons it joins. For meaning to arise, there must be recognition. Hence, meaning addresses an underlying *unity* among persons, things, and the world, which the act of observation can make visible.

Observing in the full power of vision is to discover what you recognize in the world, and, in discovering it, to find a part of yourself and your thought mirrored back through the world. The naturalist's recognition of "small things on the ground" is part of her unity with the world, her memory of it. For her, the "small things" make that memory visible and particular. The more they are recognized and seen, the more visible and individual they become. Similarly, the fascination which mushrooms held for a child named Elizabeth resulted, when she was 12, in observations that further illustrate the reciprocity of person and thing:

1. Grow in rich soil, 2½ inches high, sort of shady spot. Thick stem about 1-inch in diameter it is, the gills are white getting brown toward the edge. Also curves upward at edge. Sort of maroon color the cap curves inward making cup shape, is about 2½ to 3 inches across the cap. The color gets darker as it cups in, feels hard; the stem is white. When broken open it is, or we think it is, a tricholoma. They grow next to pine trees mostly. This was growing with birches and maples. Animals may like eating this kind of mushroom.

2. Is one inch tall. The cap is shiny white

which has a light yellow in the edges are sort of brown. The cap is a round shape, it is about one inch across. The top has a veil from the cap down. Down to the veil it is (a brown) white. The veil is this color too. From the veil down it was a bright clean white. The gills are white and go to the top in a deep slant; they are bright white. *Unidentified*

3. 3/4 tall, the cap is three inches across. It is a brown color, is very roundy. The top flat part is darker than the rest. The gills are white, the stem is pinkish white. *Unidentified*

4. 3 inches tall, the cap is about 1½ across. Cap is flat, brown very light in the middle toward the edge which is white. Stem is white. The cap has lines from the gills until the brown color starts.

   Has flappy feeling. Gills are white. The cap is indented just a little bit of round bump starts in the middle which is brown. Stem is about 1/8 of an inch in diameter. We think it is a mycena vulgaris.

   Excerpted from a series of descriptions

The effect of recognition is to articulate the *distance* of the person from the thing, of one thing from another, and to particularize the viewed object as Elizabeth's observations particularize the mushrooms. That is, *unity is not identity*.

Therefore, given distance, it can be said that observing, through the full power of vision, lets something come into existence by calling it forth in its own right. However, calling something forth in its own right requires of the observer time and the capacity to let the object enter, and to be, as the painter Paul Klee suggests, submerged by it. Schachtel terms this process *objectifying:*

> By "objectification" I do not mean objectivity, but the phenomenon of man's encounter with more or less definite objects as a *certain type of relatedness* emerges between him and his environment. The degree of objectification is characterized by the degree to which the object is perceived as existing independently of the perceiver and the degree to which the richness of its qualities is perceived. (1959, p. 85)

Schachtel specifies the particular relationships to things, and to the world in general, through which objectifying occurs. One of these--openness--was

described earlier as the difference between the human perception of the world and that of other animals:

> It (the animal) cannot perform the peculiar act of detachment and distance by which man transforms an environment into the "world" or into a symbol of the world. (Scheler, 1969, p. 39)

The complementary relationship--interest--is distinguished from the fleeting attraction to the novel or titillating, in Heidegger's view, by the deep absorption which it requires:

> Interest, *interesse*, means to be among and in the midst of things, or to be at the center of a thing and to stay with it. (1972, p. 5)

To be open to the world, and to approach the object with interest, extends to the object the totality of its being. As Schachtel says:

> The act of interest is total and it concerns the totality of its object...On this hinges the often observed fact that the object, the world, reveals itself to man only to the degree and quality of the interest he takes in it...Human perception is not only in the service of the question, addressed to the object, "How can I use you or protect myself against you?" but... it also answers the question, "Who or what are you who are part of this same world of which I am a part?" It is this latter question which concerns the *totality* of the object, while the former always concerns only the need-related aspects of the object. (1959, p. 222)

Further, openness and interest extend to the person the capacity to stay with something for long periods of time and, thereby, to understand the manner of its dwelling in time and space:

> *Only* the adult who is able to be completely absorbed, again and again, often for many hours and days, in an object that arouses his interest will be the one who enlarges his, and sometimes man's scope of perception and of experience. A painter may spend many days, weeks or months, or even years, in looking at the same mountains as Cezanne did, or a blade of grass or bamboo leaves or branches of a tree as many of the Chinese and Japanese masters did, without tiring of it. The same is true of the poet's or writer's devoted love for his object, of which Rilke speaks, of the true naturalist's perception of the plant

> or animal with which he has to live for long periods of time in order to acquire that intimate knowledge from which eventually new meaning and understanding will be born. (Schachtel, 1959, p. 239)

To abide with something, is to make visible its dwelling place--that is, all of the object's multiple points of relatedness to other things and to the passage of time. Therefore, observing locates the thing in the vicinity of other things and makes visible both its continuities and its transformations through time.

When Barfield says that, "...human consciousness is the mirror in which nature surveys herself" (1963, p. 194), he is speaking to the power of vision, realized in observation, through which memory and meaning are served. The observer is preeminently nature's questioner, who calls her forth, recognizes her, names her, preserves her, and thus weaves together inner perception and outer enactment. The observer is the person standing in the world, among all other things, with the capacity to "see himself seeing," to remember the world by his recognition and naming, to increase the world's articulation and his own--in short, to add to the world "a fresh layer of meaning." (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 406)

The neutrality, detachment, and *objectivity* of the technical observer serve usefulness, and the prediction and control of nature. The openness, submersion, and *objectifying* of the observer through the full gift of vision serve meaning and the visibility of the aesthetic order of nature.

It follows from this distinction between the technical and what I will henceforth call the reflective observer that the posture and intention of each, as well as the standards by which their observations are guided and judged, will be different. It has been commonplace to describe the posture of the technical observer along a continuum from passive to active. The more standardized the instrumentation for recording, the more passive and neutral the observer. At the other extreme, the interviewer and the "participant observer" often actively intervene in the object of study, becoming more experimenters than observers, albeit without the control on variation of variables that the laboratory makes possible.

By contrast, the posture of the reflective observer is better described as simultaneously receptive and evocative. He opens himself to the object to receive it, not passively or according to a predetermined schematization, but through "repeated and varied approaches to the object in its manifold relations to himself and also tentatively tries out, as it were, a great variety of relations between the objects thus approached and other objects, ideas, experiences..." (Schachtel, 1959, p. 241). In that manifold of encounters, he calls the object forth not in order to manipulate it, intervene in it, or change it, but in order to see it in all of its dimensions, to

make visible its composition and, thereby, to approach the integrity of the object.

The standard to which observation is held in science and technology is objectivity. The "detached object," fully and ideally separable from the vagaries of personal viewpoint, can only be described in a way that makes it available to prediction, control, and explanation, if it is to be free from the biases of subjective judgment. In practice, objectivity is achieved through operationalizing the object of study and standardizing the method of recording.

In contrast, the standard which guides reflective observation is imagination. The "recognized object," fully articulated according to the unity of its composition, can only be described in a way that makes it visible, if the reciprocities that abide between the observer and the observed are called forth. In practice, imaginative observations are achieved through immersion in the object of study through time and through stating the polarities which describe its coherence (unity) and its durability (transformation).

QUESTIONING

What is it to question? How and where does the observer's question arise? Clearly, the order of question asked for here is not a schoolmaster's question to which the answer is already known. In order that the currently invisible gain visibility, the question called for is one that leads forth. To "lead forth" is to grasp the very root of question: the quest. The question that leads forth is the question that is a quest, a searching. The questioning observer does not mouth questions, he is not inquisitive nor an interrogator, he is a seeker. Seeking requires space and time. Quest places the question not in a disembodied mind, but in a world space which is the relatedness of a specific person and a particular thing. That relatedness, itself a function of detachment and distance, leaves space for the question to occur, just as the act of detachment allows the thing to stand forth in the first place, and to be available to "enter into man's dwelling." How the question arises addresses a further enigma in the relatedness of man and thing, which is already foreshadowed in the earlier discussion. He who calls forth must simultaneously answer and respond, and only that which he can recognize can be called forth.

From myth, we know it is the Wizard who is the Namer. He knows the true names of all of nature's members, recognizes the essential being of each thing, and holds the secret closely to preserve each thing's freedom--and his own. It is perhaps in this same vein of thought that Cezanne said, "Nature is on the inside," or that Jung asserted "...The mythological processes of nature, such as summer and winter, the phases of the moon...are in no sense allegories of these objective

occurrences; rather they are symbolic expression of the inner, unconscious drama of the psyche which becomes accessible to man's consciousness by way of projection--that is mirrored in the events of nature." (1969, p. 6) That is, the essential and true questions are not raised by abstract analysis, nor by forcing the thing and trespassing its limits, but by allowing things to cross the seeker's own boundaries, to enter there, and to dwell there. Indeed, in true questioning, it is difficult to say *who* is the observer and interrogator and who is the observed and respondent.

To learn to question is to learn to recognize and to answer to the freedom of the thing, to acknowledge and to find the resonance of the thing in one's own being, and to dwell together with it in order to constitute a new setting or location which renders visible, as Van Gogh's painting of the chair does, the previously invisible. It is in calling forth, in rendering visible, that we discover more of the world, and it is this deep aspect of inquiry that Heidegger acknowledges when he says that only that which is worthy of questioning *remains* or becomes worthy of thought.

To call forth and to make visible requires those attributes of being--concentration and self-consciousness--that Scheler designates as the spirit in man and that Heidegger locates in memory. Scheler says:

> Concentration, self-consciousness, and the capacity to objectify the original centers of resistance encountered by the drives--these characteristics form a single indivisible structure which, as such, is peculiar only to man. (1969, p. 48)

Relating memory to devotion, Heidegger says:

> Originally, "memory" means as much as devotion: a constant concentrated abiding with something--not just with something that has passed, but in the same way with what is present and with what may come. What is past, present, and to come appears in the oneness of its own present being. (1968, p. 140)

The two statements, taken together, establish the essential gestures, the essential actions of the reflective observer--to concentrate in full consciousness of self. That is, in questioning the object, the observer is enjoined to "remember" it, not in the sense of recalling past events, but in the sense of abiding with it in order to collect all its moments, and so to preserve it in oneness:

> His (the apprentice's) learning is not mere practice, to gain facility in the use of tools. Nor does he merely gather knowledge about the

> customary forms of the things he is to build. *If he is to become a true cabinet maker, he makes himself answer and respond above all to the different kinds of wood and to the shapes slumbering within wood--to wood as it enters into man's dwelling with all the hidden riches of its nature.* In fact, this relatedness to wood is what maintains the whole craft. Without that relatedness, the craft will never be anything but empty busy work, any occupation with it will be determined exclusively by business concerns. (Heidegger, 1968, pp. 14-15)

IMAGINATION

The cabinet maker envisions "all the different kinds of wood" and "the shapes slumbering within the wood." He does not see the wood as an inert mass nor as merely useful to him for burning or building, nor as all the same. He sees the wood particularly and in the full potentiality of its possibilities; he sees the wood *imaginatively*. Barfield says that the true *differentia* of imagination is "that the subject should be somehow merged or resolved into the object" (1966, p. 30). Imagination is to become "one with," but not literally to *be* it. That would imply an unselfconscious and unrecognized identity, a return to an original participation which recognizes no boundaries between objects. Original participation requires no imagination--it is the state of "ecstatic immersion" that Scheler ascribes to plants and animals. Imagination arises from the effort, and ensuing self-consciousness, of detachment. Where a leap must be made, there is distance and space. Yet it must be kept firmly in mind that the distance and detachment occur within the unity of a world space in which participation is the original, indeed, the primordial experience. Barfield says that the essence of participation is

> ...that there stands behind the phenomena, *and on the other side of them from me,* a represented which is of the same nature as me. Whether it is called "mana," or by the names of many gods and demons, or God the Father, or the spirit world, *it is of the same nature as the perceiving self,* inasmuch as it is not mechanical or accidental, but psychic and voluntary. (1957, p. 42)

The givenness of this environ, the penumbra that lies behind and around all objects, coloring and shading all our commerce in a world from which we subsequently stand apart, is addressed in a further and historical description of Barfield's recalling when the world was "more a garment that men wore about them, than a stage on which they moved" (1957, p. 94).

It is through the archetypal and personal memory of this original participation and unity that we may recognize the world, see ourselves as dwellers in it, and so have imaginative access to it. We are not aliens forced to leap unbridgeable chasms. As the poet Rainer Maria Rilke wrote:

> We have no reason to mistrust our world, for it is not against us. Has it terrors, they are *our* terrors; has it abysses, those abysses belong to us..." (1954, p. 69).

In imagining, the person's own spirit is united with the spirit of that in which he is immersed, and that in which he is immersed reveals back to him his own spirit. In imagining, detachment is abrogated and the merging of the viewer and viewed brings a new meaning into existence, reflective of both moments, enhancing of each and the possession of neither. Without the artist and the objects of the landscape, the painting cannot be born. In the birth struggle, both object and observer gain visibility through each other. Or as Barfield phrases it, "If 'I' in my true self am *that* (the apparently objective), then it is only by knowing *that* and knowing it *imaginatively* that I can 'know myself' (1966, p. 31). Once born, the painting is free, a meaning in its own right, available to be recognized and apprehended through the imaginative power of another viewer.

Given that power of vision underlies the reflective observer's imaginative access to the world, what is the character of imaginative participation? Stated most abstractly, it is the occurrence of the hypothetical: the "as if" of mere possibility. But, after Barfield, we have suggested that it is more than that, "that the subject should be *somehow*...resolved into the object." (1966, p. 30) It is the "somehow" that is of concern to the observer. It is here that Mnemosyne, in the guise of memory, the mythic mother of imagination, enters. The world is recognizable to us because we remember it. It is

> by means of memory that the outward appearances become an inward experience, (Barfield, 1957, p. 154).

The capacity to stand apart, to be detached, as noted earlier, is qualified by memory, both personal and archetypal. What is remembered continues to live, to change, to color and shade the vision of the perceiver. When something is remembered, it cannot be used up or, in essence, pass away. In the most fundamental way, nothing that happens can be undone:

> For after a thing has happened nothing can ever go on quite as it did before. We may say that it shall and that it does. We may even believe

> this. But a happening can never be unhappened, and, faint or strong, its color will creep into the shade of all things and modify it with its own infinitesimal but all-pervading bit of change.
>
> Itself become a thread in the vast web, one that cannot be torn out until time himself destroys the whole fabric--if even time can do that, for there will be happenings as long as there is life, which is eternal. And since that is so, memory must likewise be eternal in one form or another, and while there is memory, the web of happenings must go on weaving. (Walton, 1974, p. 44)

But it is actively reflective memory that renders the merely hypothetical into the imaginative. Actively reflective remembering is the order of memory described by Heidegger that was noted earlier:

> ...a constant, concentrated abiding with something--not just with something that has passed, but in the same way with what is present and with what may come. What is past, present, and to come appears in the oneness of its own present being. (1968, p. 76)

Active remembering, then, is not idle day-dreaming, a shaping of things and events to suit personal need and to support personal fantasies. Remembering is first of all receptive to the thing that is its object. To *receive* means to give over and to give up--to give over your own energy and power by giving up your preconceived ideas and the familiarity of the object. In this way

> The object is perceived in its suchness, without any labeling, naming, classifying, thinking of possible similarities, relations to other objects, etc. (Schachtel, 1959, p. 179)

To receive takes time. Before something can be seen as it is, it must be gazed upon and brought into view. Rilke says:

> In order to have an object speak to you, you must take it for a certain time for the only one that exists, the only phenomenon, which through your devoted and exclusive love, finds itself placed in the center of the universe... (cited by Schachtel, 1959, p. 225)

It is in that opening up, in that submersion and immersion that a resemblance is found--that point of intersection that brings to visibility a meaning previously hidden in the observer and in the thing.

The process of immersing one's self in the object

is largely determined by the essential nature of the object of observation. Schachtel's description of the artist's struggle to preserve and, therefore, remember the vision of the true object, suggests the nature of the effort required to approach the thing without violating its integrity:

> In this effort, they (the artists, writers, poets) have to examine the words and concepts, or the materials used for the work of art and their particular application in canvas or sculpture, as to whether they express truly and precisely the original intuitive perception...(for example). The Japanese ink painting (sumie) forces the artist to render his vision directly, without corrections and without hesitation...it imposes a life-long discipline through which the artist eventually arrives at such a profound vision of his object and such a concentrated, yet relaxed mastery of his medium that vision and execution approach each other, and ideally, become one. (1959, p. 180)

Through its preservation, the object is made available to the continuing reflection through which the full range of its possibilities can be made visible. This reflection is again not an analysis--not a prediction nor a predication *about* the object. Rather, by immersion in the object through which the object is remembered and preserved, reflection seeks to grasp the object in its fullness, its unity, and its particularity. The technical or analytic observer breaks the object into its parts and its behaviors, and at the same time, subsumes it to a general category. The reflective observer attends to what Whitehead terms the *composition* of the object--that is, the internal coherence of *details* through which the *essential* nature of the object is revealed. Rather than focusing on discrete parts or on general categories, the observer's eye searches in the following manner:

- -- for the points of relatedness among the details;
- -- for the pattern of recurrence among the details that compose the object;
- -- for the boundaries of the object that locates it among, and intersects it with, other objects within a setting;
- -- for the transformable potentialities of the object through time.

Thus, in assuming the unity and integrity of the object, the reflective observer seeks the unifying essence of

the object through the reciprocities and polarities of its parts. The observer in this posture does not reduce or fragment the object nor does he subsume the parts to the whole. It is through full concentration and absorption in the importance and particularity of the parts, and in their reciprocal moments, that he imaginatively sees a whole that transcends the parts. In the reflective observer's description,

> The whole displays its component parts, each with its own value enhanced; and the parts lead up to a whole which is beyond themselves, and yet not destructive to themselves. (Whitehead, 1958, p. 86)

3

The Recognition of Other Persons

At first glance, it would appear that another person is more visible to the observer than a tree or a moth. Certainly another person is more *familiar* than a moth. However, in accordance with the earlier distinction that I made between profane and gifted vision, familiarity is, generally speaking, a block to visibility. What has been named and categorized becomes flat and uninforming, its dubious virtue being that it raises no question and does not disturb the complacency and comfort of the viewer, which is what accounts often for our attachment to the familiar. Unfamiliar persons, whether because of color, race, custom, or language, arouse anxiety and distrust. As Schachtel says:

> Most people, most of the time, see other people as objects-of-use (i.e. objects of need, fear, or use for some purpose). (1959, p. 173)

To the degree, then, that people are viewed as familiar objects, interesting only in terms of what they have to offer in fulfillment of personal need, they cannot truly be recognized or seen. Daily life abounds with the experience of a utilitarian relationship to other persons, and in some degree, it is a necessary part of the human condition. However, to the degree that it becomes virtually the *only* way of viewing others, it drastically limits the capacity to grasp the actual experience of another person, and, as we shall see, it also therefore drastically limits the observer's capacity to grasp his own experience.

If familiarity is not the basis for that recognition of other persons which underlies the fullest realization of gifted vision, it is important to consider the alternative possibilities, which immediately raises a series of questions: Is it possible to recognize the actual experience of another person, and to what degree? If I feel that I do grasp the experience of another, is it by empathy and through the projection of my own feeling? If that is the case, is it his experience or my own that I have recognized? Is there a limit to the range of the human experience which can be grasped? Even more fundamentally, is the person at bottom an individual, private and isolated in his own world? If that should prove the case, the person's accessibility to another would be highly limited. Or is the person first of all a part of a

community, participating in a common world from which he slowly differentiates an individual viewpoint? If that should be the case, the person's accessibility to another is greatly enhanced.

Before confronting these questions directly, it is useful to reflect on the depth of their meaning in personal experience. In this matter, we have all had contradictory experiences. There are occasions when I can sincerely say to another person, "I know just how you feel," and other occasions, perhaps involving the same "other," when I can say with equal sincerity, "I just don't understand you." It can be said in virtually the same breath that we are all sisters and brothers under the skin or that each person is a unique individual. We have all on some occasion immediately and intuitively "recognized" a person new to us (which is not to say "liked"), and equally been immensely surprised, indeed made inordinately uncomfortable, by the statements or actions of someone we felt we knew intimately.

Let us look for the point of unity that encompasses these seemingly opposite experiences with their opposing implications for the kind and degree of knowledge one person can have of another. Scheler, in *The Nature of Sympathy*, asserts that not only can we participate in the experiences of others, but also that such participation extends to an understanding of *experiences we have never had*:

> We can have a lively and immediate participation in joy or sorrow, can share with others their appreciation of value, and can even enter into another person's commiseration for a third party, without ever having sampled that particular quality of experience before. (1970, p. 47)

Scheler amplifies this assertion, by ascribing to it a direction in which our knowledge of each other's experience is greatest at the most profound levels of experience --the levels of thoughts, feeling, and spirit--and least at the level of sensory experience:

> ...Moreover this applies increasingly, the more such feelings ascend from the sensory level...to the spiritual plane. It is only for *sensory* feelings...that reproduction (i.e., direct experience) is required in order to be sure of understanding...the understanding and sharing of *mental*, and still more of spiritual feelings, is completely independent of all such gulfs between the contingent personal backgrounds of individuals. Jesus' despair in Gethsemane can be understood and shared regardless of our historical, racial and even human limitations. (1970, pp. 47-49)

Scheler acribes this capacity for access to the experience of others to fellow-feeling, to the fact "that independently existing persons...are by nature *predisposed for a communal mode of life*" (1970, p. 66). To be "predisposed for a communal mode of life," and by extension to be available to, and to have access to the full range of human experience, being explicitly barred only from the sensations impinging on another, does not however *ensure* that access, nor does it obviate individual privacy and uniqueness. It does, however, provide the substratum through which access to another can be direct, requiring neither inference nor empathy.

These ideas require further examination. The very predisposition for a "communal mode of life" has the initial effect of shielding the person both from his own individuality of viewpoint and from access to other individuals as individuals. Being caught up in the communal flow, the person is originally identified with it, and is incapable as it were of sufficient detachment to recognize the other person's joy or sorrow as that person's, since he is himself fully absorbed into the experience of the other through emotional identification. That is, we are not originally inclined to empathy and the projection of our feelings onto another, but rather inclined to take the other's experience to be our own.

> ...a man tends, in the first instance, to live more in *others* than in himself; more in community than is his own individual self. This is confirmed by the facts of child-psychology... The ideas, feelings, and tendencies which govern the life of a child, apart from generalities such as hunger and thirst, are initially confined to those of his immediate environment, his parents and relatives, his elder brothers and sisters, his teachers, his home, his people, and so on. Imbued as he is with "family feeling," his own life is at first almost completely hidden from him. (1970, p. 247)

From this point of view, the person, while a uniquely *constituted* human being, is only slowly emergent as a separate individual from the larger stream of consciousness of humankind, and is therefore, directly and originally participant in the thoughts and beliefs of a particular culture and tradition. These suffuse his being and constitute a layer of memory that is only articulated through later recollection and through the objectifying process in which the person gradually detaches himself from the familial/cultural unity. Without that process of detachment there would be no "other", but equally there would be no "self." The separateness of others and one's own experience of separateness is a function of the struggle for self-consciousness, both historically and in the individual life.

In this sense, it may fairly be said that I gain access to my own experience and self in precisely the same way I do to the experience and selfness of the other: through the expressiveness of the body in the world. That is, it is only to the degree that I am capable of being an object to myself--"to see myself seeing"--that I gain detachment and self-consciousness. Similarly, it is only to the degree that I can detach the other from myself, to let him stand apart, that I can grasp both the fellow-feeling that binds us and the uniqueness of being that distinguishes us. Because, as potentially separate selves, our mutual detachment is accomplished through the body and the body's expression, I have as direct an access to the other's inner experience as *it is stated in his projects in the world* as I have to my own inner experience as *it is stated in my projects in the world*.

The limitation on both my own self-consciousness, and on my perception of others, is that the broader context and intention of my own life and being is fundamentally mysterious and hidden from my direct view, and so is that of the other person. In this shadow realm of ungathered and unrecollected thought, I have a *sense* of a self beyond and surrounding my self-consciousness, a familiarity of dwelling that is unshareable with another because it is unstateable. The perception of that level of experience in another person is unavailable to me; I cannot enter another person's unrecollected meaning.

Going back to our earlier discussion, when the perception of other persons is based on inference and empathy, there is an assumption of originally separate and mutually unknowable beings who have to be joined through projection. The further assumption is that self-knowledge *precedes* the knowledge of others. When, on the other hand, the perception of other persons is based on direct access through the expressiveness of the body in its engagement with things-in-the-world, there is an assumption of co-extensive beings united through the shared world setting. From that assumption, it can be derived that self-knowledge and knowledge of others are achieved reciprocally and intersubjectively. Or in the words of Schiller,

> If you would know yourself, take heed of the practice of others;
> If you would understand others, look to your own heart within you.
> (cited in *The Nature of Sympathy*, 1970, p. 250)

If the first set of assumptions is accepted as the basis for our knowledge of other persons, the potentiality for observing persons is drastically limited: there is neither shared experience nor a shared world through which to gain access to the other. The best I can hope for is to observe myself introspectively, project my own feelings, and therefore to experience the other either as a hypothetical entity, or alternately as a shadow of myself. I am also forced to a position of deeming self-knowledge as

easier or more accessible than knowldge of others, in spite of the fact that self-knowledge is notoriously difficult* to attain.

*Scheler in reference to self-knowledge, cites Nietzche's cogent words, *"every man is farthest of all from himself."* (1970, p. 251)

With the second set of assumptions, the problems of perceiving and knowing others are considerably altered. From that perspective, I have direct access to the other from two powerful vantage points: the expressiveness of the body and our shared, and mutually accessible, world setting. I have also the observation and reflection upon my own body's engagement in the world as that is reciprocated in the engagements of the other. In this way, reflection and perceiving become mutually informing. I recognize myself in others in the world and I am in turn recognized by them. In this manner, we come to stand apart from each other in the particularity of our being, yet remain understandable to each other.

THE POWER OF RECOGNITION GAINED THROUGH REFLECTION

If the body or the world, as fields of experience, are to be made accessible to our vision, we have to find ways in which to see each according to its particular nature, and also through their shared contexts. This requires of us, as observers, an act of reflection before we plunge into empirical facticity. Without first clarifying our experiences and our perceptions of *body* and *world*, we would leave ourselves without a way to understand the meaning of the facts gathered through observation. This is precisely the situation of the sciences and of technical observers for whom the starting point of inquiry is fact rather than reflection.

Reflection turns thinking back upon itself. When I reflect, I hold my own thinking in front of me, as if it were an objective aspect of myself viewed in a mirror, and enter it imaginatively to find those settings and things in which my thought is gathered and through which it is called forth. Reflection is thinking which gathers, keeps, and preserves thought by finding the pattern of relationship among seemingly disparate events. It is, therefore, a special branch of *remembering* which consciously chooses a focus to concentrate on--a subject which may be an idea, an image, a motif, a symbol, an experience, a person, an event, or anything.

The ways in which reflection awakens memory and unifies disparate events and moments makes it a lot like acts of contemplation, meditation, musing, and fantasy. But in important ways, reflection is different from these other modes of thinking, just as each of them is distinguishable from the other. Closest to contemplation and meditation, reflection shares with these modes of thought an attitude of concentration, focus, and openness. However, reflection is an active, conscious seeking for relationship while active thinking in the arts of contemplation and meditation is as completely stilled as possible in order that the thinker be open to thought. At

the same time, reflection contrasts with musing and fantasy in terms of its ordering of events. In musing and fantasy, one event leads on to the next, each bearing potentially equal weight in the open-ended linking of ideas and images; in reflection, each thought and image is refracted and related to the unifying center of the focus of concentration. It is that center which gains illumination and increases in weight and depth by its points of intersection with other images and thoughts.

For all of these modes of thinking, the setting is memory, and remembering or remembrance is the mode of thinking that encompasses them. This commonality of setting and generic mode distinguishes reflection and related modes of thought more sharply from logical mental operations than from each other. Fundamentally, logical operations are addressed to the definition of events in the physical world according to constant and mutually exclusive object attributes. The purpose of this mental activity is to separate and to categorize events, and through the generalization of categories to subsume a particular thing or event as a special instance of an abstract principle. Further, by establishing rules of logic as the procedure for definition, the perspective of any individual thinker toward the object to be defined is obviated.

By contrast, in reflection, the reflected upon becomes a chosen center which unifies, within the perspective of a particular thinker, a pattern of relationships among a pool of meanings otherwise only loosely associated. However, reflection while it calls forth the particular vision of a given thinker is not private, isolated, or alienated from the reflections of other thinkers. The image, the medium, the motif, the symbol, the archetype, even the personal experience that is the focus of reflection is itself a shared moment of the world setting which is the ultimate unifying context for humankind. For example, if I take the motif "tree" as the focus of reflection, it is a motif that has been thought, remembered, drawn, written, viewed and spoken by every person for millenia--thus, we not only think it, it thinks itself in us. As part of all of us, it nonetheless calls forth a particular and unique relationship in each individual consciousness. For example, my own reflections on the meanings held by the idea, experience, and image of "tree" evokes the following symbols, images and experiences: still, solid, wind, leaf, abiding, strong, green, whispering, rooted, rustling, swaying. Reflection is that thinking through which I discover not the event itself but more importantly my relationship to it.

Given both my own perspective and the shared event which is nothing less than the world, the bedrock and source of our lives, it is by gaining access to the reflections of others in any particular event that I discover each of *their* relationships to it. This, then, is the purpose of reflection; not to discover or define an "it," a physical event, or even an aesthetic or

metaphysical event, but to discover and describe the range and patterns of relationship in which thinking and thinkers stand to the motifs, themes and things of the world. It is a further potentiality of collective reflection to suggest the overlapping boundaries among events in the perception of persons. For any individual, it is also possible through their personal reflections on a range of events to find the dimensions, patterns, and kinds of relationship the person establishes to different orders of events. Continuing my earlier example, the reflections of seven persons, including my own, yield the following meanings of tree:

#1 bird...trunk...plant...wood...root...breeze... branch...rest...rough...life...building...tall... green...bark...body...smooth...sap...animal... waving...nest...strength

#2 quiet...moving...present...cool...sun...bark... smells...still...removed...top...wind...tall... mountain...solid...deep...abiding...fall...fresh... echo...chop...green...

#3 light...sugar...upright...strong...window... green...sky...rough...leaf...swaying...young... life

#4 age...patience...high...home...hiding...winter... gentle...climbing

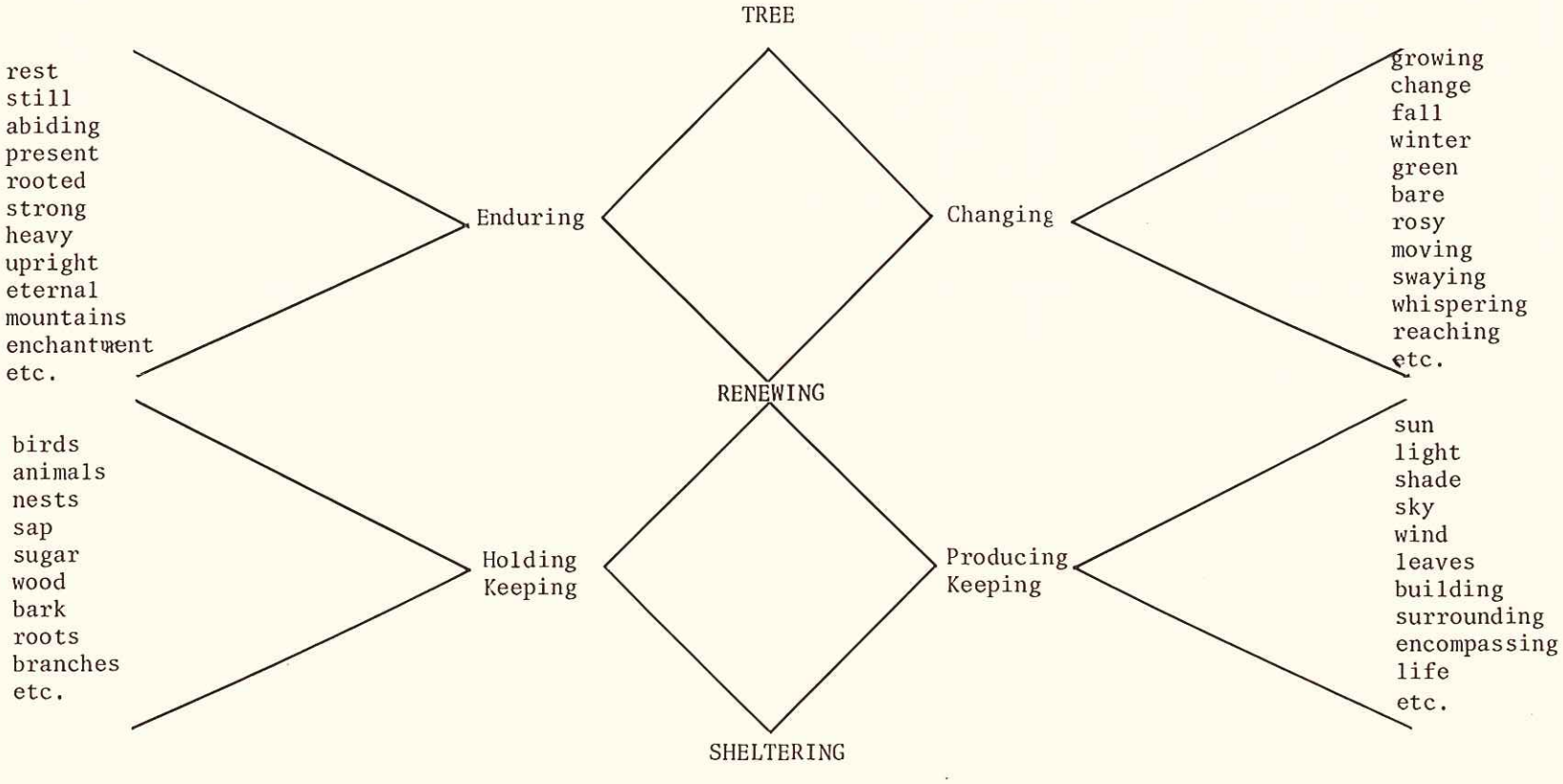
#5 still...solid...wind...leaf...abiding...strong... green...whispering...rooted...rustling...swaying

#6 shade...rustle...view...bugs...change...sticky sap...giving...hard...green...rough...strong

#7 encompassing...surrounding...reaching...wind of the world...breath...silvered...silent...webbed ...intricate...simple...eternal

Within the boundaries of the perspectives evoked by tree, the intersection of individual perspective can be described, and by implication, the aspects of the tree evoked for an individual (see opposite page).

THE INTERSECTION OF THE PERSPECTIVES ON TREE
IN THE REFLECTIONS OF SEVEN PERSONS



It is obvious from even these limited examples that the relationship which any person establishes to an event far exceeds any facts or series of facts concerning the thing or any definition of it. Rather, the examples reflect a fundamental *relatedness* which describes man's perception of the things and events of the world, and of life itself, and that relatedness can be summarized as follows: Nothing is perceived by persons in isolation, all things are likened to others, and in that process of likening each particular partakes of and is enhanced by other particulars. Further, since no event of the natural world is exhaustible in terms of meaning--i.e., in terms of our points of relatedness--each individual consciousness contributes a unique perspective and calls forth a new vision of the thing or event. These perspectives are accessible to and shareable with other persons, thus each person's perspective is enlarged through access to the perspectives of other persons. The enlargement of the perspective of generations of other persons increases the layers of meaning expressed and potentially available in the world.

My personal experience, image, and idea of tree is in and of itself a statement of deep relatedness, of likeness in physiognomy, imbuing tree with the symbolism of protection, age, and life itself. These inherent perspectives are particularized in my individual experience: the ancient elm in my grandfather's yard, requiring four of us to encircle it; the lightning of a prairie storm splitting and burning a tree by the edge of the river; the large twin pines' branches touching the ground to make a double house, etc. They are also particularized by the statements, visual and written, and the traditions and rituals which are accessible to me through other individual perspectives, and my own and other cultures: the tree of life; the tree as the symbol of bounty and fertility; the tree as the symbol of the return of life in Proust's *Within a Budding Grove;* the cool northern trees of the Flemish and Dutch painters; the enchanted forest of fairytale; Ents and the trees that walk from Tolkien. Reflection brings this full assemblage of perspectives forward, with the consequence that "tree" becomes for a time the center of thought, an object of devoted attention. In reflection, therefore, tree is enhanced and made more visible--in short, it is fully recognized. The power of recognition gained through reflection is the essence of observation. It is, I believe, what Pasteur meant when he said, "In the fields of observation, chance favors the prepared mind." I can only observe what I am fully prepared to see: I can only see fully what I have reflected upon to discover as much as possible its full range of relationship, and my particular and unique relatedness to it.

A REFLECTION ON BODY AND WORLD

The assumption stated earlier that I have "direct access to the other through the body and our shared, and mutually accessible "world setting," suggests a focus of reflection* that recognizes the intimate bond of body setting and world setting. That focus is provided by Whitehead when he says, in *Modes of Thought*,

> The Human Body is that region of the world which is the primary field of human expression. (1958, p. 30)

"Region" and "field" are terms for events of the natural world. Ascribing them to body, brings body into the realm of nature and into the realm of observable events. These descriptors provide, therefore, a sensitive and productive focus for a dual reflection on body and world. The following pattern of perspectives on region and field emerged from the reflections of 12 persons at The Prospect Center:

> A region is larger than a field, and carries with it the character of terrain and three dimensionality (even in maps). The field by contrast is not only more circumscribed, it is flat. The image of "sculpture" was evoked by region, while field evoked "painting." The region is so large that one can only gain a bird's eye view, while a field is available to the child's eye view. One can gain access to the overview, the salient, large characteristics of the region, while the field is accessible in minute detail. Field also implies that which is taken in from a particular point of view, while the region is more general, and more generally available.
>
> The field is more familiar than the region. It implies cultivation, care, order, detail. It can be and is thoroughly known by someone, and is capable of being cared for by one person. Someone can have a field, work it, grow things in it--it has the aura of domesticity and safety. In keeping with this character, field evokes the images of flowers, grain, meadows, grass. The region has a less personal, less intimate familiarity based on broadly shared characteristics of culture such as dialect, economy, cooking. Virtually equal in weight with its settled and traditional nature, is its wild nature. Region connotes the unexplored, the yet to be explored. It brought to mind the "uncharted," the "windswept," the "unknown." The region may be the "home" of a communal group, but it does not belong to someone. It is by nature collective and shared, just as field is singular and personal.

*Since our access to other persons is through the expressiveness of the body and the context of our shared world setting, these must be the primary and continuing focus of reflection for the observer of persons. For my own study and observation of the body, the philosophical writings of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Whitehead, and Feldstein have been invaluable as have the drawings of Matisse, and the dance notation system of Laban. Similarly, Von Uexkull, Rachael Carson, Loren Eisely, Nikos Tinbergen, and especially Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space* have contributed along with the aforementioned philosophers to my understanding of the world, and the boundaries of body and world. However, it is by periodically setting myself the task of reflecting on the meanings that body and world have for me that I maintain and heighten my sensitivity to their fullness and nuance.

Similarly, when I am teaching persons to observe, I set as their first task to reflect on these fundamental concepts. As the assemblage of ideas grows in the observer's memory, it in turn becomes part of the experiences available to active remembering which contributes to the act of reflection.

> The boundaries of a region are ambiguous in the sense of not being clear or directly viewable. The region's boundaries are implied, not stated. They are generally "natural"--rivers, mountains --and these serve to identify, delimit a part of a larger whole. Within these boundaries, the region is defined by some "constancy of homogeneity." That "constancy" unites and limits an enormous diversity of events. The boundaries of a field are directly available. They most usually have been arbitrarily established by someone--through the building of fences, stone walls, etc.--sometimes someone has taken deliberate advantage of a natural boundary (a wood, a river) to make one or more, but rarely all four, sides of the field. While the region unites diversity, the field is "filled with the same stuff." The boundaries of the field are more definite, more "actual" than those of the region. Nonetheless the field, except for the actualness of the fixed boundary, may be difficult to distinguish from the countryside surrounding and impinging upon it. In that sense the field is "clear at its source" and "generates from its center," but has "no clear ending" independently of its set limits.
>
> The coherence and stability of a region resides in its distinguishable terrain and in the traditions that unite a community. The region has the character of bedrock, of givenness, of the unchanging. It readily relapses back into the totality of which it is a part and yet stubbornly holds to its own separateness. The region accommodates great diversity through underlying connectedness. The field's coherence/stability is a function of the activity which it allows and particularizes. It is the "stage for something," an "arena," an "area of action." It allows for, but does not determine, particularity. It has a more limited, but a more specific "span of influence." Both temporally and spatially, it connotes action, counteraction, orderly change, growth, and encompassable cycles. Relatively, the field is the dynamic force within a durable, continuing totality.

For observers of persons, there is much here that is thought-provoking and which serves to inform and realize our vision of others. The body as region is a part of the world, a moment of it, distinguishable from it but likened to it. The body in this sense is at bedrock composed of the earth's substance and rhythms. Speaking to this, Whitehead observes,

> ...the body is part of the external world, continuous with it. In fact, it is as much a part of nature as anything else there--a river or a mountain or a cloud. Also if we are fussily exact we cannot define where a body begins and where the external world ends. (*Modes of Thought*, 1958, p. 263)

The body in its regional character, apart from having no fixed boundaries in terms of the larger world-setting, is simultaneously traditional, fixed, participant in the broad characteristics of culture and also wild or uncharted. This echoes, virtually exactly, Scheler's paradoxical contention of the essential communality of persons and the ultimate mystery and hiddenness of the person from himself and from others. The body as region is the person's particular dwelling place, but he does not ultimately own it or completely control it.

Just as the body as region is collective and mysterious, the body as field is personal, viewable, and accessible "in minute detail." It is cultivated, known, and clearly demarcated through its expression and gesture. While the body as field has less mystery than the body as region, it has greater dynamic. Indeed its coherence and stability is a function of the activity which it particularizes. If the body as region is a dwelling, the body as field is a stage for the person's expression, marked by cycles of transformation and capable of ever-increasing complexity, nuance, subtlety and individuation. It can be concluded that the body as field is the dynamic, personal force within the durable totality of the body as region, which in its turn dwells in, and relapses into the enduring stuff of the world from which it arose.

As observers, therefore, our attention is naturally drawn first to the body as field--i.e., to the setting and the expression of the person's meaning. However, it is important even as we focus attention on expression to be mindful of the body's successive dwellings in body-region and world-setting. As will be illustrated by an initial focus on the observation of the body as expressive field, the significance of that expression is only graspable when the physiognomy of the body region and the world setting are also captured in the observation.

THE BODY AS EXPRESSIVE FIELD

The capacity to see the body as an expressive field is based on the original and dominant perceptual orientation of the baby or the young child toward the lively and moving aspects of the setting. Before the baby sees objects as such, he sees and is responsive to the dynamics of things and persons, whether these are emotional (feelings) or physical (movement). Thus, underlying our perception of a thing or person as a static object defined by constant object properties, there is a perception of the

importance and the dynamics it expresses. This participation in expressiveness makes importance or value the basic substratum for all human perception:

> ...value-qualities of objects are already given *in advance* at a level where their imaged and conceptual features are not yet vouchsafed to us, and hence...the apprehension of values is the basis of our subsequent apprehension of objects. (*The Nature of Sympathy*, 1970, pp. 57-58)

However, both as a function of development and of education, the perception of others, and of the world in general, becomes characteristically more attuned to constant object traits and attributes than to dynamic relationships. Developmentally, there is an increase with age in the capacity to conserve the invariant properties of objects in spite of shifts in orientation and perspective. Since constancy and invariance are essential to the detachment of the object, and also to its availability to control, manipulation, categorization and prediction, the value of this capacity for all of the useful work of science and technology is obvious. The schooling of children, therefore, is generally directed toward supporting and extending this ability. Carried to its furthest potentiality, the thinking emergent from this view of the world is abstract, generalized, and remote from the particular and the expressive. Abstractness and generalization make it difficult for the person to see the expressive uniqueness of other persons as that is stated in the interplay and texture of gesture. Rather, other persons are seen, from this point of view, according to general categories and specific traits: caucasian, middle-aged, aquiline features, brown-eyed, etc.

In spite of the person's developmental thrust toward the constancy of the object, and schooling in support of abstraction and generalization, the openness of perception to value and dynamic is never wholly lost, however. In order to grasp the expressive uniqueness of other persons and to gain access to the "layer of meaning" contributed by each person's projects in the world, the capacity for perception needs only to be educated, the basis for which is the stabilized structure of the body. The body is the stage on which the expression of the person is enacted. That expression in turn reflects the continuity and transformation of a unique perspective as it is realized in its projects in the world:

> I am a field, an experience. One day, once and for all, something was set in motion which even during sleep, can no longer cease to see or not to see, to feel or not to feel, to suffer or to be happy, to think or rest from thinking, in a word "to have it out with the world." There then arose, not a new set of sensations or states

> of consciousness, not even a new monad or a new perspective, since I am not tied to any one perspective, but can change my point of view, being under compulsion only in that I must always have one, and can only have one at once--let us say, therefore, that there arose a fresh *possibility of situations*. The event of my birth has not passed completely away, it has not fallen into nothingness in the way that an event of the *objective world* does, for it committed a whole future, not as a cause determines its effect, but as a situation once created, inevitably leads on to some outcome. There was henceforth a new "setting;" the world received a fresh layer of meaning. In the home into which a child is born, all objects change their significance; they begin to await some as yet undeterminate treatment at his hands; another and different person is there, a new personal history, short or long, has just been initiated, another account has been opened. (Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, 1962, p. 406)

The body is not only an ongoing perspective in the world, it is a perspective that leads somewhere and is capable of its own transformation. The body, therefore, is essentially a rhythmic mobile event, both spatially and temporally. It is through a full openness to, and recognition of, the rhythmic interplay of gesture that the aesthetic order of the body-field, which exceeds and embeds the body's static traits, can be grasped. Thus, it is the reflective observer's task to locate imaginatively the composition of the body's dynamic in the recurrent patterns of gesture, and to connect the composition back to the fragments of gesture through which it is made visible.

This is a difficult undertaking. It requires of the observer a reengagement and strengthening of the perception of the value qualities underlying the more familiar, obvious, and nameable constant object traits. It also requires time in order that recurrent gestural patterns can be described and in order that the gestures through which the body's composition is made visible can be objectified. However, it is important to note that, as arduous as is the process of describing the objectifying gesture essential to reflective observation, the expressiveness of the person is in large measure at the root of all our daily immediate and long-term responses to other persons, even if these bases are not fully recognized or accepted. For example, it is a commonplace experience that we can recognize someone we know approaching from a distance long before their features are discernible. What is recognized is the person's characteristic gesture when moving, or the grace (without implying beauty) of the person's body. It is also true that persons who we think of as resembling each other are more usually similar

through a shared grace of body than through sameness of specific features. Although it is not as frequently noted, a person immobile is not as readily recognized as a person in motion, because the tempo and rhythm of the body is less visible. At a subtler level, when we know someone well, a slight refocusing of gaze, or a slight variation in the angle of the body, may speak volumes. Again such commonplace expressions as "I knew by the tilt of her chin..." or "As soon as I saw that glance..." are comments regarding the expressiveness of the body, whether grounded in long and intimate experience or in response to the immediate impression formed of a stranger. All of these ordinary, daily experiences point to an underlying and immediate openness to the expressive force of other persons which can be educated in the interest of refined and objectified observations.

4

Reflective Observation: Describing and Objectifying the Expressive Field

Stated briefly, disciplined observation requires immersion in the object of observation through time, and through the variations of perspective provided by change of setting. The observer's record of the recurrence and variation of gesture through time and across settings permits patterns in the interplay of gesture to become visible and open to reflection and thought.

TIME, VARIATION OF SETTING, AND GESTURAL EXPRESSION

For example, a body trait such as eye color is immediately observable, but the gesture of the eye as these are related to its own movement and focus, to the eyelids, the brows, the forehead and the orientation and tilt of the head can only be seen through time and through repeated encounters.

Thus, a child at The Prospect School was thought to be distant or remote by adults who met her for the first time. The characteristic manner in which she noted the approach of strange adults was with her head tilted slightly down, and angled slightly away from them. If they came close to her or spoke, she typically glanced upward and sidelong, her naturally deep set eyes veiled by long lashes. On somewhat longer acquaintance, adults sometimes found this same child more or less disconcerting. She was usually absorbed in her own projects and work, characteristically keeping her body, along with her thoughts, to herself. In her working attitude, she again often looked down, her long hair swinging forward. However, being a person of definite opinions, and a holder of high standards, when she found herself in disagreement or conflict with an adult, her expression of opinion was accompanied by an upward, full-face, direct, and markedly level gaze of the sort that holds the eyes of the other.

Encountered in another kind of situation, such as playing at being a horse outdoors, "bucking" and "whinnying," her hair a tossing mane, the eyes revealed yet another gestural expression. Her eyes have a rather long, narrow formation, are somewhat deep set and thickly lashed, and the iris was not markedly visible when the child was in repose, solemn, or concentrated in her work. Out of doors, the change in total body expression from

rather contained movement to vigorous dramatic involvement was accompanied by smiles and laughter. Her eyes, when she smiled or laughed, became wide open at the fullest curve of the eye, although tight at the corners in contrast to the slight narrowing of the eye that more typically accompanies smiling. Since the iris was a clear, sparkly blue, there was an expression of merriment which was in marked contrast to her more characteristic eye gestures.

The example could be continued through transformations of eye gesture as she became older, through nuances of gesture in a wider range of situations, and particularly as the powerful gesture of eye in this person was resonated in other gestures of her body. I should also say that the observations of this child sprang to mind as an illustration of eye gesture because the eye, for her, was a dominant focus of expression. For another person, the focus might be the hand, the mouth, the inclination of the torso, etc., which is not to imply that the other parts of the "field" are not also gesturally active or important. However, there is for each person, when observed through time, a concentration of gesture and expression in some dimension of the body that suffuses and is supported through the other gestural potentialities of the body.

IMPRESSIONS OF BODY GESTURE AND THE OBJECTIFICATION OF THE GESTURAL PATTERN

Let us give some further consideration to the example in order to describe more clearly the objectification of the body's expressiveness. On first acquaintance, teachers and staff at The Prospect School who noticed this child and were interested in her, received an *impression* of her. The impressions varied somewhat--"distant," "independent," "unfriendly"--but they were related to each other within the continuum of remoteness and self-sufficiency. These are the impressions any of us form, even about total strangers, if we fasten our attention on them. The impression itself springs from the openness to value or dynamic at the root of our perception. Many of us distrust these impressions because we suspect they are subjective. I would suggest that it is wise to distrust an immediate impression and self-deceptive to carry it to a conclusion and judgment about the other person--not because it is not "objective," but because the impression has not been sufficiently *objectified.* The impression stops short of the question, how--that is, in what gestures of the expressive field--is remoteness being stated? More importantly, it stops short of the question, what is the *fullness* of meaning this person is expressing, and what is the fullest *potentiality* of meaning in her expression? If the "impression" is rejected or dismissed because it is "subjective" or emotional, it is not really available to reflection since it is treated as a "fiction"

and a product of my own fancy. The only alternative to subjectivity is objectivity. Objectivity in relation to other persons, as noted earlier, treats them as objects-of-use--a treatment in which the general and spontaneous impression is put aside in favor of detachment and neutrality. In order to maintain the posture of detachment, it is necessary either to diminish and fragment persons or to categorize them. In a school, for example, the outcome of the posture of detachment is a tendency to respond to children according to intellect and ability--e.g., as "bright" or "dull," and "easy" or "hard" to teach.

On the other hand, if I accept impressions as a basis for reflection, I can engage an impression in order to gain greater access to the person's meaning in its fullness. Impressions arise where the boundaries of my being overlap those of another; therefore, they are an entry to the understanding of the other. The engagement requires recollection, questioning, further encounters, and imagination. Let us turn to another example to examine this process. The observer's attention was called to a boy (Jack) who seemed large, aggressive, and intimidating in a class of 5-6 year olds, although he was among the younger of the children. Excerpts from the observer's recordings and notes illustrate the manner in which observations of the child were made in order to gain a record of expressive gesture which would illuminate and objectify the initial impressions of largeness and aggressiveness.

Observation No. 1

8:45 Jack is seated at the table in the reading room.

Although people pass next to him as they move from this room to the next he does not glance up at all. Concentration is fully on the pre-primer he is studying.

9:00 "Hey, Mrs. S_____, what's this...h-e-r-e?"--a loud, flat voice, focused in the teacher's direction although there was no previous indication that he was noticing her movement through the three rooms that house the class. Jack holds his finger under the word as he calls out. When the teacher does not respond, picks up book, walks to next room, still holding finger under the word "here." Without any indication of awareness, pushes up close to the teacher who is working with another child at the clay table and thrusts the book in front of her. Teacher glances, says

"here." Jack walks back to reading table, sits down in same posture as before--continues to read. Total absorption.

9:40 Don (Jack's friend) approaches. "Hey Jack you wanna make something?" No answer from Jack. Don sits down next to him and works on a boat he is making from wood, humming a little, and chanting "Batman and Robin." Jack is frowning at the book, and shifting on the bench. Looking up, he notices Don (Don may have bumped him slightly) and raising the book, shouts, "Hey, you're botherin' me" and lands the book (light weight) with force on Don's head. The teacher comes at Don's furious shout. Jack standing, his face pushed forward, eyes narrowed, shouts at the teacher, "I don't care! He's bothering me!" When the teacher puts a hand on his arm, he pulls away and straight and rigid he walks away. The teacher follows, and although he keeps a definite distance and holds his body away, he allows himself to be seated in the next room to "cool down." ... As he sits, he "watches" the activity at the clay table. There is little facial expression, no specific eye focus, and no participation in the conversation or jokes. With his right hand he "counts over" the fingers of the left...twisting his left fingers and crossing them ... (3 minutes later) Jack's eyes have brightened. The teacher passes by and he calls (same loud, flat voice as before) "Betcha don't know I went to the movies." Teacher (stopping and smiling) "Well, did you enjoy it?" "Yeah, it was cool,--Don went with me and I'm gonna get (blocks falling mask Jack's statement)." As Jack was speaking he moved off with the teacher toward the blocks in the next room...

Observation No. 2

8:00 Jack entered alone, looked absorbed, serious. Seated himself absently on the rug--straight back, legs cross, elbows on knees, "counting over" his fingers and crossing them. Len walking behind him brushed his back. Jack shrugged and without looking at him, said "Quit it" in an irritable voice. Jack glanced around, and straightening up on his knees, 'walked' on them to a new spot, directly across from the teacher and reseated himself. As he does, says to Terry who is on his left, "Shove over, I need more room." (There was quite ample space as only walkers had arrived at school at this hour.)

10:20 Jack comes in from recess, flushed, hot looking, shoulders elevated, back rigid--stops to drink

water--while drinking says loudly, "We did too win, I stopped him (points at Len)." ... Len looks down, there are signs of tears on his face...

10:45 Jack's ability to solve number problems is interesting. He appears to look off into space and without the aid of any physical equipment...to arrive at a solution. Because of this facility I asked him...what half of 120 would be. He tilted back his chair, looked thoughtfully at the ceiling and replied "60." When I inquired how he knew that, he said, "Oh I just know. I could see it. I'm right too. I bet I know a lot more."

Observer's Note No. 1

The teacher made a very telling comment about Jack today. She remarked that "he learns to read as if someone were paying him a nickel for every word he learns." So far as I can determine he does not enjoy reading much although he readily learns vocabulary. But...there is not much that makes Jack laugh, except "jokes." He finds Karen's new rhyme, "Nyah, nyah, you're dead, brush your teeth and go to bed" a scream.

In this first entry to the observing process, what the observer "saw" was noted at the time to preserve a series of impressions formed at different times. The notes were intended to focus the observer's eye and body and to provide an aid in a later revisualizing of the child. Later, the notes were transcribed, and it is that descriptive transcription that is given above. However, the process of copying over the notes serves more than legibility, just as the notes taken at the time served more than recording.

In the first instance, the act of writing keeps the observer focused and attentive, although if the recording should dominate seeing, then the record would limit the observation rather than intensify it. The observer's body is engaged in another way, as well, during the observation. As Jack shifted postures or gestured, the observer experienced those gestures, not by literally enacting them, but by mapping them in her own body--i.e., by localizing the elevation of the shoulder, or focusing of the eye. This example of direct access to the gesture of another person may need some reference to other experience to be fully understandable.

When you see someone put their hand on a table, you can feel the focus of the gesture in your own hand, and can, correspondingly, feel the texture of the surface the hand has encountered and the force of the engagement. Or to take another example, there are persons who "speak along" subvocally with another, especially if the

relationship or the content of the speech has intensity. This is not meant to prompt or to interrupt; rather it is an act of accompaniment which allows the listener to hear twice and to resonate the other person's thought. The "body mapping" that the observer does is a deliberate engagement of these more familiar daily actions. It may further clarify the nature of the activity to point out that it moves in the opposite direction to empathy. Rather than putting myself in the other person's shoes, I put him in mine. I let his body gesture and dynamic force dominate my own for a space of time. Therefore, the observation has a doubled intensity in yet another dimension: What I am "seeing" at a distance from me and experiencing as "out there," I am simultaneously experiencing in my own body.

Later, when at leisure, the observer sits down to recollect and reflect upon what was viewed, there is a double point of reentry to the observation. The notes have kept and preserved the visual setting as a landscape which can be reentered, and the observer's body has kept the gestural intensity, the dynamic of the body field of the other person. Taken together, the transcribing of the record calls back vividly the visual and the intersensory experience to be relived. The effect of the second transcription and the reliving is to make the original observation part of memory, and therefore available from that time on to active remembering by the observer as a totality, or in a free selection and variation of any of its sequences or elements.

It is in actively reliving and remembering the observation that the initial impressions of the person, such as Jack's largeness or aggressiveness, can be seen to come from gesture. It is through reflection that questions are evoked which direct the observer's eye and body in the next encounter. In this observation, "largeness" can be recognized in many gestures, some quite blatant and some more subtle. Jack stands very straight and throws back his shoulders. He also faces anyone who approaches head on. This characteristic posture and orientation presents another person with the most fully expanded view of his body. Less blatant, but also large, is the volume of Jack's voice and his gestural use of his voice to call for attention from a distance. The observer's reflections at this point are pertinent:

> I don't think Jack is a physically large boy. It is the posture, the voice, the full-face orientation that conveys size. There is something else in the face that I can't quite capture that is also contributing to "largeness."
>
> There are other "qualifiers" to largeness that I should pin down--for example, there are few expansive arm gestures.

The reflections and questions direct further observation to the face, arm gestures, and to other situations, particularly out-of-doors where larger gestures of the arm might be more likely to occur. Encounters over a somewhat longer period of time and in varied settings yielded the following observations relevant to Jack's presence.

Observation No. 3

Jack is building a rocket. He is standing at the table squarely facing the materials and with his back to Penny and Grace who are doing an experiment on capillary action with blotting paper. They are speaking with animation about the water creeping upward. Grace mentions the evaporation experiment set out the day before. Jack is carving a "fin" for his rocket from soft wood. He is focused, head down, tilted to the right, the wood held securely in his left hand close to his body, the carving tool in his right. Without a word and without glancing up or around he puts the "fin" down and walks to the radiator to check the water level in the pan, then leaves the area--(the teacher later confirmed that he went to check a comparison pan). When Jack returned he continued his carving--holding it up once to Penny and Bliss, "Look at this will 'ya--it's real smooth" ...

Jack is absorbed by scientific experiments...of all kinds... He has done displacement experiments, rockets, temperature charts, rock classification, evaporation experiments, and others--alone. He is always fully concentrated and only occasionally explodes into speech, "Didja see that? Betcha don't know how I did that, do ya?"...

Observer's notes...Jack is a fast, graceful runner. I watched him in the kickball game. His timing in approaching the ball is accurate, his leg swings smoothly and the ball goes straight, level and far. His skill here definitely exceeds his years. When pitching Jack is equally coordinated, but yells a lot at his team mates "Get it can 'cha?," "Don't get in my way," "Can'cha see it?" etc. He throws with force and accuracy to put the opposition "out"...

Observation No. 4

Jack is climbing a tree--has been forbidden the ball game because of an argument on previous day. He catches a branch by jumping and pulls himself up. He climbs from limb to limb easily and surely. Well to the top he finds a perch and settles himself. At

first calls down, to get people to look up. Ten minutes later... Just remembered Jack is still sitting up there, looking out--quite hidden... *Observation made while acting as playground supervisor.*

Observer's notes... A really disturbing playground occurrence. Jack walked up to Chris and using a judo hold, "flipped" him so that Chris was landed hard on his back. I was furious. I grabbed Jack's hand and began really yelling at him as to why he had done such a thing. "To see if I could do it." His hand as I held it was limp and there was no expression of emotion...

Observation No. 5

Jack is shooting baskets alone. He shoots the ball from a distance, it rebounds, he catches it, dribbles, shoots from under and then sinks a basket. Retrieves the ball, dribbles to a distance, stands in a classic stance for shooting, legs together and sinks the basket. Rushes forward, gets ball, turns fast and tries to throw ball in with a lob shot--misses.

Observer's notes... This practice looks as if Jack has carefully watched the body gesture of basketball players. Perhaps on T.V. He told the teacher following the "judo" episode with Chris that he had watched a similar action on T.V. and that's what he meant when he said he wanted to see if he could do it.

Observation No. 6

Jack is pitching for kickball... Len kicks ball and runs for first... Jack catches ball and throws ball to put Len out, the ball skins Len's pants just as he reaches first. Jack: "Out." Len: "I was here (pointing)." "Out, you dope--you're out." Jack advances, talking loud, head pushed forward, eyes narrowed, jaw clenched, which has effect of accentuating cheekbones and broadening his face. Len backs away a little--but is holding ground--teacher approaches to settle things.

Observation No. 7

Jack is reading. Nearby LB is "printing" from one wet painting to make another. She is humming and as she carefully lifts the painting says, "Oh neat." It is. Jack looks up and watches as she repeats the

action--it doesn't print as well. LB leaves. Jack goes to the paints. He lines up six damp papers, then makes a very wet painting--black strokes and purple well-placed, a good effect rapidly achieved. He prints this on the blank sheets quickly and achieves graduated prints of increasingly less intensity. Jack puts these aside and lines up 8 papers. This time he paints with brown and black, again a few well placed strokes. The prints diminish to virtually nothing by #7. He stands back to look at the effect... (No speech during any of this).

(Observer's note: Have never seen or heard of him using the paints before.)

The process of observing and reflection through recollection as it is described above was carried through on many subsequent occasions. Seeing Jack in other circumstances and situations grounded the early impressions more securely. These observations and others confirmed that, indeed, there were very few expansive arm gestures and that Jack characteristically both throws back his shoulders and elevates them. The muscles are tensed in this posture making his body hard and taut. There is not the free motion in the shoulders to permit an expansive gesture of the arms. The tautness of neck, shoulders, and spine is resonated in a clenched jaw. Given Jack's relatively broad face, the clenched jaw increases the breadth. When angry, the face broadens as well across the cheekbones, the eyes narrow and the face is thrust forward. Anger at other children is stated sharply and quickly through jabbing punches that hurt because of the tautness of the arm and shoulder muscles. The setting in which this posture is most changed is out-of-doors where running, games, and tree climbing reveal an underlying agility and grace of movement. The observer's notes at this point describe these gestural expressions of Jack's, and other somewhat divergent gestures of mouth and attention:

Observer's notes... Physical description of Jack. Jack is of medium height and build. He carries himself erectly at all times and he sits straight as well, sometimes angled forward from the hip, but with his back straight. His shoulders are often elevated slightly, but they are square and thrust back--not narrowed and drawn inward. Jack's characteristic orientation is to face fully the focus of his attention--the teacher, a book, another child. His face is broad and rather square, accentuated by a clenched jaw. The eyes are level and widely spaced, the cheekbones broad. The mouth is delicate and soft in contrast to the jaw and the level gaze. Jack's voice is loud, unmodulated, and flat in tone.

He doesn't speak a lot and his speech is directive, commanding, and demanding. Jack does not laugh often or smile. Deep absorption, focus and energy alternate with periods of irritability and periods of what appears to be inner absorption, judging by the blankness of expression and sudden shifts of topic and/or activity that follow these less overcharged periods. Even when deeply concentrated, Jack remains unusually alert to persons and activities around him.

This example of reflective observation has virtue because it is circumscribed in time, situations, and focus. However, to approach the integrity of personal meaning and the composition of gesture through which it is made visible would require the integration of many more observations, extending the period of observation over several more years, and entering the expressive field from a diversity of vantage points such as speech, abiding interests, and the craft of the hand. The observations would also take additional focus through the cultural and world media (e.g., paints, words, clay, etc.) and settings (wood, water, rocks etc.) that compel Jack's perception and thought. Nonetheless, even the limited data presented here can be explored recollectively, reflectively, and imaginatively to illustrate the manner in which successive layers of observations and reflections increase the visibility of meaning and refine the original impressions and questions.

REFLECTION AND THE REFINEMENT AND INTEGRATION OF OBSERVATIONS

Through the observations, we have established the interplay of facial, shoulder, back and vocal gestures that contribute to the impression that Jack is large. We have also established a suddenness of gestural action combining a full face orientation of the body with rapid reaction to seemingly minimal provocation by others that contribute to the impression of aggressiveness. Certain subtler meanings, shadings, and divergencies in Jack's expressiveness are also hinted at, particularly the note taken of the delicacy of the mouth, the alertness to surroundings and the agility and plasticity of the body in physical activity and in imitation of physical activity.

In the light of these observations, a return to the original impression of Jack as "large" and "aggressive" offers the possibility of employing the range of meanings held in these descriptions to expand the points of entry to the subtler implications of these observations, to direct attention to further and more refined observations, and to further points of reflection. As with the earlier reflection on "field" and "region," the patterns revealed in this reflection by the observer are merely suggestive and not exhaustive.

Large

Large is pre-eminently a spatial term, referring to that which occupies or fills a lot of space. It may connote the open, spacious, and empty as in "the wide open spaces." Equally it may connote the dense, voluminous, and full. In this connotation, large is three-dimensional, sculptural, immovable. In the former, large is flat and broad, a landscape to move through.

Visually, that which is large, looms on the horizon and fills the eye. At its outside limits, where it borders on huge or gigantic, it may be more than the eye can take in, and there it verges on the awesome and overpowering. Large forms dominate a landscape or a setting, towering over or dwarfing less imposing objects.

That which is large may be benign--"the gentle giant"--or threatening. Large, benign persons or natural forces offer security and protection to smaller, weaker beings. In this dimension, large borders on beings and realms that are larger than life, the hero and the heroic, and acts of largesse. Here strength and the larger perspective available to those who see beyond the smaller, ordinary events are the source of enlightenment. Large violent persons or natural forces crush smaller, weaker beings, virtually without recognizing their existence. Taken from a less personal vantage point, the quality of remoteness connotes that seen from and visible from afar, such as an imposing edifice.

Large, especially in reference to persons, carries the image of generosity as well as gentleness. Cheerfulness, good temper and calm are all attributed to the large. Equally phrases such as a "largeness of mind" or "largeness of spirit" convey the commodious and the capacity to accept and take in a diversity of viewpoints--a kind of expansive roominess.

The tempo and rhythm of large is, in the very sound of the word, heavy and expansive. Large things are hard to move and are slow to move themselves. They are weighty and ponderous. They may themselves, by sheer presence, be an obstacle to the movement of other less powerful things. However, while large beings may be slow to initiate actions and appear lumbering and clumsy, they are often surprisingly quick when they do move. Bears and elephants are both illustrations of this paradox as are large people who are frequently light of foot and step when dancing.

> Finally, large things are a challenge, and mythically the small and weak often overcome the large and powerful. This is accomplished by wit and agility--the large being typically characterized as power and force *sans* brain. David and Goliath typify an enactment of this theme, just as the colloquial phrase, "the bigger they are, the harder they fall" typifies the rallying cry of the tiny challenger.

Aggressive

> Aggressive is pre-eminently an active word, referring to animate beings or forces. The action it connotes is head-on, direct, naked, and immediate. It is action against, in the face of something, and therefore while it initiates, aggression is also reactive to something.
>
> To be reactive to something requires awareness of it. In its reactive dimension then, the aggressive overlaps the borders of watchfulness, alertness, and at its extremes, suspiciousness. To be aggressive is to be on guard, alert to attack. The adage, "the best defense is a good offence" applies here. To be aggressive, therefore, implies a certain degree of tenseness and irritability.
>
> In that aggression is a response to the perception of some outside and threatening force or circumstance, to be aggressive may be at one extreme a characteristic stance reflective of a generalized distrust and fear of the world. At the other extreme, it may be a highly specific response to an extreme situation--for example, the cornered animal who turns to fight. To be aggressive, therefore, also connotes a range of inner posture from an arrogant confidence in one's own strength and capacity to overcome to the desperation of terror in the ultimately endangered.
>
> However, wherever aggressiveness is possible there is energy, force and strong feeling. To be aggressive is to be active.

With this range of possibilities in mind, it is possible to further objectify the interplay of gestures that constitute Jack's expressiveness.

Jack's largeness is the largeness of density and volume rather than the largeness of spacious roominess. Destiny is portrayed in the tight, hard muscles and the clenched jaw. Volume is expressed literally in the loud, flat voice, but also in the volume of his body that expands and grows when his feelings are aroused.

The density and volume of his presence is also conveyed in the powerful, energetic concentration which is so characteristic of him. His concentration and focus are expressed in every line of his body. From the observations so far gathered, it is a concentration that intensifies energy and feeling and periods of concentration are often followed by immediate and strong physical actions. Even when he is still and concentrated, Jack conveys imminent, direct, and linear action. Energy emanates from him. Jack looms large, and his presence dominates the space around him. The impression which should now be checked through these and other observations is that the density and power of his presence is responded to by other people instinctively leaving him plenty of room (for example, note the teacher's manner of intervening in his anger and at the number of occasions in which he is noted to be alone). Concentrated energy also contributes to another characteristic which borders on large. Jack is strong. A tensile concentrated body that strikes out, hits with force.

Aggressive, if taken in the sense of reactive, describes Jack well. Jack's "large" presence is virtually always oriented directly toward something and his actions are in direct response to something. The posture is alert, the reaction is immediate, and the tempo is rapid. Jack is "on the ready" for anything that might interfere with his body, his concentration, and activity. More subtly, the indications are of energy and concentration directed to keeping things under control by anticipating them--to know more, to play better, to be stronger. With the concentration so firmly focused on mastering the outside, it is important specifically to observe for Jack's representation of his personal perspective and thought, particularly in the fluid media which do not so easily conform to external standards--such as paint, clay, papier mache, sand. Both irritability and the "unfocus" which follow an expression of energy are also deserving of more attention. When Jack's alertness lapses after a strong response to someone, the hand gesture of "counting over" his fingers is markedly divergent to his usual directness. It is at these moments, too, that the softness of the mouth is most noticeable.

Finally, since other persons give Jack a lot of room, the contacts he does make need to be described. Observations thus far indicate a kind of partnership formed on the basis of physical prowess in which Jack is the dominant and stronger partner.

Reflection and further objectification of Jack's gestural expression clarify and confirm his characteristic focus outward, his extreme alertness, his enormous energy, and his domination of space. This is a person poised for action, endowed with a finely coordinated body that has both power and plasticity; it is also a taut and tense body. The primary focus of expression is the face, but the body in action--climbing, kicking, throwing--is itself the dominant medium of expression. The extraordinary

physicality of the person is underlined by the relative paucity of speech, the limited inflection of the voice, and the narrow range of social interaction.

The observations suggest a whole range of possible activities which, in addition to providing further observation, will extend Jack's physical prowess and grace, support his interaction with other kids, and ease tenseness somewhat. Running and swimming which have time and technique as the standard of success, rather than winning, would provide support for Jack's insistence on measureable achievement, while minimizing Jack's pattern of pitting himself against other children. At the same time, such whole group physical activities as bushwhacking, trailbreaking, and camping would use Jack's strength and skill in the interests of the group and create opportunities for a deeper level of social interaction. Yoga would be an excellent discipline for Jack in order to decrease body tension. If presented in the context of the skill required, it would very probably be attractive and acceptable to him. Gymnastics and mime are other possibilities, although it is doubtful that the latter would "take" until Jack gains more social awareness; the former he could do easily, but there would need to be care that the activities were of the group and technique sort so that Jack would not immediately translate them into a competition.

At a subtler level, Jack's urgency to exercise control over outside circumstance could be given positive recognition by helping him to anticipate events, by helping him to pace his activities, and most important by helping him to remember and think about them. Possibilities for facilitating this include the following:

- Creating a work place with a full view of the classroom in order to minimize irritability and the need to be constantly on the alert for what is going on around him.

- Planning academic work especially--but also projects--according to definite steps and time intervals to slow his pace, to decrease the build up of tension, and also to lessen the need to interrupt him before, in his terms, he has finished a project.

- Reviewing projects with him, particularly to commend quality and technique rather than speed and amount.

- Discussing with him what he reads, encouraging simple humorous books (e.g., Amelia Bedelia) in order to increase involvement with content rather than number of books read.

- Providing the opportunity of a private place with an ongoing soothing activity such as

finger weaving to relax between projects and to ease the irritability that accompanies transitions from concentrated involvement.

Carrying on conversations with him casually about daily events, sports, T.V., as much as possible, and particularly when he arrives early in the morning and the pace of the room is quiet.

5

Converging Perspectives: The Expressive Field, The Body Region, The World Setting

A focus on the person's expression acknowledges the natural visibility, force, and importance of expressiveness in our recognition of other persons. However, to be able to understand and articulate the significance of expression, the observer must simultaneously apprehend the physiognomy of the body as a region of the world and specify the relationship of personal expression, through the body's structures, to the larger world setting. Although the illustration offered by the observations of Jack is limited, it confirms this necessity. Jack's gestures and movements were only meaningful as viewed in relationship to things--books, trees, persons, rockets, balls--and in the context of the pervasive orientation or perspective of his body, which is *toward* things, in *reaction* to them, and in *anticipation* of them. The observable expressions alone--muscular tension, hasty responses, and preternaturally concentrated focus--have little coherence or meaning unless they are embedded in the body region and in the world setting. Without that coherence, there is no basis for the further reflection and thought that can eventuate in structures and attitudes that will support the realization of Jack's thought and meaning.

The relative ease with which the observer, in the activity of observing, moves from Jack's gestural expressiveness to his pervasive body orientation and its engagement in the world setting confirms the underlying unity of person and world. However, that ease is at the same time somewhat misleading. In the first place, the observations presented in the illustration fall far short of disclosing Jack's thinking, his larger intentions, or his particular and unique openness to the world. In the second place, more observations gathered from the perspective of expression will only somewhat broaden this knowledge of Jack. What is needed is a convergent perspective that will give another point of access to the cohering and enduring body structures that integrate Jack's activity in the world.

Earlier it was suggested that the body as region is more mysterious, less charted, more traditional, and more collective than the expressions that spring from it. Our expressions, and our recollection of them, carry us back and in some measure illuminate the body as region, but that region remains ultimately hidden. Thoughts spring

to my mind whose origin is not based in experience. I "recognize" things or situations I have never seen or experienced before. In dreams, I am visited by creatures utterly remote from my waking life. In general, I am as often possessed by my life and body as I am in possession of it--although an advanced consciousness and rationalism would have it otherwise. All in all, factors in my being and life over which I have full conscious control are miniscule in comparison to the untamed forces I house and dwell with, which come to the fore whenever a crack in conscious control appears.

The degree to which my body has me is nowhere more evident than in my unquestioning acceptance of it. In its innermost workings, it is remarkably silent, given, and self-conducting. It follows internal rhythms to which I, as a Western woman, have little access and over which I have practically no control, although at points I recognize that these rhythms in fact resonate the larger world rhythms--the phases of the moon, the shifting patterns of light and dark as the Earth's relationship to the Sun changes, and the daily alternation of day and night. I also recognize other "givens" in my life that point to the intimacy of my body's union with the world, both spatially and temporally--an unaccountable preference for openness of landscape and the long view, a predilection for moving bodies of water, a sense of continuity with an earlier historical epoch, a delight in a particular color, and an affinity for the changing quality of light in northern climates. These preferences are no more subjective or unreliable than the impressions gained of other persons. Neither are they explainable by reference to the accrual of experience. In fact, our willingness to laugh off and discount, or explain away our preferences may be taken as an indicator both of their importance and of our latter-day unwillingness to plumb the depths of inner experience, even though we are immensely preoccupied with our individuality and with the "control" of nature's forces.

Preferences and predilections have, of course, a kinship with impressions through their common base in value. Thus, my preferences in the world and those of the "other" whom I seek to recognize are constituted through that same perceptual openness to the world, common to all humankind, which recognizes the importance of the thing before its object properties and goes beyond the thing's mere usefulness to its freedom and multiplicity of meaning. Man's perceptual openness gives to all persons, and to each person individually, a world space. It is through the shared world space that one gains access to the person as a unique region of the world.

SPACE

It is important to consider the notion of developing further openness and the world space that makes such a

development possible. If the animal can be said to flow into its environment, bound in every gesture--visual, auditory, olfactory, kinesthetic--to specific environmental stimuli, man can be described as gesturally open: he can gaze without looking, point without reaching, and speak without acting. Openness to the world is also the condition for space, for emptiness, and therefore for the standing forth of the moments of nature as beings in their own right. The emptiness of space breaks the unself-conscious, reflexive arc of the organism-in-environ, and constitutes, as Scheler says, "a 'world space' which persists as a stable background independent of the animals' movements." Within the "world space," each object and thing is disposed objectively; that is, without the qualifications of its integrity imposed by the necessities of the vital drives--environ arc. Equally, the boundary of the object constituted by its separateness and integrity in space is reciprocated by a boundary-of-being in the constituting and objectifying spirit of man. In other words, man perceives the world, spatially and temporally; he is, therefore, the source of the world's objective character, of the standing forth of objects, and of his own incipient consciousness of self in time and space.

Because man psychologically stands peculiarly empty and open in the world, he gathers the world in a particular way--that is, by setting the boundaries of things and of himself within the larger boundaries of a world space. This emptiness is, therefore, the source of man's peculiar place in nature: he calls her forth and asks her questions. Freed from the demands of immediate gratification and fulfillment of drives, man's perceptual openness--the freedom inherent in the capacity to gaze and to wander--means also an expectancy in the world from which there is no surcease, and for which there is no specific and lasting gratification.

Thus, the clarity of man's objectifying perception is qualified from the outset by the ambiguity and uncertainty of emptiness and expectation. The world-space, filled with paths for the wanderer, holds untold possibility and mystery. If the object can stand forth unqualified by specific needs in the perceiver, its aspects are multiple, precarious, and surprising. The urgency of emptiness--the vastness of space and time--sets the wanderer forth to seek, to question, and to call forth. What he seeks is nothing less than the boundaries of his own being, his conscious self within the boundaries of a world space, constituted by him, and labyrinthine and uncertain in its dimensions.

Therefore, it is from a knowledge of the world space construed by any given person that I gain access to his body "as (his) general medium for having a world" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 146), and to the questions and perspectives through which he calls the world forth. In short, if I can enter the world space as he has construed it, I am able to accompany him upon his particular quest

by following the paths he follows into and through the world space. In particular, I need to know what he recognizes in the world, where he dwells, where he travels, where his eye is captured, and how, through speech and craft, he answers to the meaning he finds in the world's things. That is, by taking the things-of-the-world as the body's correlatives, I gain access to the particularities of the body's openness. Thus, as Merleau-Ponty suggests, it is in and through its engagement in things that the body's unity becomes visible.

TIME

However, a journey also requires time and it is through time that the coherence and durability of the person's interests and meaning are revealed to the observer. Time is the essential dimension of human events. Not, as Merleau-Ponty says, "as a cause determines an effect, but as a situation once created, inevitably leads to some outcome" (1962, p. 406). It is only from the special perspective of time, divided into intervals for measurement, that we can speak of past, present, and future--and it is only within that frame that analysis of cause and effect is possible. Time as the essential dimension of human events--that is, time as it is intuited by persons--is multifaceted and, in its complexity, does not readily lend itself to division into past, present, and future events.

For example, we customarily speak of time's passing, and concommitantly recognize that what passes in time, lapses. And yet it is also the case that what passes in time does not altogether pass away in the sense of dispersal and disintegration--it most fundamentally *has been* and *is*. Therefore, time also keeps. To say it another way, time passes and it also abides. Or, what passes in time, lapses, but it also remains.

In our recognition that time's passing and abiding is inextricably tied in our experience to the passing and keeping of things and events, time as I intuit it is placed in the world of phenomenal events, and in the phenomenal experience of a subject. It would be a mistake, however, to think that the world or the subject is the author, the seat, or the origin of time. Indeed, in that time *keeps* life, it can be said of time, in the historical sense, that it is anterior to being. From this vantage point, time passes in order to return and life in all its variation of particular forms is stated and transformed within the circle of its recurrence.

Time, then, is at the deepest level the unpossessed, belonging neither to the phenomenal world nor to the subject. As such, pregnant with all meanings and incorporating none, it is the realm for the realization and unconcealment of all events, in the sense of a dimension that holds and keeps all possibilities. Accustomed as we are to take the quasi-scientific view that events that precede

are causative of events that follow, a dimension that holds or keeps all possibilities in every possible relationship to each other is not readily understandable. But that is only because in everyday parlance and in the recording of time, we have conceptualized time as a linear passage. This conceptualization of time with its utility, its clarity, and simplicity for purposes of measurement, however, must be recognized as both narrow and inadequate in the face of our personal intuition of time--that is, in our perception of the phenomenal world and its passing, and in the larger sense of time as the time that keeps.

If in my coming into being, I do not originate time--and my very experience of coming into being suggests the anteriority of time to my personal existence--it is nonetheless the case that in my being I am permeated by time, and its passing through and abiding in me is not only knowable to me, but is the source of my own particular meaning. Time, as I intuit it, is a vectoral arc, an indivisible unity, which I know, as Merleau-Ponty says, in my performance of it.

> The passage of one present to the next is not a thing which I conceive, nor do I see it as an onlooker, *I perform it;* I am already at the impending present as my gesture is already at its goal. *I am myself a time, a time which abides.* (italics mine, 1962, p. 421)

"...I am myself a time..."--with that thought Merleau-Ponty provides the orienting perspective for observing the person in the historical flow of time, in his intuition of time, and in his transformation of time. That is, time is available to me in its complexity as history (tradition and memory), and also as personal meaning and memory, because I am myself a moment of time, vulnerable to its passage, its recurrence, and its permeation. Thus, in one dimension or aspect, observations of the person must reveal the person as a time in relation to epochal time (tradition and memory), but also and most importantly as a "time performed;" i.e., as being arising in that relationship that unifies the person to the setting --his "relationship to things." By taking time as the *dimension* of study in human events, it is possible to frame the observation of persons in the following terms:

> The person in the flow of time (tradition and memory).
>
> The person's intuition of time (memory and meaning).
>
> The person's transformation of time (the expression and representation of meaning).

ELABORATION OF THE TERMS FOR OBSERVING THE PERSON THROUGH TIME

We have suggested that meaning and time precede our individual existence and consciousness. It is also the case that each takes a particular and unique shape through an individual consciousness, partaking in that person's specific energy and disposition--an energy and disposition which in turn reflects the energies and dispositions of those who passed before the person in time and now recur through him. It is in memory, therefore, or kept time, that meaning and time are joined to give significance to the individual life, and to all the lives with which the individual life is interdependent. Through memory, the person as the carrier of meaning is indeed kin (both as a time and as a person) to other times. Thus, whatever it is the person seeks to know, it lies within his own meaning and time, and also it lies in the meaning and time that have preceded his existence and are now passing through him. For this reason, each time a person knows something, reveals something, unconceals something, he restates the phenomenal meaning of the world, and at the same moment establishes his relationship to all the other knowings of this phenomena that have preceded him and that coexist with him. Thinking, from this vantage point, is a dipping into the held meaning of memory to relate a person's individual thought participantly with others, both present and past, contiguous and apart. For as Barfield says, it is

> ...by means of memory, man makes the outward appearances an inward experience. He acquires self-consciousness from them. (1957, p. 154)

From this perspective, the person in the flow of time--that is, as a time participant with memory and tradition--can be observed and described as an embodiment, a source, and a reflector of a pool of historical happenings. The task of observation in this instance is to reveal all those ways in which the person represents his memory. This means describing the archetypal themes that pervade the person's relationship to things in the world, as these are made visible through consistent motifs, and grasping the range of meanings held in the media through which the motifs are represented. The archetypal themes, are, of course, not personal but collective questions shared by all persons--immortality, the eternal, power, loss, identity, heroism, aloneness, oneness, wandering, dwelling, love, preserving. These capacious and inexhaustible themes unite us and describe our common humanity, and its essentially aesthetic nature.

Motif is used here as it is in art to refer to the pervasive subject, whether object or image, of a person's work, but the meaning of motif has also been expanded to include the constant activities, processes, qualities and relationships in the person's work. Examples of motifs

would be "trust," "miniature," "interlocking systems," "fort construction." Similarly, "medium" refers to the material or form in which a motif is treated such as paint, clay, blocks, sand, or writing. Here the term is expanded to include other processes such as play, reading, and thinking. As Alberty notes, "in many instances a thing could be either motif or medium, depending on the context of use and of consideration." For example, miniature landscapes can be a constant motif in a child's work, constructed through a variety of media such as drawing; clay; or twigs, pebbles and sand. At the same time, the landscapes might be considered the medium through which a more collective and broader image is made visible. Thus, every poem, drawing, painting, musical composition, or dance participates in and then restates large themes--but each one envisions the theme anew, investing common motifs with fresh perceptions that contribute to the greater articulation and differentiation of the shared themes. In this restatement, all of humanity's perception of, and relationship to, the world is broadened and enriched. There can never be too many love poems, or too many stories of the heroic quest, since each one, shaped as it is by a highly particular and unique consciousness, adds a layer of meaning to the world, and thereby increases the consciousness of man. For this reason, the person in his aesthetic nature is accessible not through identification of the archetypal themes *per se*, which permeate his orientation and intention in his quest, but as Jung says through the shape given these themes by his individual consciousness:

> The archetype is essentially an unconcious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perscribed, and it takes its color from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear. (1968, p. 5)

Therefore, the observations of the person which disclose meaning and the integrity of the self are gathered primarily through the observation of the continuity and pattern of media and motifs which shape and color the person's transformation of larger and more collective themes.

Given this focus of observation, it is both the description of temporal unity with the world and the process of articulation and transformation that can reveal the person's performance of time. That focus of observation must take into account that the personal life is at the outset a keeper of time, invaded as it is by both time and meaning, and also that the personal life or time is intrinsically an *expression* of memory and a *search* for meaning. The expression of memory as it is shaped by the individual consciousness, and the search for the representation, realization, and articulation of that meaning in the things of the phenomenal world, constitutes the personal sojourn, and provides our deepest recognition of other persons.

6

Observing the Person Through Time and Within the World: Theme, Motif, Medium

Through description of the person's projects in the world --that is, through the mediums that the person in drawn to and uses and the motifs that recur in his representations, the observer brings to bear the convergent viewpoints offered by the world setting and by time. To do this, the mediums and motifs need to be reflected upon to determine the range of meanings they hold and can preserve. Within this range, it is then possible to describe the particular person's relationship to both medium and motif. An example drawn from staff review sessions of The Prospect School will illustrate this.* The medium is clay, and the observation and description is of four pieces of work by a child (Sean), the earliest of which was done when he was six years old and the others when he was nine. The entire process of reflection and observation can be summarized as follows:

*For a detailed description of the staff review process, see *Observation and Description, etc.*

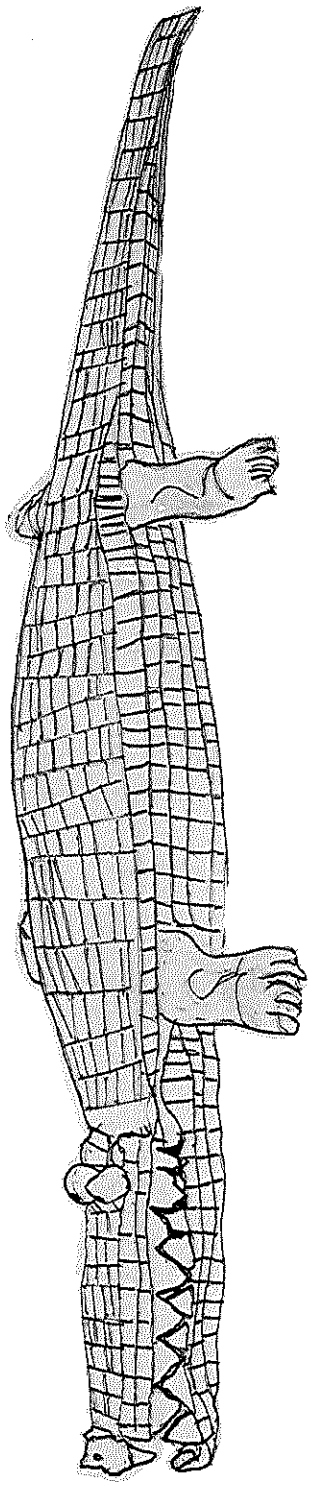
1. Reflection on meanings held by clay (both wet and dry).

2. Reflection on motifs frequently employed by children in their clay work: vessels, human figures, miniatures.

3. Observation and description of children's work representing these motifs in order to articulate the variations and nuances within the motifs through their exploration by different children.

4. Description of one child's work through time to observe and describe his relationship to the medium, his choices of motif, and the patterns of continuity and divergence in the motifs and themes he explores in clay.

Only the final session devoted to the fourth part of the process is presented here. The reflection on and description of Sean's crocodile illustrates the full process of The Prospect School staff reflecting on a motif and observing and describing a work. This is followed by descriptive summaries of Sean's other current work and a comparison of all three pieces to articulate the continuities and divergences among them. That comparison is



The drawings in this chapter were done by Melissa Leland.

followed by a summary of the description of the piece (a snake) which Sean produced at age six. The integration of that description with the preceding comparison, to illustrate the long-term continuities and transformation in the child's clay work, completes the process.

OBSERVATION AND DESCRIPTION OF SEAN'S PROJECTS IN CLAY

The session began with reflections of the motif of the work, which was summarized as follows:

> The crocodile has several layers of ambiguity: perhaps most strikingly it is a creature of two abodes--land and water. In the water element, it is facile and quick, while in the earth element, it is slow and awkward.
>
> It is a prehistoric creature which still exists, and that is emphasized in the oozy, slimy environs (jungles, rivers, swamps) that it inhabits. Finally, the crocodile is ambiguous in appearance, whether on land or in the water. Because of his textured skin, he merges with the earth landscape. In water, he lies submerged suggesting a log except for his watchful eyes.
>
> For a primitive creature, the crocodile has many connections with humans. He appears to smile, and his short legs have a hand-like quality. However, it is his character that figures in so many stories that variously stress his cunning, deceptiveness, wisdom, humor, and dangerousness: *Peter Pan; The Way of the Whirlwind; Captain Salt in Oz; David Copperfield; No Fighting, No Biting; My Father's Dragon.*
>
> The appearance of the crocodile confirms his ambiguity: the body is long, sinuous, graceful, while the legs are stumpy; his head is all mouth that both gapes and clamps; his back is tough and thick, the underbelly is soft. Above all, he is toothy--and in that characteristic, he is clear and unqualified.

Then the teacher introduced the piece with a brief description and with a caution on its fragility. The description of Sean's crocodile which follows has been organized under five major headings: body; feet and legs; eyes; mouth and teeth; and process of construction.

> The piece is unfired, approximately 7" long with a tapering tail, four legs, a long jaw (with teeth showing), two round balls for eyes on the head. A pattern of stripes and crosses are incised on

the body. Sean was prompted to make a crocodile because Rainer had made one.

The piece will have to be pasted on a piece of cardboard because it is very fragile. Some of the legs have already broken off.

The crocodile's body. The body is squared off at the edges and the pattern of incised cross hatches on the body top and sides accentuates its squareness... It's heavy... If you look at the body from the side, it's flat, inactive; if you look down on it it is much more active, because the curve of the body and the activity of the feet are more apparent... Given the sharp gradient of the tail and the nose, it has a strong likeness to a projectile... It is geometrical in every particular--the cross hatching, the squared edges, the mechanical placement of the eyes... It is streamlined, mechanical and powerful--like a sportscar... The body does have a subtle lengthwise curve, and viewed from the front at eye level, the crocodile appears to move forward slowly--still powerfully--but slowly--not like a projectile.

Legs and feet. The legs have a very different appearance from the body. The legs are old and withered--particularly the right back leg--especially in contrast to the streamlined body. ... The curve of the legs is much more pronounced than that of the body and so convey much more life... The front legs are bigger and suggest more weight than the back legs... The feet look like a turtle's feet, broad and spreading... They also suggest hands spread out sideways.

Eyes. The eyes are balls stuck on top of the head, and each looks in a different direction--up and to the side. It gives him a cock-eyed look, really a peculiar gaze... The eyes make you giggle and detract from the power and thrust of the body... The eye placement on top of the head asks the viewer to look down on the crocodile as if he were in the water, perhaps partially hidden ... They (the eyes) are his most docile feature ... The eyes also look like frogs' eyes.

Mouth and teeth. The teeth are very large relative to the size of the face... Viewed from the side, they are precise, large, sawlike. They suggest metal and a mechanical opening and closing... The teeth also fit together precisely... The front view is altogether different. There is one funny snaggletooth in front, like Ollie's... the front view is definitely humorous (akin to

the cock-eyed gaze) and in contrast to those larger sawlike teeth visible from the side... The mouth is also larger and since a part of the top of the jaw has broken off, it looks very open ... Apart from its being open by accident, the incline of the jaw is well angled to suggest the potential for opening... The mouth suggests a cave, with the teeth as stalactites and stalagmites. It's really big.

Process of construction. He achieved the geometric form of the body by slapping the clay down ... The articulated features--eyes, feet, legs--have been added on to the basic form... He used a tool to incise the body surface. He must have viewed it from several angles in order to contrive the angles of the eyes and the variation in the teeth... The construction required several processes with the clay and considerable precision.

General Comments. The feet, eyes, and mouth are all different from each other and each diverges as well from the body... He is reminiscent of a mechanical, plastic reptile with wiggly legs.

The chairperson summarized these descriptions as follows:

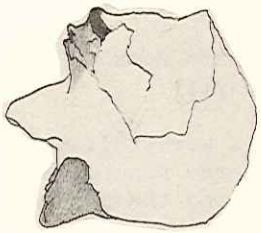
This is a heavy piece and expressive of power. The power is conveyed in the slow curve and gradient of the tail and in the size. The scoring of the body in a geometric cross-section and the squaring off of the edges suggests something mechanical, streamlined: a sports car, a plastic reptile, a projectile.

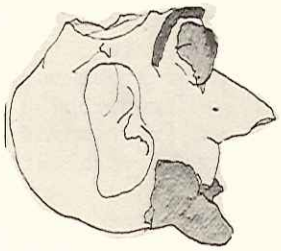
The eyes, jaws, and especially the feet are divergent accents. The eyes are on top of the head, implying the looking-up-out-of-water posture of the crocodile, but they are cocked at different angles. The cock-eyed gaze and the one snaggle tooth in the front of the jaw, in contrast to the other perfectly "fitted" teeth, give the crocodile a humorous visage from certain angles. On the other hand, the jaws are clamped with larger triangular teeth incised, and the angle of the jaw suggests potential for opening. The mouth is large (extending up to the eyes) and implies a cavernous, cave-like interior. The feet are the liveliest part of the crocodile and stand in sharp contrast to the mechanical geometric body. They are at the same time old, withered, wiggly. They suggest a turtle's feet and because of the curve of the leg and the spread of the feet, a slow movement over land.

Following this summary, the chairman summarized previous descriptions of Sean's construction of (1) a clay head and (2) a clay vessel.

(1)

The head* was made by forming it around paper and then firing it. In the firing the top of the head blew off. Sean made the head working above it (the gaze is up). He started with a sphere and added the features on, smoothing each feature into the sphere. The nose is the most thoroughly smoothed and integrated as are the eyebrows; the ears are least integrated. The expressiveness emerged as Sean added on to the sphere. He didn't move the head or shift its orientation as he worked. All of the working is in the face (no hair, for example).





The head is strikingly ambiguous: broad from the front, flat and wide--narrow and long from the side. From the front the head is animal-like, from the side the head is a crotchety old man. Also each aspect of the head is different from the other--one side could speak; the other side is in repose, but speech is not precluded; the front view precludes speech. From the side the head could be a sheep. The mouth is particularly ambiguous and is also a focus. The mouth is described as animal-like: a beak, or a fish's mouth. On the other hand, the lips from the side are described as a beard. The eyes were described as barnacles, or volcanoes (they were set in), and as both bland and sharp, with the sharpness deep down, protected. The eyes suggest a creature peering up out of darkness or underwater; they have a luminosity. The ears have an element of ambiguity also--suggesting goggles or earmuffs.

The head evoked many animal images, mostly amphibian:

fish-like mouth	salamander	frog-like
newt	platypus	

However, the over-all impression is another statement of ambiguity: a creature between two worlds such as Gollum in *Lord of the Rings*, half human-half fish, or a creature that shouldn't exist but does.

(2)

The vessel was thrown, and a tool was used to incise a repeating design. The piece is textured and irregular, but also symmetrical. It gives the appearance of being rounder than it is, although it is described as a perfect spherical

lump inside. The lip of the vessel was much wetter than the rest, causing the crack around the lip.

The vessel is repeatedly described as mouth-like, that description applying to the opening (gaping) and to the accentuated lip character ("fat fullness") of the vessel's lip. The animate character of the vessel is also conveyed in the description of it as organic and by the images called forth such as fish, flower, sea anemone, sea urchin, melon, gourd.

The ambiguity of the vessel is marked. It is noted that the outside and inside don't reflect each other at all--The inside is cylindrical and the outside is spherical. Also, the vessel looks very different from different angles.

The piece is described as full, fat, heavy, solid, primitive, squat, meaty, fleshy; the latter descriptions underline the organic animate character of the vessel suggested by the mouth and lip quality and by the fish-sea urchin/anemone imagery.

Two parallel incised lines--a bead--are notable for their delicacy and reed-like quality.

These summaries of individual pieces were followed by a comparison and integration of the three pieces. The description of the points of commonality and the points of divergence among Sean's three pieces was heavily weighted toward the commonalities. In particular, as noted in the summary below, the pieces are interrelated through the motif of "mouth" and the use of basic geometric forms to express underlying themes of water, the ancient, and the hidden or ambiguous. The greatest variety among the objects was in methods of construction, multiplicity of process used within the construction of each piece, and manifest content--head, vessel, crocodile

In all of the pieces the mouth is emphasized; even the vessel has "lips." The mouths are amphibian, and all of the pieces carry amphibian, water images--the crocodile being the overt affirmation of that image. Bird and flower images arise occasionally. Virtually all of the imagery is organic and animate.

The exception is the machine imagery--car, projectile--suggested by the crocodile.

All of the pieces are ambiguous, conveying different images from different angles of viewing. In this dimension the head has greatest ambiguity, the crocodile the least. Within this general

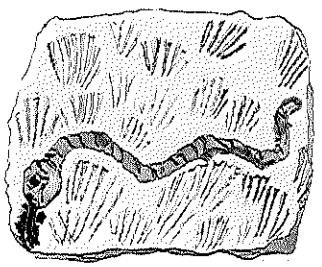
ambiguity the lack of relationship between the outside of the pieces and their insides is particularly notable. The ambiguity of the pieces suggests "hidden depths"--the deep eyes of the head--and also "hidden in the depths"--the eyes of the head and the crocodile peering up.

All of the works are cockeyed, humorous, or disconcerting. In two of the pieces (vessel and crocodile), the old and the primitive are emphasized. The quality of "peering out" is common to the head and the crocodile, and eyes in these two pieces share an equal emphasis with the mouth.

The artist always works from a dominant geometric form (this is the most striking in the crocodile), and accents that form with divergent details. The details are invariably added on to the form rather than pulled out from it. The basic symmetry of his geometric forms is emphasized by the carefully spaced incising of the surface. He has drawn in this way on all of the pieces. He creates irregularity through pressing deep holes into the surface in contrast to the projecting added-on features. Each of the pieces employs a different method of construction: throwing, shaping around paper, and slapping down a slab. The artist also uses a variety of processes and tools in the creation of each piece.

The continuities and divergences in Sean's clay work through time can be illustrated by (1) description of the snake he made three years ago and (2) a comparison of that piece with Sean's current work:

(1)



The piece was made by rolling a curved line of clay, pressing it into the tile and incising the line. The grass was made by stamping the tile with a shell. The snake was left earth colored, but he was accented with black and varnished. By contrast, the tile was glazed a dull green and some of the earth color of the clay is allowed to come through. The artist has used a complex series of hand gestures to create the piece, and it took a number of steps to complete. The perspective required to identify a shell as a tool and a tool that would give the effect of grass is notable in so young a child.

The snake is an ambiguous figure at two levels. The snake's form and the earth colors suggest an earth habitat, and the snake itself when viewed from above suggests a mountain. On the other hand, the shell imprint and the head suggest water and fish, and viewed from one angle the snake

looks like a river. Besides the ambiguity of habitat, the snake's unusual head suggests fish, bird, or dragon rather than snake, while the segmented body suggests a worm.

The mouth and eye of the snake are emphasized by color (black), size, forked tongue (mouth), and protuberant ball shape (eye). The primitive, prehistoric character of the piece is conveyed in the dragonish, power aspect of the snake, the shard-like quality of the tile, and the shell-grass imprint which suggests land emergent from water.

(2)

In common with the other pieces, the snake was made by shaping the basic form and then incising it. Except for throwing, all of the actions noted in the construction of the current pieces are present in this early work: rolling, pinching, pushing, slicing. Also in keeping with the current work, the snake required many steps in its production. Unlike the current work, this piece has a ground; it is a relief and not a free standing object.

In terms of imagery, composition, and theme, the snake is continuous with the current work. It is ambiguous, amphibian, emphasized at mouth and eye, and composed in curved lines. The underlying themes of the ancient, water, and the powerful, are present in this piece as in the others. A detail which is striking for its constancy through time is the use of a delicate incised line; it appears here in the shell print and in the later work in the reed-like design on the vessel and in the head.

The approach to the observation of the person through his projects in the world and the motifs, mediums, and themes through which he questions and quests, brings the observer back at several points to the expressiveness of the body. Sean's work, carefully observed and described, is the permanent record of his highly individual expressiveness and gesture. Thus, we are reminded that in the observation and recognition of other persons the unity of person and world prevails, and the observer's alternating focus on direct observation of the body as expressive field and observation of the body as a medium for having and representing the world is simply that--an alternation of focus between reciprocals that identify a unified whole.

A continued integration of the observations of Sean's work in clay, this time focused on the crafter, the person at work in the world, would allow us to illustrate the manner in which the artist is revealed in the work,

and the focus for direct observation of the artist at work provided by the product. In this way, the circle implicit in the examples offered for the observation of other persons is completed: Observation continues with recognition of the previously undisclosed imagery and themes of the body region and returns to the expressive body with a mind more prepared to recognize it.

CONTINUED INTEGRATION OF OBSERVATION OF SEAN'S CLAY WORK: GESTURE, MOTIFS, THEMES

When working with clay, Sean starts from a basic geometric form, which is smoothed and shaped as a "ground" for reworking. That is, he starts from "something" and then works and varies the piece within that original, relatively formal, structure. He alters the original symmetrical form nearly always by adding on, rather than by pulling out or radically reshaping the ball or cube from which he started. This results in products that are protuberant or lumpy and are also sharply accented in certain characteristics--notably mouth and eyes. This approach successfully breaks into the symmetry of the "ground," and yet the original geometry of the piece is preserved. Therefore, in the final product, form and asymmetry are both dominant. Color is minimal and virtually always used to give further accentuation to the added features.

The process of "adding on" allows Sean to study the effects of his changes on the original form and to rework them, without having to start over again from scratch. The deliberateness with which eyes are set at a cocked angle or a jagged tooth is placed in contrast to precise sculpted teeth reveal the artist's eye for the detail that will catch the viewer's glance and which throws the whole meaning of the piece into question. These details often combine to produce an effect that is both humorous and disconcerting. It can be added that the pieces capture the viewer visually rather than tactually or kinesthetically.

Incising, which is Sean's other characteristic approach to the clay, is a more sculptural technique. However, the line that Sean typically uses is a drawn line, shallow and curved. Deep or sharp incising is less frequent; exceptions are the crocodile's back and, to some degree, the segmenting of the snake. The delicacy of the drawn line creates an interesting contrast to the protuberant, sharply accented additions, particularly in the head, vessel, and the grassy background for the snake. The incised lines also do not suggest the same potentiality for reworking and rearrangement as the additions. They give finish to the final product and thus qualify objects that are otherwise bold, primitive, powerful and heavy. It is also a line that suggests water, which is a theme pervasive to all of Sean's work.

Within the wider context of meanings held by clay, Sean's work participates and calls forth the themes of water and of primordial or emergent forms. In one aspect, one piece (the snake) suggests clay's more "civilized" side--its potential for preservation--but the work (including the snake) is largely watery, emergent, full, powerful, and above all ambiguous. Indeed, the repeated mixed imagery of bird and fish in the work brings to mind "neither fish nor fowl" as a suitable sobriquet in relationship to Sean's work. Water is, of course, the element which is the source of life. Sean's investment in this theme allows him a full range of expression of the hidden, the dark, and the forms that rise up from, or emerge from the depths.

The eye and mouth motif that Sean uses in all his work, including the mouth of the vessel, combines the hidden and the emergent potential of water. Eyes are added on the tops of heads or oriented upward; they are round and large, giving rise to such descriptions as "something looking up from underneath," "frog's eyes," "in the water, looking up." The mouths, also large and accented, often suggest fish mouths, but also by their largeness and openness, they suggest hidden caverns or insides that are surprisingly different from the outside. In the vessel and crocodile, the variance between the outside of the mouth and the inside is overt. It is the ambiguity, and the suggestion of the hidden, that qualifies on longer viewing the initially humorous visage of these objects, and suggests something rather more disconcerting or mysterious behind the humor.

A sub-motif in the work, the amphibian creature, is also a working of the themes of water and the primordial. The clay crocodile is the overt statement of amphibian, but all of the pieces have amphibian and water imagery associated with them, just as they often suggest creatures half-way between. For example, the head suggests a creature "who shouldn't be, but is" or a "creature like Gollum in *Lord of the Rings*," who is half human in form and consciousness, the other half being frog-like or still in the water.

On the basis of the work examined, Sean's motifs in clay make visible the large theme of beginnings and origins. As an artist, he prefers in his representation to start from something: at least in clay, he starts from classic geometric forms. Clay is a medium well suited to the expression of both origins and form. Given its watery, earthy, malleable character, it allows a statement of form--but with fluidity--and it is quintessentially at the beginning of things.

The work examined suggests a quick worker, who is also a reworker: a basic form is quickly made, and the process of "adding on" allows rearrangement and attention to detail and effect without starting over. The work also suggests a keen eye for the bizarre and macabre, and an investment in visual effect in general: the deliberate placement of the cock-eyes, the dominance of visual

detail, including the "drawn" lines, over the tactual or kinesthetic. In addition, the clay work suggests a person skilled in hand work: the finish and deliberate "unfinish" of the pieces; the varied hand processes used within any one piece; and the variation of technique (relief, throwing, rolling around paper, etc.). Finally, the power and boldness of the pieces, in combination with their finish and delicacy of detail suggest the confidence, planning, and firm execution of a craftsman at home in many mediums.

The content and imagery of the clay work indicate a general interest in fantasy, the mysterious, and the hidden worlds of the sea, caves, other planets, and prehistory. The rich characterization especially in the head and the snake implies a flair for the dramatic, especially as that is visually portrayed. In summary, the talent for the visual effect is so marked in all this work that it suggests that Sean has enormous range in design, drawing, acting, and painting. The method of work indicates a preference for a structure and a total framework, in which many pieces can be arranged and rearranged, and in which many processes can be employed. This is a versatile child, capable of taking many approaches in his work.

The description of Sean that emerged from his examination of clay raises a number of points for further observation. For example, does Sean often choose a purely fluid medium such as water, or the purely static geometric mediums such as blocks, wood shapes? What themes and motifs are explored in these mediums, if chosen? In carrying through these observations, and amassing examples of Sean's work over time in a variety of mediums, the ground is prepared for a full portrayal of the child.

7

From Observing and Reflection to Portrayal

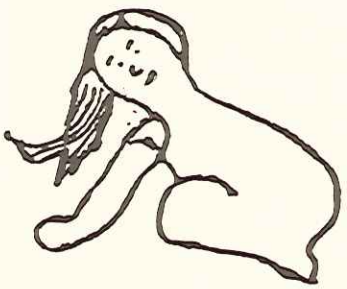
In practice, the integration of the divergencies, continuities, and transformations of thought emerging from this long-term observation, reflection, and description to provide for portrayal of the person depends upon cataloguing and reflecting upon and describing each aspect of the child's work. Continuing with the example of Sean, the illustration below depicts the way in which his drawings are catalogued:

CATALOGUE OF DRAWINGS

Summary of Headings (1973-74): Faces; Human Figures, Monsters; Vehicles & Battles; Surveys; Designs; Cartoons.

Human Figures

Kneeling Girl (A Tracing?) pencil
Kneeling & pointing pastel
blond-haired girl
green clothes



Confetti Sky Figure	tiny figure amid a whole page of multi-colored dots brown hair mostly blue & purple clothes	marker

Similar catalogues are prepared for the child's work in other mediums, such as writing, sewing etc. Individual pieces are reflected upon according to medium and motif, and then described according to the process above for Sean's work in clay.

These individually detailed descriptions are employed for reexamination of the work in each preferred medium. The motifs and imagery stated in each medium are then contrasted and reintegrated to arrive at themes overlapping and combining motifs and/or mediums. For example, the fire and burning imagery visible in Sean's work as a 4½-year-old child is traced over a six-year span through its ever-elaborated expression in writing and drawing. This imagery, contrasted with the water and amphibian imagery expressed by the same child in clay, counterpoints both medium and imagery. As a medium, clay holds water imagery easily, but not fire imagery; fire in its dramatic spread through a building is readily captured by the sequential line of drawing or writing, but is resisted by the earthy, moist lumpiness of clay. In terms of imagery, fire consumes and changes, while water contains or absorbs. The one is the fiery breath and spirit of change, while the other is the beginnings of all things, the medium of the carnate, material form.

The differentiation of each of these images through time and through mediums of representation reflects patterns in the growth and transformation of the child's thought--thought provoked by the invisible (the spirit)

and the material (carnate forms). The presence of these early images in later, seemingly different interests in metamorphosis (dissolution of the physical form in fluid) and self-portraiture (the material form capturing spirit) is visible in the child's work in the continuity and overlap of detail, as well as in the overlap of imagery across mediums.

In the same manner, each observation and record of the child is catalogued and described according to headings that emerge from these data:

Charting of Records, Interviews, Observations, Staff Reviews, and Parent Reports on Sean, 1971-1978.

Emergent Headings:
- Physical Presence & Gesture
- Emotional Tenor
- Anger/Scatter
- Humor
- Involvement/frustration
- Activities & Interests
- Process & Continuity
- Articulation: Thoughtfulness/Reflectiveness
- Relationships: Adults

Physical Presence & Gesture

8/75 small--is aware of his appearance and is extremely sensitive to comments about his appearance.

Rhythmic. *(Short Staff Review)*

8/75 tall, slim, olive skinned--shoulders are broad & square--give impression of being carried high but not tense--eyes are dark and large, and hold a quality of watchfulness--sometimes in contrast to the mobility of the mouth (observation)

a very focused gaze--eyes in fact large and well spaced but focus and largeness of iris give appearance of close-setness and depth (observation)

The most continuous observation of the child--for example, a teacher's daily/weekly record--is used to provide the chronological time frame for the integration of the child's direct statements of choice in motif and medium and for the other observations:

Example of Teacher's Chronological Record
(1975-76)

Weekly Academic Records

Date	Reading	Numbers	Writing	Other
Jan. 5	Sky Blue Easy Pet Parade	groups in 48 100-4's 100-3's	write about whales (story starter)	spelling (4) drew airplanes tangrams-math
Jan. 12	Sky Blue The Tur- nip	X	writing-- planets	X
Jan. 19	Sky Blue billygoats rumble-- roar-- wait	99-4's	writing about desert	drawing of desert

Weekly Descriptive Records

> Jan. 5-- a little weaving, some windows (elaborate and careful)--made pumpkin bread--spent one morning sliding with Simon--on Friday got carried away with furniture for Little Bears--made a T.V. with squiggles: "They don't have cable." --made antenna, cord, and plug for wall.
>
> Jan. 12-- Extremely intrigued with the Planets theme-- elaborate drawings of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars. Started a scrap book--animals and humorous drawings.

Motifs that emerge from these descriptions which interrelate aspects of the child's perspective and mode of relatedness are reflected upon, and these motifs are employed for further recharting of the observations and the work.

The integration of these motifs illuminates the particular interplay of opposing factors and tendencies representing the poles of a unifying potential. For example, reflectiveness and self-absorption are the polar tendencies in the child gifted with inward vision, as perseverance and stubbornness are the polar tendencies of the child gifted with endurance to overcome obstacles. These potentials and polarities combined in the same child give the child, in the context of other potentialities and polarities, the possibility of self-centeredness and self-indulgence (self-absorption and stubbornness) and at the same time the possibility for deep loyalty to persons and ideas (inner reflectiveness and perseverance). Within the multiplication and interrelatedness of polarities like these, as they are qualified by variations of time and setting, lies the composition of the child's life--that is, its aesthetic order.

In practice, the method outlined here requires that the reflections and descriptions of the child and the child's work be reworked and recharted in numerous ways in order to objectify details and to confirm patterns of relationship within the data. The initial check on the impressionistic order of the data suggested by the headings that emerge from the data is to inscribe under each heading *every datum that can be encompassed within it.* Thus, theoretically, any given datum might be inscribed under each of the headings. The purpose of this overlapping is to make visible as many points of intersection as possible within the person's total experience without violating the temporal sequence of the data. In addition, this free variation of the data allows each datum to be viewed in reference to each other datum. In this way, the nuances of the data are reflected within the total order, but also each particular enhances each other as well as contributing to the whole. The process also identifies specific data which, by virtue of their overlap with a wide range of other data, are critical to an understanding of the order and pattern within the total range of data.

In the process of inscribing the data and considering the relationship of each datum to each heading and to each other datum, the continuities and divergences through time and across headings are identified. The inclusiveness of the charting process identifies its differences from the categorizing of data typical of data analysis. Categorizing separates the data into mutually exclusive categories, in which, by definition, a given datum can only be subsumed to one category. Further, the category subsumes the particular datum, and once categorized, it exists only as a special case of the general category. Thus, where charting particularizes and makes visible the phenomenon itself, categorization generalizes and abstracts it as a special case of broader category of events.

The initial charting is followed by an unspecified number of rechartings according to motifs, mediums, images, and themes suggested by the initial exploration. For example, a second charting of the data on Sean included the following headings:

> surprise; ambiguity; quickness; drawing; motifs; motifs in stories/clay/painting; befallen-ness in relationship to different mediums; physical posture and hand gesture; the motif of "outsiders"/clowns/carnival figures

Some of these headings--for example, "motifs in stories/clay/painting"--are refinements of earlier headings. Others such as "surprise" or "quickness" cut through the data from subtler angles than the more global characterization of the data provided by the initial headings. The ultimate number of rechartings for any study is dictated largely by practical considerations since the data itself is inexhaustible in terms of the perspectives from

which it can be viewed. That is, each recharting increases perception of the whole and increasingly the whole "display(s) its component parts each with its own value enhanced..." (Whitehead, 1958, p. 86)

The greater the attention and time given to the charting, the richer and more articulated the composition that emerges, since the relationship of the parts is increasingly specified and subtle. From the emergent composition, the child's portrait may be painted broadly and comprehensively--the child as thinker; or according to a special perspective--the child as reader, or as builder. In any event, each portrait will have a center provided by the mediums which most pervasively shape the child's thought and most comprehensively state back to him his perspective. Finally, the individual portrait is placed in the context of the myths and stories which most fully illuminate its meaning. In this last action, the myths are placed as reflectors, mirroring facets of the child's destiny in their largest and least particular terms, and therefore, their fullest and most collective terms.

The studies of the Child as Thinker which this essay introduces are portrayals of children's lives in school, and the educational choices confronting each of them and their teachers. The choices are revealed through the child's own work in preferred mediums and the observations of the teachers and observers at The Prospect School. Each portrayal also illuminates the potential for thought and curriculum held by a variety of mediums, and the pervasiveness through time of motifs explored by the child.

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