OPEN DISCUSSION

BLEKSLEY: There remains a little period for discussion. It's quite obvious that we can all contribute at considerable length to the discussion. I think that one will have to apply the closures sooner or later on a perfectly arbitrary basis. Some members of the group have already established their claims. I'm now going to ask Mr. Jennings to speak first, and then Dr. Gaddini, and then Dr. Meerloo, and if there's any time after that, whoever gets in first. Mr. Jennings.

JENNINGS: I have a holdover from our earlier discussion and one brief comment here. With respect to the English language, or for that matter European languages in general and their limitations or their paralyses because of their bifurcation into subject and predicate, every language bootlegs reality in a pretty ordinary way no matter what the structure, no matter what the grammar or the syntax. But it's the poets who always act as the pawnbrokers between those who want to explain what language does and those who, perforce, must use it. And I couldn't help thinking, as Kenneth Burke was talking, of a marvelous little fantasy by Heywood Broun who was known mainly as a journalist and reporter, but who was a great fabulist. He wrote a book in the late twenties called "Gandel Follows his Nose." Gandel was an apprentice to a magician, but he learned how to kill the magician and walked off into the great outer world possessed only of a handful of words about which he didn't know too much, but with a capacity to absorb new words easily. One word he knew was the word "bastard," because the magician had told him that that in fact was what he was, and he took that merely as his name. But he was approached by a White Knight who addressed him in the name of Agatha, the fairest and most virtuous lady of the land, and Gandel said, "White Knight, thou art a bastard," and discovered it was a fighting word. There were a whole series of adventures in between, but the one I like best of all was his encounter with a genie after he rubbed the appropriate lamp and the genie came and said, "Master, I am thy slave and will do whatever thou willst of

me." And so, Gandel had a long shopping list. He wanted castles; he wanted lands; he wanted horses; he wanted wealth, and then he bethought himself of the remark of the White Knight just before he saw him, and he said "I would also like Agatha, the fairest and most virtuous lady in the land." And here the genie said, "Thou stop, master. Castles I can bring you, lands I can recreate for you, but words are slippery things—they just won't stay put." And I couldn't help thinking of that punch line as you were talking.

Now one final comment with respect to the testimony of any artist. I wonder just how dependable is the testimony of an artist on the nature of and process of the work. It's been my experience, both personally and among artists, that they'd like to reject the role of self explication. They tend to say, "Look, listen, feel, read, but don't ask me to explain." Or if they are forced to explain, they tend to establish very complex rhetoric which is a recognition more of the audience than of the work itself. I'm fascinated by those artists I run into, in New York especially, who do bear witness, *in extremis,* they do bear witness. They talk so much and so embarrassingly beside the point.

BLEKSLEY: Thank you Mr. Jennings. Dr. Gaddini, please.

GADDINI: I wanted to refer to what was said about "nothing" again. Some of the things that were expressed by the artist seemed to be interesting. In a way, what's supposed to be "nothing" in early childhood —excuse me if I always talk in terms of development—seems to be connected with separation. Separation anxiety from the beginning is conceived as the first "nothing," because the self is not even conceived at that moment. The effort of the human being is to represent the self and reaching the feeling of individuality is certainly connected with this basic need. So in this respect, it may be interesting that the first expressive image that a child can represent is a circle. Not a straight line, not any other image, except for the first scribbling that doesn't mean anything except muscular. The moment a child is able to make an image, this develops into a circle and this circle intrigued me some years ago. The final result from what I could understand, was that the circle was there as a first and early representation of the self, which is a structure, really, representing something like "nothing," which is the empty space, but circumscribed, defined, something that is a first attempt to isolate himself from the "nothing." If this is true, this could be connected with what painting is (as a graphic expression). Maybe this need of representing the self, of course highly developed in structure, is always there for a painter, so a painting is always a representation of the self connected with infinite varieties of this need. And

this may be connected also with what Patricia Mangione said of this feeling of the work of art placed in a place where before there seemed to be nothing.

BLEKSLEY: Dr. Meerloo, this is your turn.

MEERLOO: Well, as Keats has said, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." I would not be able to ask all the questions. I think the asking of a question is already creative enough, and maybe in some personal discussions I will talk about it, but I want to finish with an experience about asking questions. That year, Einstein was alive, and what happens to every professor who is popular, he gave lectures to the public. Of course, it's far beyond my head, still, and also beyond the head of the public, but we are all so full of awe—it was a wonderful meeting. At the end, there was a question period and a lovely lady got up and said, "Professor Einstein, you talked about Mars and Jupiter and all the planets, but how do you know that those planets have those real names?" . . . Everybody started to laugh. I laughed, and the students did too, but Einstein remained unperturbed, and said, "Listen, I know a lot about my own explorations, but the question you asked is one of the most difficult questions. We don't know about the names." He made us all ashamed, and suddenly we got some glimpses of something even beyond mathematics.

BLEKSLEY: Who would like to speak now?

BURKE: I just want to say something about the whole point I was dealing with about the tautological creativity of terms. There's one aspect that I've recognized for years—the effect of grammar in affecting our thinking, but what I'm discussing here, although there may be a grammatical aspect, is not essentially grammatical at all. For instance, if I take a word like "government," implicit in that idea if I look at it, is the idea of a ruler; implicit in that is the idea of subject; implicit in that there's the idea of war; implicit in that there's the idea of obedience or disobedience. Now you can have various types of transformations within those terms and terms of that sort, but I think any language in the world will have some cycles of terms of that sort that are not reducible to peculiarities of that language.

BLEKSLEY: Dr. Grey Walter?

WALTER: I just want to ask Pat Mangione a question about painting. Do you think what you said applies to all painting? I mean classical painting as well as modern painting?

PAT MANGIONE: I know it doesn't apply to all the painters I know. It applies to the sort of painter that I am. I'm not an illustrator. I don't really paint for commercial purpose. I paint, and then if it's bought, that's nice, but I'm not painting for that reason. I really don't know too much about other painters. I was speaking of myself in that paper, really.

WALTER: It has been said that everyone has one good novel in him. In other words, the story of his life. This is not true of painting. In other words, it wouldn't be enough to paint once.

PAT MANGIONE: I think all painting is a stream of life. The reason I asked George Rochberg about his "black mood" when he finishes a composition is that I was curious, because I don't experience that when I finish a painting. I'm going to start another one right away. I only experience a "black mood" when I'm unable to paint because of some circumstance that takes me away from it, but I never feel depleted when I finish a painting.

WALTER: Do you feel that your painting is sequential in any way?

PAT MANGIONE: Yes, I think there's a relationship between all the paintings I've ever done. I think so.

WALTER: Is this generally true?

PAT MANGIONE: Of other people?

WALTER: Yes. Of good painters.

PAT MANGIONE: I don't even know if I'm a good painter or not.

WALTER: Honest painters.

PAT MANGIONE: Honest painters, yes. I think if a painter has integrity, yes. I think that would be true.

WALTER: So then in a sense, if everybody has one good novel in him, anybody might have a good series of paintings. In other words, the paintings are representing your life impressions in sequence, where, of course, you can't put your whole life into one painting.

PAT MANGIONE: Of course not, and if you can do one, you can do others because you keep on living. It represents your life, really, and it's always continuous.

WALTER: From what you said, and what other people said, about creation, this seems to me to be subjectively an impulsive or spasmodic

act in general as with the universe—the big bang, continuous creation. It seems we're in a state of continuous spasmodic creation rather than a continuous process. That's the impression I get, and I would go along with that. It seems rather an interesting process as opposed to most human life which is a fairly smooth development of biological evolution. It's spasmodic, explosive, which I suppose one might relate to sexual activity, in a way, which is also explosive and spasmodic. It has a sort of orgasmic quality. I don't think anyone has mentioned the word sex here so far. It seems to be very important.

PAT MANGIONE: I mentioned "sensuous."

WALTER: Yes—orgasmic sexuality, sensuous—an orgasmic impulse to create. We tend to associate creation with technique, etc., and this may be true also of sexuality. There is an aspect of sexuality, the impulsive, spasmodic, almost unconscious explosion, the explosive quality which seems to be imminent in all we've been saying about creation.

PAT MANGIONE: Yes, I think so.

BLEKSLEY: Dr. Servadio.

SERVADIO: In addition to what Dr. Gaddini said, I'd like to express my great interest in Mrs. Mangione's presentation, because in the first part of her presentation, she described everything that happened to her, externalizing all her inner processes. She spoke of creative springs of visions, of the dream material, of colors, as if she were projecting outside all her inner world, which confirms exactly what Dr. Gaddini and I have been trying to say in our own presentations. Even the restitution process, the joy and surprise at seeing the art object; feeling protected from outside aggression which means from your own aggression, and giving back the object where it belongs, and then finally, as Dr. Gaddini pointed out, the object that finds itself in a place where there was nothing, which is the end result of the restitution process. Then, in the second part you had a different attitude vis-à-vis the inner springs of your creation processes and you looked at them with awe and respect and preferred not to probe too deeply into them. It was really magnificent to see the train that you followed, I don't know to what extent consciously.

BLEKSLEY: Mr. Mangione.

JERRE MANGIONE: I simply wanted to make a comment that ties in with what Dr. Walter said and what my wife said about the experience of painting. I think that a distinction has to be made between being a

painter and being a writer. I am constantly jealous of the joy that my wife takes in her work. I have very little joy in my work. When I write, it's a terrible effort, at least it is for me, and I have to keep writing and re-writing and I get very little pleasure. I get a certain satisfaction when I achieve certain goals that are somewhere within me, and sometimes of course, I'm happily surprised at the result. Sometimes it's much better than I thought it could be in the beginning, and sometimes it's completely different from what I set out to do. I don't think that the act of writing—I'm talking mainly about writing fiction—is a spasmodic experience. I think perhaps this might apply to the act of writing poetry which I think is closer to painting and perhaps to musical composition. But the act of writing is such an act of discipline that if one were to depend on a mood to get a work done, let's say, that work would not get done.

BLEKSLEY: Wouldn't it be true in general to say it's a question of the magnitude, the time scale involved. Surely a man can write a poem. He writes a poem, in fact on the spur of the moment of inspiration. Another one can write a novel on the spur of the moment of inspiration. Much of the writing of the novel is sheer hard work. This, I think, is the fundamental difference. I think if one were certain to have the privilege of asking Michelangelo what he thought of the task which confronted him when he had to start painting the Sistine Chapel, he would have said, "I hate its guts," and he probably continued to hate its guts all through the period of the work. There's no doubt whatever that an artist who is presented with a task that is going to take him four years, is not going to enjoy that task for four years. That's impossible. You can't enjoy anything for four years.

ROCHBERG: There have been a number of things which have been said this morning which I would like to comment on, perhaps not directly, but to express in my own way thoughts that have been triggered by these comments. If you sit down and write a symphony that can take a very long time. I mean, the sketching could take at least three to six months, but you're not done yet, because now you've got to sit down and make an orchestral score and that could be a labor of six months and that means rigid discipline just as you said. You've got to sit down every day whether you feel like it or not and just plug away for three hours or four hours and then get up exhausted and go and have some lunch and take a nap, if you don't have to go and teach that day.

But what I wanted to talk about was something that Kenneth Burke said, which really rang a bell with me. He talked about "one word

spawning another," and this links up with what Pat Mangione said, "one work, in a sense, spawning another," and I think that this links up in the opposite direction; it's a kind of contradiction to what Grey Walter just said about the spasmodic nature of it. I happen to have a kind of experience which is difficult to articulate, but which I like to refer to as "the parent image" in musical composition. I suspect that there are parent images in all artistic evolution. What I mean by parent image is simply a kind of prologue, maybe just verbal, but at least an analog to the kind of genetic process where one human being gives birth to another who gives birth to another through coupling with another person.

Let's say, for example, Bach comes at the end of an epoch which, presumably as far as the historians tell us, lasted from 1600 to roughly the time he died, which is about 1750, there's 150 years of evolution. Now somebody, and we don't really know who, established those particular parent images which spawned the second generation and third generation and fourth generation, and as each generation of this particular way of thinking about music evolved, obviously they became more sophisticated, they branched off, they became more interesting or less interesting, and they reached that point of closure where when the classical period started, there was, I suppose, a sense of disinterest now in continuing this way and people wanted to go on in the new way. That new way, in its way, would also be a new parent image.

Now, the interesting thing to me is from whence cometh these parent images? Are they collective emergences? Because we know, for example, and I can't cite any particular instances, but I've read it innumerable times, that scientists have invented the same thing at the same time within a week's period of time or two weeks or two months in different parts of the globe. So that something is in the air, which leads me to suggest that in the mental realm, there probably is a level of reality, and I must confess that I have been having all kinds of difficulty with the word "reality" beccause we've all used it I suppose in different ways and I have my own curious way of using it. Dr. Meerloo and I were having a little conversation of our own while we were refreshing ourselves outside during the intermission, and I was suggesting that a work of art has a reality in the sense of a parent image. It affects the other people who pursue that way of working. A child takes on the characteristics of its parents so he continues to work in this way, and to me this has a strange and powerful reality because it exists precisely in the only realm that seems to me to be meaningful. If we're merely animals and if that's the only reality we are willing to grant ourselves because we have physical material structure, then I

don't think that this is enough. At least, for me, it's not enough, and so even though it may be hierarchic in a sense and be difficult to substantiate, I don't believe I could pose any particularly persuasive arguments for it. It's more a matter of faith on my part, but once we reach that realm of the mental operation, then it seems to me that something, such as the creation of a Hamlet, is a very powerful, potent reality. Or the creation of any particular kind of way of forming and shaping a melodic idea which implants itself in that generation of musicians, continues to affect the next generation of musicians just as I'm sure that in painting there must have been historically certain images which generations of painters kept going back to which had a peculiar meaning for them. They were magnetized by it and they continued to work with it.