

NO WORD IS AN ISLAND

Some Thoughts on the "Creativity" of Verbal Automatism

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It seems reasonable to assume that human beings may at times draw upon kinds of "energy" (even as physical as an electric current) not generally recognized, and perhaps not even available to the kinds of awareness we associate with conscious sensation. And one could assume there may be powers of this sort operating in "creativity." But I shall deal with a "logological" kind of motivation which could easily be confused with such physical sources, if there are such.

The logological or terministic motives I have in mind can become quite vague and complicated. But in their simplicity they are obvious enough. For instance, so far as rhyming is concerned, though the words *dog*, *chien*, and *Hund* all mean the same as regards their definition in a dictionary, each contains a different "future" (or set of terministic possibilities) in the sense that, although *dog* rhymes with *hog*, *chien* does not rhyme with the corresponding word *porceau*, and *Hund* does not rhyme with *Schwein*. Here it is obvious that the conditions of "creativity," differ to that extent.

Turning now to a case which, though much more complex, lends itself as readily to inspection, consider the two terms, *God* and *Nature*. In orthodox theology they are so related that, although *Nature* can be interpreted as a sign of *God's* "creativity," the two could not be equated. *God* is "more than" *Nature*, or "transcends" *Nature*. If the two terms are equated (as with Spinoza's formula, *Deus sive Natura*) the relation between them is such that implicit in it there is a turn from orthodox theology to pantheism.

However, although so much is clear enough on the surface, further possibilities are implicit in the terms. For instance, a poet might explicitly subscribe to the orthodox dogma that proclaims as great a difference between *Nature* and *God* as between "time" and "eternity,"

or "finiteness" and "infinity"; yet his poetry might be so infused with the sense of a "divine" presence immanent in *Nature* that it amounted to a pantheistic identifying of *God* with *Nature*.

Such ambiguous complications are made more viable by the terministic fact that a poetic cult of *Nature* might well place much stress upon imagery, and imagery readily "transcends" the law of excluded middle. I had that point in mind when writing, of the term "fire":

Fires of torment in Hell
Purgatorial fires
Fires of lust
Fires of love
Protective rings of fire
Fire ultimate.¹

Or here's another instance, in a story by an adolescent who shall be left nameless:

A fire has broken out. A boy and a girl, whom he loves, are trapped, while the flames draw nearer. She faints. Must they die virgins? He goes to her side, fumbles at her garments—and suddenly the floor gives way, pitching them together into the flames. Symbolically, such a "fall" could stand for a kind of "love-death" combining transgression and judgment (the hellish, purgatorial, lustful, and loving fires, all in one).

Returning to our *God-Nature* pair, we can readily think of other possibilities, even prior to the ambiguities of imagery. For instance, the distinction between *God* and *Nature* introduced susceptibility to a *God* vs. *Nature* relationship, even to such an extent that a cult of *natural* impulse might rule out *God*. Or the terms might be so related that one leads to the other. For instance, if creative *Nature*, then a fortiori a creative *God* that sets it up. Or they may be so related that *Nature* can replace *God*. For instance, if *God* is unknowable, but His signs are everywhere empirically observable, then let's settle down and study the relationships among the signs, even to such an extent that the "higher" term can drop out of the design (sometimes without our awareness, sometimes explicitly, even challengingly). Nor should we forget that grammar made readily available the historic pair, one active, the other passive: *Natura naturans*, *Natura naturata*.

One could readily reduce the designs of such considerations even to total abstractness. I have in mind such expressions as: A equals B; A is greater than B; A vs. B; from A to B; from B to A; and so on. Or one can conceive a situation of this sort: Suppose that, instead of A we put "one's sense of loyalty to a certain cause," and instead of B we put "one's sense of loyalty to an Authority who effectively represents

that cause." In this case we might say: A is in harmony with B. However, suppose that, although one was loyal to a cause, one did not feel at all that the Authority to whom one would be correspondingly loyal was worthy of one's devotion. The corresponding design should indicate a pair of terms, A and B, whose "proper" or "intrinsic" harmonious relationship has fallen into discord.

But our main point is to stress the fact that terms are not related merely by "and," as for instance *God* "and" *Nature*. Terms imply one another, they are parts of a cyclical order; and to this extent what looks like "A and B" may, on closer inspection, disclose a relationship that should be expressed in a proposition such as "the idea of B is implicit in the idea of A." One cannot even think of A without setting up conditions for the "revelation" of B.

To be specific: Insofar as *Nature* is viewed literally as a "Creation," implicit in such an idea of *Nature* there is a drive, in one direction, towards the corresponding idea of a "Creator." Here the terms *God* and *Nature* would be so intertwined that the thought of *Nature* implicitly contained the automatic invitation to proceed from the term *Nature* to the term *God*. Or the procedure could have been in the other direction, since the idea of *God* as a Creator would implicitly contain the spontaneous invitation to think of *Nature* as a Creation.

And obviously, the pattern gets further rounding out, inasmuch as the idea of a Creation leads to the idea of Creatures (variously related to Creation and Creator). Here follow possibilities whereby ideas of the relation between Creatures and Creator can spawn ideas designed to reject or sanction certain relationships among Creatures. For instance, a doctrine proclaiming the "divine right of kings" can serve not just to sanction monarchy; it can also imply the authority of a priesthood which reserves for itself the exclusive right to officiate at the crowning of a monarch. And thus the doctrine might also serve as a threat to the monarch, insofar as a priesthood might withhold such ceremonial sanctions.

With regard to the terministic slant of the present conference: Insofar as the concept of "creativity" is an aesthetic and/or psychological secularizing of a term once predominantly theological, there is always the likelihood (or at least the possibility) that some of its original meanings are still implicit in it.

I dare hope that my examples serve in a general way to reveal a principle of "creativity" in terms themselves. Terms are so constituted that "one thing leads to another," not by mere additive succession (this and that and that), but rather as with a nest of bowls, except that there is no one necessary fixed order; thus, though one might derive

"Creature" from "Creator," one might as readily begin with "Creature," and note that implicit in it, if taken literally, there are both "Creation" and "Creator."

In my article on "Terministic Screens," I deal with a related aspect of terministic "creativity"; namely, the respects in which a nomenclature, by directing the attention to one mode of speculation and investigation rather than another, leads to a corresponding set of observations. For instance, a Darwinian use of the word *Nature* spontaneously eliminates at the start such implications as are set up in the opening words of the Old Testament, "In the beginning God created . . ." etc. Or implicit in the terminology of physics there is a set or knot of implications quite different from those that guide the study of rhetoric, thereby in a sense creating kinds of *inattention* also.

Incidentally, the increased reliance upon computers is revealing the risky nature of "terministic creativity." Computers are so exceptionally efficient in processing the information that is fed into them, they make it apparent how strictly they are limited by the scope and quality of this information. Their conclusions can be no more accurate than the data they are given to work on. Thus, their digesting of flimsy reports on the social and political situation in Vietnam has led on-the-spot critics of the official conclusions to sum things up in the grimly ideal formula, "Garbage in, garbage out." If the input is a mess, the output will be ditto. The simplest instance of such "terministic creativity" is a situation of this sort: Imagine two similar-looking salads, side by side. One happens to be wholesome, the other contaminated. But insofar as they both go by the same name, we are in bondage, since we cannot make a rational choice between them. In that sense, any and all inaccuracies of nomenclature, any terminology that draws the lines at the wrong places, can be drastically "creative."

Where, then, are we? First, as regards a possible "psi-factor in creativity," I personally incline to believe that one should attempt to develop a methodically empirical, secular approach to parapsychological problems. And I personally favor inquiries of biophysical cast. For instance, I incline to believe that whatever a mob-psychology might amount to it probably involves some kind of physical radiation due in some respects to the sheer proximity and like-mindedness of so many human bodies. There could be a kind of human energy, or radiation, or quasi-electric power, that operates differently when one is alone, when one is coupling with a mate, when one is addressing an audience, and when one is raging in anonymous unison with a madding crowd. Or, to temper the last possibility, think of the 18,000 or so Athenian citizens who assembled in the amphitheater, to weep together at a tragedy,

in an exalted mood of pity. For under such conditions pity, being on the slope of love, would somewhat duplicate the design of a communal erotic orgy.

I believe in such likelihoods, that might even be capable of description in terms of brain waves, or of bodies acting like magnets with a field in common. How I loathed military training, which was compulsory where I first went to college! Yet, there came the day of the Grand Parade, and me there keeping step along with all the rest. There he was—marching, marching, marching—his gun on his shoulder; and for all his resentment at the whole set-up, there he was, swinging along, totally yielding, and so affected that he began to cry. But that must not be! Turn one's attention elsewhere! Lo, a solution! The man immediately in front of him was marching in a way whereby the crease of his pants shifted back and forth absurdly. There was the solution. To protect oneself against surrender to the parade, focus the attention upon that solemnly contorted seat of the man's pants. But the contortions seemed so silly, now the impulse was to giggle. But to giggle was as improper as to weep. So, by way of compromise, improvise as best one could, by shifting the attention back and forth between thoughts of yielding to the military rhythms, and the attempt to rescue one's threatened individuality by a twist of satire that forthwith threatened to become hysteric laughter.

Yes, there is something momentous involved in such participation as marching ceremoniously in step (along with the fact that armies marching across bridges are better protected by falling out of step). And though even in this regard one could probably account for many of a parade's effects purely in terms of symbolism, I would not reduce the whole of such experiences thus. But with respect to the sheerly symbolic element, I'd ground such crowd-temptations in the nature of language as tribal, collective. Whatever one may do with speech in his role as a competing individual, and though speech itself is perfected by a commingling of cooperative and competitive functions, the individual acquires speech essentially as a cooperative instrument; and the instrument, being collective, has implications that far transcend any one person's immediate relationship to the conditions in which it was acquired.

True, the idiom gives the individual a name, thereby accentuating the kind of bodily separation that is already present, owing to the centrality of the nervous system. And under certain circumstances, that name (that mine-ownness) can become further aggrandized by fantastic terms for ownership, involving properties up into the rich man's billions even. And in all likelihood, the greater the possibilities of such

individualizings, or differentiations, the greater the compensatory incentives to get lost, as in some primal orgy, the quasi-civilized counterpart of which would be total participation in a unified throng.

But my basic point is this: Though I grant the likelihood that such collective experiences as rhythmic motion and emotion in unity involve a sheerly physiological dimension (as with communally shared radiations or such, or as with insects vibrating together in the autumn), I would focus upon concerns of a quite different sort, involving the sheer internality of terms themselves.

However, one further consideration is necessary, as preparation for our next step. I should make it clear that I build upon the assuming of a fundamental distinction between motion and action, with "action" in the realm of symbol-systems. In this sense, I am "acting" when I put forth these sentences in this particular language. But if all typically symbol-using animals such as ours were suddenly obliterated, there'd be nothing left but sheer motion, such as the revolution and rotation of the earth, the swishing of the tides, or the ways of the winds and their storms. Though such a world of motion without action might be, there can be no action without motion. That is, in any use of symbol-systems such as with human speech or thought, there must be an underlying realm of physiologic motion, such as those operations of the nervous system which we usually refer to as a form of biological "activity," though they'd be called "motions," in the usage adopted here.

Thus, implicit in any kinds of symbolic action there would be modes of innervation that are themselves in the realm of biophysical "energy," however such motions might be defined and measured. But we are concerned with the purely logological or terministic aspects of the case when we note that words (symbols, ideas, concepts) are not in their essence single (and defy those Moslem pietists who are said to have kept repeating "Allah, Allah, Allah," nothing but that one name urgently and without interruption, in the attempt to drive out the possibility of straying into any other association).

In this sense the Word, in its sheer nature as word, is "creative," a starting-point or generating principle, from which derivations inevitably follow. And though some kind of "energy," or sheerly biophysical "motion," will necessarily be involved in any such developments, the specific source of the developments is not in that "energy," but in the nature of terms as such. Accordingly, to think about them is to discover various such internal relationships (the routes differing with the character or experience of the user and with the situation in which the progressive disclosures are being made).

This general discussion was but preparatory to a particular line of observations, having to do with ways in which the implications of terms can, as it were, "sneak up" on us. And I shall now introduce some personal "case histories" which concern this somewhat different area, an "outlaw" aspect of terms.

The author (whom we shall hereinafter refer to as "the Subject") had written a book (*A Grammar of Motives*, recently reprinted by the University of California Press) which formally takes its beginning from a pentad of key terms; namely: *Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, Purpose*. In the original draft of the book, there was no such pentad, to serve as a beginning. Actually, the Subject had begun in search of a beginning. And each place he chose but suggested the need of a prior step; for when he focussed his attention upon any one step, he immediately confronted the need of a step prior to that, so that he found himself confronting the vexatious prospect of an infinite regress. Eventually, he put a stop to this hopeless, helpless race backwards by landing on a kind of plateau. To end the search for an introduction, he got to writing a chapter on the theory of introductions. In the course of his work on this reflexive enterprise, he hit upon his "dramatistic" pentad. Then he revised his book by beginning where he had ended.

The Subject had originally thought of the five terms as connected by "and." That is, his five key terms were *Act* "and" *Scene* "and" *Agent* etc. Later he discovered their integral interrelationship along the lines of observations already made. That is, there cannot be an *Act* unless there is an *Agent* to enact it; the *Agent* cannot *Act* except in some *Scene*; any *Act* requires the use of means, or *Agencies*; and it isn't genuinely an *Act* unless it has some aim, end, *Purpose*.

In taking up the terms successively, he had begun with *Act*, then turned to *Scene*, then *Agent*. There were good reasons for beginning with *Act*. For instance, insofar as the theory of motivation that the Subject had been formulating was strongly affected by the Subject's speculations on the nature of drama, even if one treated the five terms as equal there were good reasons for treating *Act* as "foremost among the equals."

Even so, in one sense it didn't matter which term one began with. Yet after having begun with *Act*, the Subject began so revising his revision that he now put *Scene* first, next *Agent*, and *Act* third. These changes involved an irritating amount of incidental revision. For although any order was possible, the order that had been originally chosen affected the placing and presenting of many secondary observations. Thus, comments that had originally been considered in the section of *Act* now required shifting to the new beginning, the section

on *Scene*. And whereas Marxism had originally been considered under *Scene* (as would befit its stress upon the "objective situation"), in the revision Marxism got shifted to *Agent* (supposedly in keeping with the terministic fact that "dialectical materialism" also involved a strongly idealistic element, which the Subject's schematism located under *Agent*).

In any case, despite the irritation due to the need of so many editorial revisions now required by the change of order (while the Subject was burning to get ahead with more substantive matters), things went well enough until he got to *Agency* and *Purpose*. Then, of a sudden, something went radically wrong. Two totally different methods of treatment suggested themselves. And depending upon which of these routes he thought of taking, the book threatened to become either intolerably confined or to fly apart. That is, if the Subject thought of dealing with the terms, *Agency* and *Purpose*, in the abstract way that the project demanded, a painful fantasy overwhelmed him. He felt as though he were caught in a state of total immobility. The experience was so real, it was almost as though his arms were literally being held to his side by ropes that were wound round and round his body. If, on the other hand, he chose the other route, abandoning the procedures that the book had so far followed, and relaxing into a somewhat "Dear Diary" mode of presentation, not only did he feel "more free," nay more, he had an equally obsessive sense of being quite like those tablets one sees on TV commercials, fizzing and dissolving in water.

He tried to reassure himself. "You have been working too hard. You are over-tired. You need a rest." (All the while, the pressures to get on with the job kept up.) Well, what do you do in a case of this sort? Naturally, one has a profuse succession of tangled dreams. One consults them as Delphic oracles, while taking notes on any possibly helpful data. Despite one's impatient desire to keep going, one stops, though still trying to think up various alternate schemes that, one hopes, will fool the jinx—but no luck. In the cause of sociality (for the abstract speculations had been remote at best) the Subject worked in a room where the two youngest children were often playing and fussing around his feet. Particularly now, when this dilemma had hold of him, he was grateful for their turbulent contributions to reality.

Then, still pursuing his dreams in search of a sign, he suddenly got the cue. When writing down the details of one dream, in a flash he remembered having jocularly referred to his five children as his "five terms." And that was it!

Now he could see what had gradually been happening. Those five abstract terms had begun to take on personality. That is to say: *Scene*

had "subversely" ("subliminally"?) come to equal the Subject's first child, *Agent* the second, *Act* the third, and so on. (More later, as regards the details here.)

But though he could now detect traces of this terministic tendency in the pages on *Scene*, *Agent*, and *Act*, why did all hell break loose when he got to *Agency* and *Purpose*? That's hard to say for sure. However, it does so happen that, with respect to the Subject's personal life, there had been an abrupt and quite drastic break between the circumstances of the first three "terms" and the last two, then playing about his feet. The first three were by one marriage, the fourth and fifth by another. And the transition was marked by a novel depicting a man who came to the edge of total destitution, through punishments largely of his own designing, a novel with the intentionally ironic title, *Towards a Better Life*.

That distinction must have figured somewhere in the effect. But in any case, the sheerly logological fact remains that, if five supposedly abstract terms have been lived with and worried over with urgency enough to somehow take on the essence of personality, two quite unrelated orders of motivation must be implicit in them. To keep them functioning simply as abstractions would be as though to be tightly bound; but to let them take over as persons, as it were diaristically, would be as though to be a tablet dropped into water, and fizzing into dissolution.

The Subject's diagnosing of this "personalistic infection" happened to correspond with an invitation from a dear friend who had come to town, who was celebrating something or other, and who wanted the Subject to leave his retreat in the country, and join in the festivities. The Subject found persons willing to spell him during a talking jag that lasted all that night and all the next day. Then, returning home, he found that he had broken the troublesome continuity for good, and from then on the revision could run its proper course without the painful fantasy of being bound.

But now let's consider how it all looks, as regards the threats of diaristic intrusion, threats to which I need not yield until now, though I have also referred to this incident glancingly in classrooms. At that time, the third daughter was greatly involved in hopes of becoming an actress. So the term *Act* had got "appropriately" shifted to the third step in the succession. The second daughter was greatly exercised about social causes, and as I have said, the schematism of the Pentad classifies such idealistic leanings under the head of *Agent*, which had now become the second term in the list. As I have said, Marxism might seem to fit most readily under *Scene*, owing to its stress upon situational

motives; yet its development out of Hegelian dialectic would also justify its classification under *Agent*, inasmuch as Marxist materialism is a transforming of Hegelian idealism—and I incline to remember that Marx was once classed, in old-style histories of philosophy, among the various brands of “Neo-Hegelians.” But be that as it may, insofar as the furtive personal aspect of these terministic implications was concerned, the shift from *Scene* to *Agent* would go with the leftward-leaning idealism that the Subject spontaneously associated with his second daughter. As for the secret equating of *Scene* with the first daughter: Over and above the fact that she is certainly “scenic” enough, she could be established as first by the nature of the pattern itself. For by the very fact of her being the first term, the other four would follow from it; in its position as a point of departure, it would be the term most directly “grounded.” Hence, *Scene* for No. 1.

Through these three stages, the trend was but emerging. But the sudden irruption of the fourth term makes it apparent why the secretly personal nature of this design took a qualitative leap into the drastic and obsessive. For beyond all question the fourth child, the older boy, belonged to *Agency*. *Agency* categorizes the realm of instruments and his genial interest in tools and machinery of all sorts was already so pronounced when he was still quite young, the Subject often fondly referred to him as the Great Gadgeteer. To cite a typical anecdote: His class at school took a trip on a boat around Manhattan. He came home, greatly excited by what he had seen. And what had he seen? It turns out that he had spent the entire time watching the workings of the ship’s engine. To repair a motor was as soothing to him as it was maddening to the Subject. In the light of struggles between generations, and of the father’s tremendous admiration for the son’s abilities, how could the situation be solved more mellowly? Yes, beyond all doubt, the personal dimension had plenty of inducement to break through then, in earnest.

That leaves us with *Purpose*, for the second boy. The schematism of the *Grammar* sets it up thus: Philosophic schools that feature *Purpose* are there (for better or worse) classed under the head of Mysticism. To be sure, the younger boy was no mystic. But he took to the kind of conceptual twisting that we usually associate with a mystic’s style. He liked to get things backwards, as the older boy decidedly did not. If he built a house of blocks, he tended to round out the enterprise by knocking things all apart, whereas the older boy, if he had had the chance, would have left each construction standing there in order, and would have added to it other ordered clutter. At the age when the older boy went off to school and the younger one was still at home, his

mother heard him, barely audible, touching each of the older boy's contrivances and saying, "Mine . . . mine . . . mine." And of a sudden she realized the twisted wonder of that word for him. Obviously, the older boy, to get things straight before he left for school, had touched each one of those things he had made, saying emphatically, "Mine . . . mine . . . mine"—and there was the younger one, saying that same word almost in awe, and giving it a meaning God only knows what.

All told, now knowing what to discount, the Subject got back, freed of such troubles as should not have been implicit for any author in five such programmatically abstract terms, though my hunch is that, if anyone works with a term long enough, it is likely to take on a personal dimension of some sort, quite beyond the pale of what it is supposedly indicating on its face. The revision proceeded without further disaster, at least of that sort. However, in all probability, had it not been for this hidden personal dimension in the terms, the Pentad might well have been a Hexad. And what is now dealt with separately, in connection with the term *Attitude*, might have been specifically marching in that same parade as the five terms. (*Attitude*, in the schematism, would fall half under inchoate *Act*, half under *Agent*.)

Yet stop and think of this: The Subject's five-consciousness, or five-unconsciousness, did not begin with the contretemps that we have been discussing. Further back, when writing another book, *Attitudes Toward History*, he had divided his design for history into five stages. And toward the end, he got so deep into fiveness, no matter what he looked at, it fell pronto into a group of five. The aligning might be done on the basis of shapes, or colors, or categories, or even positions as, for instance, if he looked at a set of objects all alike, their chance spacing from one another spontaneously set up the conditions for a "vision" of five distinct groups.

To see fives springing up everywhere one looked was as though to be pursued by five. Even so, though obsessive, the "vision" did not have the painfulness that was to be associated with the shift between constraint and dissolution. However, when the Subject's wife, in the act of sweeping the floor, sent one of the children's dice rolling from out a corner, and it came to rest right at our Subject's feet, he urgently told himself, "I must not look." But he could not resist. And yes, you guessed right; it was a five. This kind of evidence somehow seemed different. To make up fives was one thing. But it was something else, when there objectively proclaimed on its face. However, after the book was finished, the Subject's dubious "gift" of quinary vision faded.

Looking farther back, one asks: Why did the Subject in earlier days take so spontaneously to Sir Thomas Browne, who was so enamored

of the quincunx? Does it all start from the five fingers of one hand? At least this much is certain: The perfection of the five-part form, as regards poetics, is built around the logic of beginning, middle, and end, with transitions from beginning to middle and from middle to end. And doubtless something of that sort was involved in the Subject's five-part way of dividing up History, which can be divided up all kinds of ways. Beginning with "an intermixture of Hellenistic decay and Christian evangelism triumphant," it went next to a "medieval synthesis," then a "Protestant transition," then the classic (or "naïve") stage of capitalism, then to "emergent collectivism," things being uncertain as to whether the last stage would slope more to the right or the left. That was a fairly viable pattern. Yet its quinary nature was rooted not just in history, but also in story.

Other such terministic compulsions could have been tracked down. For instance, there was the Subject's novel, which fell into three parts, of six chapters each. The first part ends thus, about a protagonist, standing at a "little country station at dawn, in a valley blank with mist," while the train that had brought him there "continued on its way through the valley, and the vibrations of the engine diminished irregularly to silence.

"I noticed then the twitter of many unrelated bird-notes, with the rustle of water somewhere behind the mist—and a dog was barking, imposing fresh sharp sounds upon his own blunt echoes."

That's how the first part ended. The Subject knew that that's how the first part should end, because it felt right. He had not the slightest notion that he was there setting up a set of terms with implications, destined through stage by stage to reach fruition. The predestinating waterfall came to ultimate revelation in the last sentence: "Henceforth silence, that the torrent may be heard descending in all its fullness." The "unrelated bird-notes" enigmatically stood for implications that got their final unfolding in the disrelated jottings of the last chapter. The barking dog, "imposing fresh sharp sounds upon his own blunt echoes," implied the *reflexive* principle that became a kind of self-imposed fatality as the plot proceeded.

Or the Subject wrote a sonnet. The octave described the mythic island of Atlantis, how it stood before it "sank into the sea." The sestet pictured it beneath the surface, after its sinking. It was solemn, even somewhat statuesque. Not until many months after the writing did he discover that implicit in its pathos there was a secondary realm of bathos. It was the "mythic dignifying" of a humble physiologic process, the act of defecation.

Or a man writes a book in which he talks much about "perspective"

(*Permanence and Change*). Having peered into the term long and hard, he found that to his discomfiture, it contained a hypnotic, or auto-suggestive ingredient whereby when the book was finished, people seemed as though separated from him by a wall of glass.

Or consider, in his novel, the disjunct note: "there is an eye, firm as the eye of the newly dead. When I am alone, this eye inspects me." At the time of the writing, it was a literary conceit. But it also, unbeknownst to him at the time, marked the emergence of implications that were later to seem intolerably real, the sense of being literally inspected by an eye always at the edge of his vision. No matter how directly he tried to confront it, it always remained thus beyond his focus, yet incessantly present.

All told, I am here referring to the fact that, included in the "creativity" of terms, there are ways whereby one does not merely use them, but rather becomes invaded by them. The terms cease to be the author's medium; he becomes their medium. And their implications can turn out to be quite different from what one might expect. To an extent, these observations overlap upon the kinds of symbolic behavior that are studied in psychoanalysis; but I am trying to indicate a mode of "creativity" here that is of specifically logological rather than psychological origin, though it naturally takes on psychological accretions.

Implicit in such considerations is the admonition that "creativity" is not to be viewed simply as a "good" aptitude. It is problematical. And if one lives with a term urgently enough, it is likely to take on implications that make one, not its master, but its servant. Yet the risks of such surrender can be peculiarly gratifying. Surely the ultimate allure-ment to man, as the symbol-using animal, resides in the fact that, when terms in effect take over, there is a kind of crossing-over. Maybe one never quite gets back, even when things turn out happily. Maybe sometimes some faulty implications can, paradoxically, help best by forcing one to find ways of undoing the spell (insofar as the spell can be undone). By endowing an animal with the powers of symbolic action, "the Creator" set up conditions whereby the Universe could comment on itself. But within that internality there is in turn an internality. Insofar as it works well, we could call it "inspiration." Insofar as it works badly, we could call it "possession." But be it one or the other, I submit that the call to "creativity" resides in this sheerly "medium-istic" temptation, the urge by symbol-systems to dissolve completely into what Santayana would have called the "Realm of Spirit."

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